

## Conceptualization of employer brand dimensions in Malaysia luxury hotels

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### Abstract

Employer branding has been suggested as an approach to combat employee high turnover, unattractive organizational image and low-quality workforce issues. It concerns on how an organization portrays its image to potential employees, current employees, and other related stakeholders. Organizational attraction can be achieved by identifying specific employer brand dimensions. However, the conceptualization of employer brand is still in an infant stage, particularly from the perspective of current employees. Most of the employer brand studies were conducted within the context of potential employees, where their perspectives might be misleading as they have no work experience. The perspectives from potential employees could not be applied to the context of current employees. Thus, the aim of this study is to conceptualize the employer brand by identifying its dimensions from the perspectives of current employees in Malaysia luxury hotels. An employer brand survey instrument consisted of twenty-five items was adopted from a previous study. 1035 forms were distributed to the employees in Malaysia luxury hotels, and this study managed to analyze 436 of usable responses. Exploratory factor analysis and confirmatory factor analysis were conducted to discover and to confirm the number of employer brand dimensions from the context of Malaysia luxury hotels. Three dimensions of employer brand were developed from this study: organization, individual and growth. Each of the employer brand dimension encompasses components that give direction in attracting and retaining employees. It is anticipated that this study will shed some light on the issue of employer brand, particularly within the context of the Malaysia hospitality industry. In addition, hotel managers will be able to strategize the employer branding in their organization according to the dimensions suggested by this study.

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### Introduction

Employer branding has been reported as one of the strategies to reduce employee turnover, to escalate organizational image and to increase the quality workforce in industries (Ambler and Barrow, 1996a; Sullivan, 1999; Gaddam, 2008). Effective employer brand helps to enhance customer loyalty, profitability and corporate reputation (Moroko and Uncles, 2005). According to Sullivan (2004), employer brand concerns of how an organization portrays its image to potential employees, current employees and other related stakeholders. Employer brand emphasizes on attracting new employees with employment offers while retaining current employees with employment experiences that the organizations can provide (Ambler and Barrow, 1996a). It should be clearly understood that the focal point of organizations in building employer brand is to attract and retain the

best employees: those who can add positive values to the organization and convey the organization's brand promises to customers and potential employees (Moroko and Uncles, 2005).

There is lack of employer brand conceptualization in terms of its dimensions. Most of the previous studies have defined employer brand in terms of its benefits, rather than components or dimensions that formed the employer brand (Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004; Wilden *et al.*, 2010; Jiang and Iles, 2011). Although the employer brand has been applied in the previous research propositions, the researchers have not defined the employer brand dimensions in detail (Knox and Freeman, 2006; Gaddam, 2008; Shahzad *et al.*, 2011). According to Jiang and Iles (2011) and JWT Inside (2008), the omission of employer brand dimensions or also known as the employer value propositions (EVPs) in research propositions may create ambiguity in identifying which dimensions

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are relevant to be applied for an effective employer brand strategy. It is also recommended by Fulmer *et al.* (2003) that identifying specific dimensions would contribute most to an organizational attraction. The five dimensions proposed by Berthon *et al.* (2005) are viewed as the most appropriate employer brand dimensions to be employed to the context of this study compared to other sets of employer brand dimensions proposed by other researchers (Ambler and Barrow, 1996a; Fulmer *et al.*, 2003; Barrow and Mosley, 2005; Cho *et al.* 2006; Kimpakorn and Dimmitt, 2007; Minchington, 2012a; Sokro, 2012).

Most of the employer brand studies focused on the potential and actual applicants, who were mostly university students, in assessing the employer brand and organizational attractiveness (Turban, 2001; Cable and Turban, 2003; Berthon *et al.*, 2005; Cho *et al.*, 2006; Jiang and Iles, 2011; Shahzad *et al.*, 2011). Though the perceptions of potential employees are considered as a good source in assessing the employer brand, they may provide unrealistic views due to no work experience (van de Ven, 2005; Jiang and Iles, 2011). Practically, the perception of current employees is more important (Corporate Leadership Council, 1999; Martin and Beaumont, 2003; Bowd, 2006; Ulrich, 2007; JWT Inside, 2008). Findings from potential employees could not be applied to the context of current employees (Maxwell and Knox, 2009). A better understanding of ideal EVPs for an organization can be achieved if the employer brand is assessed from the perspective of current employees (Barrow and Mosley, 2005; Sartain and Schumann, 2008; Maxwell and Knox, 2009). This is due to the reality of employment experiences gained by the current employees in their organization. Russell and Brannan (2016) stated that employer brand must be infused to current employees in order for them to feel the passion and worth working in an organization.

