

Evaluation of employer's brand of trade and food industry companies

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Abstract

Keywords:

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Introduction. The purpose of the research is to identify the components of the employer's brand that contribute to its agreeability and effectiveness in attracting and retaining talented employees, as well as to provide a generalized assessment of the employer's brand, which involves identifying the strengths and weaknesses of its value proposition (EVP).

Materials and methods. Experts in employer's branding conducted an expert assessment development of the components' level of employer's brand value proposition. The assessment was based on the Likert scale, which includes 5 possible states from 1 is strongly agree with the best message about the EVP component to 0 is strongly disagree. The TOPSIS multicriteria assessment method to summarize and analyze the level of employer's brand development was used.

Results and discussion. The key components of the value proposition are revealed, such as salary level, additional benefits, career growth, company image and a comfortable workplace, which are the basis for forming an attractive employer brand.

The average expert assessment of EVP components of the employer's brand for all the surveyed companies showed that the advantages of the employer's brand of the surveyed companies are official employment (4.27); products and services (4.07); social projects (3.97) of the companies. The weaknesses of the employer's brand of the surveyed companies are the opportunity to gain international experience (1.42) and the possibility of moving to another city/country (1.55).

The generalized assessment of the employer's brand allowed us to rank the surveyed companies by the level of employer's brand development and to identify among them the leader (Auchan) and the outsider (Epicenter K).

The level of employer's brand development of value proposition components of the surveyed companies is the basis for the formation of the desired employer's brand. The assessments of each EVP component were categorized into 3 ranges: strength, average, and weakness. Based on the results of the categorization assessment, EVPs were identified for each company that are associated with the strengths or weaknesses of the employer brand. This made it possible to propose directions for the development of employer's brand for surveyed companies. In particular, improving weak EVP will reduce the negative brand perception among potential employees. Strengthening of a strong EVP will allow companies to stand out in the labor market. EVP components with the average value should be considered as the potential for possible improvement.

Conclusion. The proposed methodological approach allows the objective assessment of the state of an employer's brand development and identification of its strengths and weaknesses, which is an important step in formulating strategies for attracting and retaining the target audience.

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Introduction

Creating an attractive employer image is the key task for any company. It helps to attract talented employees to the company, promotes staff retention, increases their motivation, level of engagement, marketing and sales effectiveness, facilitates attracting investments and partners to the company's activities, and creates a culture of risk and reputation management.

According to Tanwar and Prasad (2016), an employer's brand is the image and reputation of the company as an employer in the eyes of current and potential employees, as well as other stakeholders such as partners and customers. Tanwar and Prasad (2016) include in the employer's brand a set of perceptions, experiences and expectations that people associate with the company as the place where they want to work. In such circumstances, there is a need to determine the criteria for employer's brand formation, taking into account the requirements of the target audience.

Each company uses special attractive offers in the form of tangible and intangible benefits to define the desired image for potential candidates. Thus, the concept of employer's value proposition (EVP) arises (Barrow et al., 2005). According to the international audit and consulting company Deloitte, a high level of EVP is important for 80% of employers' top managers (HR Liga, 2019). According to Grc.ua (2024), for 84% of the surveyed job seekers, the company's reputation and active HR brand are important when choosing a future job. The economic impact for companies is reflected in a 10% reduction in labor costs, a 25% reduction in recruitment costs, and a 28% reduction in staff turnover (Grc.ua, 2024).

According to Liu (2020), Nagpal et al. (2019), Pawar and Charak (2015), the EVP is central to an employer's brand and is key to attracting and retaining talented employees. It defines the unique benefits and values that the company offers to its employees and helps to create an attractive employer image in the labor market. It is important that the value proposition is authentic, realistic, and reflects the actual experience of employees in the company (Staniec and Kalińska-Kula, 2021).