This study was conducted to conceptualize the employer brand from the perspective of current employees in Malaysia luxury hotels. It was executed by adopting the employer brand dimensions proposed by Berthon *et al.* (2005) and the dimensions were assessed if they are applicable to the specified industry. Five dimensions of employer brand (i.e.: interest, social, economic, development and application) as proposed by Berthon *et al.* (2005) were adopted as the foundation for the survey instrument. It is anticipated that by providing a concept of employer brand which is specified in a particular industry and within the context of its main stakeholder (current employees), employers would be able to recognize strategic employer brand dimensions.

## Materials and Methods

The target population for this study was full-time employees in Malaysia four- and five-star hotels, where the unit of analysis was a full-time individual employee from various departments in the hotels. The sampling frame of the employees was obtained from the four- and five-star hotels that were located in Kuala Lumpur and Putrajaya, Selangor, and Pahang. These areas represented 50% of the total population for full-time employees in Malaysia luxury hotels.

It was utterly impossible to get the list of all employees from the sampling frame due to the employment nature in the hotel industry. Hence, this study employed a non-probability sampling, which was a convenience sampling. The non-probability sampling is an alternative to the probability sampling when there are strong theoretical and practical justifications (Black, 2008). The list of the population being studied did not exist and the researcher did not have the access to the sample. In addition, there are also other researchers who employed non-probability sampling in their employer brand studies (Ahmad and Daud, 2016; Cho *et al.*, 2006; Sokro, 2012). In this study, managers of the 25 hotels were contacted to get an appointment for the questionnaire distribution. The questionnaires were distributed to employees who worked in different departments through their human resource or training managers.

Respondents were informed that participation in this study is completely voluntary, neither risk nor cost will be incurred if they participate in the survey and their responses are anonymous and will be kept confidential. The questionnaire was presented in two languages: English and Malay, where these two are the predominant languages in Malaysia (Tourism Malaysia, 2014). A 7-point Likert-scale was employed in the questionnaire and the choice of response was based on the likelihood continuum, comprised; “1 - Not at all”, “2 - To a very small extent”, “3 - To a small extent”, “4 - To a moderate extent”, “5 - To a fairly great extent”, “6 - To a great extent” and “7 - To a very great extent” (King *et al.*, 2010).

The first part of the questionnaire consists of two sections with 25 items for each section. It measures the employer brand offering and the employer brand delivery. In the first section, respondents were asked to rate the extent to which the employer brand components were offered to them before they join the organization or during their early employment stage. The second section required respondents to evaluate to what extent their employer fulfilled the employer brand offerings. The list of the items for each of the employer brand dimensions used in the questionnaire

Table 1. Items of employer brand dimensions as proposed by Berthon *et al.* (2005)

DIMENSION	ITEM
Interest	Working in an excitement environment
	Innovative employer (encourage employees to do new work practices and forward-thinking)
	The organization values and makes use of employee's creativity
	The organization produces high-quality products and services
Social	The organization produces innovative products and services
	A fun working environment
	Having a good relationship with your superiors
	Having a good relationship with your colleagues
Economic	Supportive and encouraging colleagues
	Happy work environment
	Good promotion opportunities within the organization
	Job security within the organization
Development	Hands-on inter-departmental experience
	An above average basic salary
	An attractive overall compensation package
	Recognition and appreciation from management
Application	A springboard for future employment
	Feeling good about yourself as a result of working for a particular organization
	Feeling more self-confident as a result of working for a particular organization
	Gaining career-enhancing experience
Application	Humanitarian organization (organization that contributes to society)
	Opportunity to apply what was learned at a tertiary institution
	Opportunity to teach others what you have learned
	Feeling of acceptance and belonging
	The organization is customer-oriented

is displayed in Table 1. Demographic questions were presented at the end of the questionnaire with eight items.

A drop-off and pick-up methods were employed for the data collection. The number of survey forms distributed ranged from 10 to 50 forms per hotel, based on the agreement made by the hotel managers. The total number of survey forms provided to the 25 hotels was 1035 forms. Hotel employees were allowed to complete the questionnaire at home and submit to their managers at any time during their working hours. Respondents were given one to two weeks to answer the questionnaire and return the survey to the drop-boxes that were provided to their manager.

IBM SPSS Statistics 20 and AMOS Graphics were the software used to analyze the data. The data were analyzed for data cleaning and screening. The main analysis for this study is factor analysis, which comprises exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). The CFA was conducted as a pre-test. In order to identify the employer brand dimensions, the EFA was later conducted and followed by the CFA. The justification for each of the analysis is discussed in the next section.

## Results

The researcher managed to collect 614 forms from the 1035 survey forms distributed to the hotels (59% of the distributed form). 597 forms were identified as usable to be filtered for the data analysis (97% of the collected form). The final usable responses after the removal of unrelated groups and missing

data were 436. The multivariate assumption analysis was satisfied: there was no multivariate outlier, multivariate normality appeared to generally exist, linearity assumption was met, no obvious violation of homoscedasticity and no multicollinearity among the employer brand dimensions in predicting the dependent variables.

The respondents' profile showed an almost equal balance between male and female respondents, 50.20% and 49.80%, respectively. In terms of age distribution, the majority of the respondents aged between 21 to 40 years old. The marital status showed an equal distribution, with 50.70% of the respondents were single and 49.30% were married. In terms of the educational background, most respondents obtained SPM/STPM (33.50%) and Diploma (32.60%). 41.97% of the respondents had served their organization between 0.51 to 2.50 years. Only 12 respondents from the total sample had served their organization for more than 20 years. The majority of the respondents worked in the food and beverage department (30.50%) and management (30.70%). The proportions between supervisory and non-supervisory respondents were about the same, 51.40% and 48.60%, accordingly. Most of the respondents were Malays (69.30%) and there were two respondents who involved in the survey are non-Malaysian (0.50%).

### Identifying employer brand dimensions

The CFA was first conducted to test if the employer brand dimensions proposed by Berthon *et al.* (2005) remained the same in this study. It is a common practice to conduct the EFA prior to the CFA (Raykov and Marcoulides, 2008; Hair *et al.*, 2010). However, in this study, the CFA was first conducted as a pre-test to assess the applicability of the five dimensions proposed by Berthon *et al.* (2005) to the context of this study. The pre-test of the CFA was then followed by the EFA to discover the number of employer brand dimensions from the data. Later, the main CFA was tested to measure the pattern of factor loadings on prespecified constructs that represent the actual data.

### Pre-test of CFA

The results show that both employer brand offering and employer brand delivery models were not fit and they did not have discriminant validity. All the fit indices did not meet the criteria of a model fit. Discriminant validity refers to the extent that the measures of different concepts are distinct (Campbell & Fiske, 1959; Farrell & Rudd, 2009; Peter, 1981). According to Hair *et al.* (2010), correlation

coefficient ( $r$ ) more than 0.900 indicates a high correlation between two constructs and thus violates the discriminant validity. The correlation coefficients indicated high correlations between the employer brand dimensions, which violated the discriminant validity (e.g.:  $r$  for Social and Development in the employer brand offering was 0.970, while  $r$  for Social and Development in the employer brand delivery was 0.960). Hence, the findings of this pre-test show that the dimensions were not distinct to each other and it can be concluded that the five dimensions proposed by Berthon *et al.* (2005) were not applicable to the context of this study. The EFA was later conducted to determine the employer brand dimensions from the perspective of employees who worked in Malaysia luxury hotels.

#### *EFA for employer brand offering and employer brand delivery*

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) for the employer brand offering was 0.964, and 0.966 for the employer brand delivery. Both employer brand offering and delivery could be considered to have marvelous values of KMO. In addition to that, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity for both employer brand offering and delivery were significant. The results of the KMO and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity indicated that it was appropriate to run factor analysis to the measures of this study.

The extraction method of the EFA in this study was principal component analysis and varimax was selected as the rotation method. The objective of rotation in factor analysis is to simplify the structure of analysis, where high items loading on one factor and the smaller items loading on the remaining factor solutions (Williams *et al.*, 2010). The EFA was conducted to both the employer brand offering and employer brand delivery.

EBO and EBD are the acronyms used for the employer brand offering employer brand delivery, respectively. There are 25 items for each EBO and EBD, and they have been numbered accordingly, from EBO/EBD1 to EBO/EBD25. By averaging the EBO and the EBD, the variable is named as EB (employer brand).

Based on Table 2, items loaded on Factor 1, Factor 2 and Factor 3 are almost the same between the employer brand offering and the employer brand delivery. Only three items in the employer brand offering are not loaded under the same factor as in the employer brand delivery, namely EBO11, EBO13 and EBO18. Hence, EBO11/EBD11, EBO13/EBD13, and EBO18/EBD18 were removed as they did not show synchronization in the factor loading

Table 2. Items loading according to factor (with the highest loading sequence) for employer brand offering and employer brand delivery

Employer Brand Offering	Employer Brand Delivery
<b>Factor 1</b>	<b>Factor 1</b>
EBO22: Hands-on inter-departmental experience	EBD25: An attractive overall compensation package
EBO25: An attractive overall compensation package	EBD24: An above average basic salary
EBO24: An above average basic salary	EBD17: Opportunity to apply what was learned at a tertiary institution
EBO14: The organization produces innovative products and services	EBD22: Hands-on inter-departmental experience
EBO16: Humanitarian organization	EBD16: Humanitarian organization
EBO11: Innovative employer	EBD23: Happy work environment
EBO13: The organization produces high-quality products and services	EBD14: The organization produces innovative products and services
EBO17: Opportunity to apply what was learned at a tertiary institution	EBD12: The organization values and makes use of employee's creativity
EBO19: Feeling of acceptance and belonging	EBD19: Feeling of acceptance and belonging
EBO12: The organization values and makes use of employee's creativity	EBD20: The organization is customer-oriented
EBO23: Happy work environment	
EBO20: The organization is customer-oriented	
EBO18: Opportunity to teach others what you have learned	
<b>Factor 2</b>	<b>Factor 2</b>
EBO2: A fun working environment	EBD2: A fun working environment
EBO8: Having a good relationship with your colleagues	EBD3: A springboard for future employment
EBO5: Feeling more self-confident as a result of working for a particular organization	EBD5: Feeling more self-confident as a result of working for a particular organization
EBO7: Having a good relationship with your superiors	EBD7: Having a good relationship with your superiors
EBO6: Gaining career-enhancing experience	EBD8: Having a good relationship with your colleagues
EBO3: A springboard for future employment	EBD4: Feeling good about yourself as a result of working for a particular organization
EBO4: Feeling good about yourself as a result of working for a particular organization	EBD6: Gaining career-enhancing experience
EBO10: Working in an excitement environment	EBD10: Working in an excitement environment
	EBD11: Innovative employer
	EBD13: The organization produces high-quality products and services
<b>Factor 3</b>	<b>Factor 3</b>
EBO9: Supportive and encouraging colleagues	EBD9: Supportive and encouraging colleagues
EBO15: Good promotion opportunities within the organization	EBD21: Job security within the organization
EBO21: Job security within the organization	EBD15: Good promotion opportunities within the organization
EBO1: Recognition and appreciation from management	EBD1: Recognition and appreciation from management
	EBD18: Opportunity to teach others what you have learned

between employer brand offering and employer brand delivery. There are 22 remaining employer brand items after the removal.

There are 10 items that represent Factor 1, eight items for Factor 2 and four items for Factor 3. The three factors extracted explaining 68.243% of the variance in the employer brand offering and 70.006% variance in the employer brand delivery. Hair *et al.* (1998) indicated that variables with higher factor

loadings are considered to be more important and have a greater influence on the name selected to represent a factor. The highest factor loading of the employer brand offering and employer brand delivery are different. Thus, the average of the loadings for both constructs was calculated to rank the items from highest to lowest. For example, in Factor 1, EBO25 was ranked second in employer brand offering, while EBD25 was ranked first in the employer brand delivery. Hence, by calculating the average rank for both items,  $(2+1)/2$ , EB25 has the value of 1.5 in the ranking. The second highest ranking in Factor 1 are EB22 and EB24, with the value of 2.5, separately. The similar calculation is used in determining the highest loadings in Factor 2 and Factor 3. The dimension names developed for this study were based on the literature from marketing and psychology. Factor 1 is named as organization, Factor 2 as individual and Factor 3 as growth.

Higher loadings items in Factor 1, for examples salary, interdepartmental experience and compensation are viewed as the components provided by an organization. Interdepartmental experience refers to the training given to employees (Berthon *et al.*, 2005). Competitive salary, compensation, and training have been identified as the explicit needs required by employees from an organization (Lievens and Highhouse, 2003; Barrow and Mosley, 2005; Wickham and O'Donohue, 2009; Minchington, 2011). Bennett and Barkensjo (2005) indicated that it is an organization's responsibility to give training to employees, where it should be an ongoing activity. Salary and compensation are also the ongoing components which organizations have to provide to employees (Barrow and Mosley, 2005). In addition, according to Ambler and Barrow (1996a), salary, compensation, and experience are grouped under economic and functional dimensions of employer brand. These two dimensions are delivered by an organization, and not by employees (Ambler and Barrow, 1996a). Hence, Factor 1 is named as organization as the three items with the highest factor loadings: EB25 (an attractive overall compensation package), EB22 (hands-on interdepartmental experience), EB24 (an above average basic salary) are the components provided by an organization. Most of the remaining items in Factor 1 (e.g.: organization produces innovative products and services, opportunity to apply what was learned at the tertiary institution, humanitarian organization) are also considered as the components produced and delivered by an organization. The percentage of variance accounted for the organization dimension in the employer brand offering is 28.559% and 26.765%

in the employer brand delivery.

Factor 2 is named as individual, which accounted for 23.243% of variance in the employer brand offering and 25.199% of variance in the employer brand delivery. The items with the highest factor loadings according to the sequence are: EB2 (a fun working environment), EB5 (feeling more self-confident as a result of working for a particular organization), and EB8 (having a good relationship with your colleagues). Ambler and Barrow (Ambler and Barrow, 1996b) indicated that there is a close connection between individual and organization, where the best people can create the best shop. It can be implied that EB2, a fun working environment, was created by employees. While self-confidence (EB5) derived from the satisfaction of an individual self-esteem (Maslow, 1943). Employees relationship with their colleagues (EB8) was initiated by the employees themselves and not by the organization, for example having meals together (Sledge *et al.*, 2008). From the context of human motivation, the three items (EB2, EB5, EB8) are related to feelings and social condition of an individual, as proposed by Maslow (1943). Hence, this factor is named as individual dimension as the items under this factor were initiated and derived from individuals, who are the employees of an organization. Other remaining items under this factor are also connected to the aspect of individual feelings, for example, EB7 (having a good relationship with your superiors) and EB4 (feeling good about yourself as a result of working for a particular organization).

The highest factor loading item in Factor 3 started with EB9 (supportive and encouraging colleagues). It is followed by EB15 (good promotion opportunities within the organization), EB 21 (job security within the organization) and finally EB1 (recognition and appreciation from management). These items are related to the aspect of moving further with organizations and the factor is named as growth. Although EB9 can be associated with Factor 2 (Individual), it is viewed from a different perspective in this study. This item has been viewed as a means to promote employee growth in an organization. Support from colleagues provides knowledge, experience, and emotion to enhance e employee development (Benson and Dundis, 2003; Lievens and Highhouse, 2003; Ramlall, 2003; Barrow and Mosley, 2005; Wickham and O'Donohue, 2009; Minchington, 2011). Meanwhile, promotion, job security, recognition, and appreciation are the components to encourage employees to stay and grow in an organization. According to Johari *et al.* (2012), when employees feel there is a prospect of promotion, they

are more likely to stay in an organization. Promotion opportunities come with a sense of recognition and appreciation, where promotion has been identified as part of career development (Jackson and Schuler, 1990; Johari *et al.*, 2012). Employees will also stay when there is a job security in their organization, and this implies an opportunity for career development in the organization (McKinney *et al.*, 2006; Johari *et al.*, 2012). All the items under Factor 3 can be associated with career development and growth. Hence, this factor is named as growth. The percentage of variance accounted for this dimension in the employer brand offering is 16.441% and 18.042% in the employer brand delivery.

#### *CFA for employer brand offering and employer brand delivery*

The factor loadings of the employer brand offering range from 0.710 to 0.830. According to Hair *et al.* (2010), the standardized factor loading must be above 0.50, positive, and not more than 1.00. Hence, none of the items were deleted in the model. The CFA model for the employer brand offering indicates an acceptable fit,  $\chi^2 (206) = 975.593$ ,  $p < .001$ , relative  $\chi^2 = 4.736$ , CFI = .899, RMSEA = .093. On the other side, the initial CFA model for the employer brand delivery did not have a sufficient fit,  $\chi^2 (206) = 1055.568$ ,  $p < .001$ , relative  $\chi^2 = 5.124$ , CFI = .898, RMSEA = .097. All of the items have a sufficient factor loading ( $> .50$ ) and no items were deleted. Hence, the error terms were correlated based on the high modification indices. Pairs of the correlated error terms are e8-e9, e1-e4, and e5-e6 with the modification indices of 102.920, 48.645, and 43.333, respectively. The correlations of these pairs are explainable as they are grouped under the same factor, which is organization. e8-e9 refers to EBD24 (receiving an above average basic salary) and EBD25 (receiving an attractive overall compensation package), e1-e4 refers to EBD20 (the organization is customer oriented) and EBD19 (feeling of acceptance and belonging), and finally e5-e6 refers to EBD17 (having an opportunity to apply what was learned at tertiary institution) and EBD16 (a humanitarian organization). The correlations between the error terms e8-e9, e1-e4, and e5-e6 were significantly high, with  $r = 0.744$ ,  $0.737$ , and  $0.706$ , ( $p = .01$ , 2-tailed), respectively. After the correlation of the error terms, the final model of the employer brand delivery presents a better model with a good fit,  $\chi^2 (203) = 850.323$ ,  $p < .001$ , relative  $\chi^2 = 4.189$ , CFI = .922, RMSEA = .086.

Table 3 shows the employer brand dimensions emerged from the perspective of employees in

Malaysia luxury hotels compared to the original dimensions proposed by Berthon *et al.* (2005). The structure of these three dimensions is different from the five dimensions of the previous study (Berthon *et al.*, 2005). Hence, the EFA has demonstrated that the five dimensions of employer brand (i.e.: interest, social, economic, development, application) proposed by Berthon *et al.* (2005) are not applicable to the context of luxury hotels in Malaysia. The finding is in line with different conceptualizations of employer brand from different contexts as proposed in the previous studies (Ambler and Barrow, 1996a; Cho *et al.*, 2006; Dell and Ainspan, 2001).

#### **Discussion**

It was revealed that structure of employer brand dimensions proposed by Berthon *et al.* (2005) was inapplicable to the context of this study. The result might be due to the sample used by Berthon *et al.* (2005) (i.e.: undergraduate students as the potential employees), which was different from the sample of this study (current employees in the hotel industry). It has been reported that values perceived by potential employees are different from values perceived by current employees. Current employees are more realistic in assessing brand values due to their employment experience (Cho *et al.*, 2006; Jiang and Iles, 2011). Besides, this study measured employer brand in a different way compared to Berthon's *et al.* study (2005). The employer brand in this study was assessed by its offering and delivery, while Berthon *et al.* (2005) assessed the importance of employer brand. Thus, the structure of the employer brand dimensions derived from this study is distinct with the dimensions proposed by Berthon *et al.* (2005). This study discovered that the employer brand values perceived by Malaysia luxury hotel employees could be grouped into three dimensions: organization, individual, and growth. The result is supported by previous studies, where different groups of people in different industries would perceive different dimensions of employer brand (Ambler and Barrow, 1996a; Fulmer *et al.*, 2003; Barrow and Mosley, 2005; Berthon *et al.*, 2005; Cho *et al.*, 2006; Kimpakorn and Dimmitt, 2007a; Minchington, 2012a; Sokro, 2012). Salary, which is grouped under the organization dimension, has been perceived as the vital factor for employee retention within the hospitality industry in Malaysia (Joo-Ee, 2016). It is also supported by Shah and Beh (2016) that employee recognition, opportunities for advancement and development, and also job security are the factors that reduce the turnover intention among the employees from the

Table 3. Comparison of employer brand dimensions as proposed by Berthon *et al.* (2005) and from the context of this study

Employer brand dimensions proposed by Berthon <i>et al.</i> (2005)		Employer brand dimensions from the context of this study	
Dimension	Item	Dimension	Item
Interest	EB10: Working in an excitement environment	Organization	EB22: Hands-on inter-departmental experience
	EB11: Innovative employer (encourage employees to do new work practices and forward-thinking)		EB25: An attractive overall compensation package
	EB12: The organization values and makes use of employee's creativity		EB24: An above average basic salary
	EB13: The organization produces high-quality products and services		EB14: The organization produces innovative products and services
	EB14: The organization produces innovative products and services		EB16: Humanitarian organization
Social	EB2: A fun working environment	Individual	EB2: A fun working environment
	EB7: Having a good relationship with your superiors		EB8: Having a good relationship with your colleagues
	EB8: Having a good relationship with your colleagues		EB5: Feeling more self-confident as a result of working for a particular organization
	EB9: Supportive and encouraging colleagues		EB7: Having a good relationship with your superiors
	EB23: Happy work environment		EB6: Gaining career-enhancing experience
			EB3: A springboard for future employment
			EB4: Feeling good about yourself as a result of working for a particular organization
			EB10: Working in an excitement environment
			EB9: Supportive and encouraging colleagues
			EB15: Good promotion opportunities within the organization
Economic	EB15: Good promotion opportunities within the organization	Growth	EB9: Supportive and encouraging colleagues
	EB21: Job security within the organization		EB15: Good promotion opportunities within the organization
	EB22: Hands-on inter-departmental experience		EB21: Job security within the organization
	EB24: An above average basic salary		EB1: Recognition and appreciation from management
	EB25: An attractive overall compensation package		

Development	EB1: Recognition and appreciation from management
	EB3: A springboard for future employment
	EB4: Feeling good about yourself as a result of working for a particular organization
	EB5: Feeling more self-confident as a result of working for a particular organization
	EB6: Gaining career-enhancing experience
	EB16: Humanitarian organization (organization that contributes to society)
Application	EB17: Opportunity to apply what was learned at a tertiary institution
	EB18: Opportunity to teach others what you have learned
	EB19: Feeling of acceptance and belonging
	EB20: The organization is customer-oriented

hotel industry in Malaysia. Hence, the employer brand items used in this study are consistent with the findings reported in the previous studies, within the context of the hotel industry in Malaysia.

The three dimensions extracted in this study have a close connection to the human need theory proposed by Alderfer (Alderfer, 1969). He proposed an alternative to the Maslow's theory, a threefold conceptualization of human needs that consist of existence, relatedness, and growth (E.R.G.). The three needs in the E.R.G. Theory are viewed to have a connection with the three dimensions of employer brand extracted in this study. The existence needs can be associated with the organizational dimension, where salary, compensation and happy work environment are the components grouped under the organization dimension. While relatedness needs are associated with the individual dimension, which includes the relationship with colleagues and superiors. On the other hand, growth needs are associated with the growth dimension in this study, where promotion opportunity is one of the components grouped under this dimension. It has been well-documented that the hotel industry experiencing employee high turnover and short supply of skilled and semi-skilled employees due to the inability to identify the factors to retain employees (Awang *et al.*, 2008; Liu and Liu, 2008; Abdullah *et al.*, 2009; Shah and Beh, 2016). Hence, it is important for organizations to be able to recognize the factors that lead to employee attraction and retention.

## Conclusion

This study aimed to conceptualize employer brand within the context of Malaysia luxury hotels. The conceptualization provides a new insight in understanding the dimensions that create the employer brand as a whole. The main finding of this study is the concept of employer brand that consists of the organization, individual and growth dimensions. It is hoped that this study will shed some light on the issue of employer brand, to both academics and practitioners, particularly within the context of the hospitality industry. It is also anticipated that the findings of this study will create more rooms for further investigation about employer brand. There were limitations identified in this study comprising the non-probability sampling and the drop-off method. The limitations restrict the generalization of the findings and the probability of getting a normal pool of the current employees.

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