Jha Sr. and Jha Sh. (2015) conducted the research of employer's brand EVPs in six leading countries and determined that EVPs help to pay the attention of potential employees, especially those who has necessary skills and experience. EVP also helps employees to understand how their work contributes to the overall success of the company and how they can grow within the organization (Tanwar and Prasad, 2016). Unique EVP allocates a company apart from its competitors and makes it more attractive to potential employees. The most important attributes of EVP are stability and job security, followed by relationships in the company, high remuneration, and benefits (Palen-Tondel and Smolbik-Jeczmiń, 2021). The value proposition is usually considered a set of associations and tangible and intangible offers that an employee receives from the company (Pawar and Charak, 2015).

Krummel et al. (2020) classified the needs of employees according to the factors of employer attractiveness using the ERG theory (existence, relatedness and growth) established by Alderfer (1969), which is a further development of Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory. According to this theory, a person has three basic needs that he or she seeks to satisfy, which include the needs for material existence, interpersonal relationships with other people, and the search for opportunities for personal development.

Valène (2024) considers EVP of employer's brand as an objectively defined set of values that the company offers its employees in the form of working and cultural environment, namely: the needs of material existence, consciousness-raising relationships with other people and society, opportunities for personal development, and work-life balance.

Nagpal A. and Nagpal G. (2019) showed that the EVP components directly affect employee's productivity, their loyalty to the employer, increase the value of fulfilling

promises to employees, and determine further communication in the company. It is undeniable that EVP employer's brand also focuses on its employees. Employees themselves have an impact on the formation of company values (Jha Sr. and Jha Sh., 2015). Satisfaction feedback is obtained through the following tools: anonymous audience surveys, interviews with dismissed employees, and analysis of labor market trends (Staniec and Kalińska-Kula, 2021). Quality interaction between the employer and the employee is the consistency between the desired and actual level of EVP.

The result of the research of HR consulting company "Sibson Consulting" there is the "Reward of Work" (ROW) model, which includes the winning elements and processes of creating an attractive workplace (Seemiler and Grace, 2017). This model is transformed into the employer's value proposition EVP.

Liu (2020) identified the following components of an EVP employer's brand as career development opportunities, personal value realization, corporate culture, financial remuneration, social responsibility, and workspace. First, the company's reputation determines the content of career pages and search sites pages, which in turn increases the EVP competitiveness (Liu et al., 2018).

Analysis of the literature has shown that most scientists consider that the main components of EVP are the level of salary, additional benefits (health insurance, bonuses), career development in the company, employee training and development system, the company's image as an employer, and comfortable workplace. Less important, but also influencing the choice of a future job, are the following factors: the company's business rating, the use of the latest technologies, company values, and the company's rating as an employer (Firsova et al., 2020; HR Liga, 2019; Liu, 2020; Nagpal A. and Nagpal G., 2019), 2019; Oberemchuk and Dehtiar, 2019; Palen-Tondel and Smolbik-Jeczmiern, 2021; Pawar and Charak, 2015; Samoliuk et al., 2021; Seemiler and Grace, 2017; Shanmuga, 2021; Valène, 2024; Volobaeva et al., 2021; Zhovtyak, 2021). In the context of the digitalization of society, reviews about the company on various portals are also important (Gross et al., 2023; Liu et al., 2018; Mir and Salo, 2024; Seemiler and Grace, 2017). Liu (2020) note that in the current conditions, social projects, positive environmental impact, social responsibility, corporate culture, and favourable company atmosphere EVP components are also important. The value proposition of work-life balance refers to harmony in the level of satisfaction from work and life. It emphasizes the importance of work-life balance, as well as the overall well-being of employees. The ability to choose a schedule that fits individual needs can increase employee loyalty and company attractiveness (Pawar and Charak, 2015; Valène, 2024).

The diversity of employer's brand EVP components suggests that they contain a wide range of economic, emotional, and functional characteristics. There is still no established opinion on which EVP components best reflect the content of the employer's brand. The issues of systematizing the EVP components of the employer's brand remain unresolved, which could be used as a basis for assessing its state of development and attractiveness in the labor market.

The purpose of the research is to identify the components of the employer's brand and to evaluate the employer's brand of the companies, which serves as the basis for substantiating the ways of its development.

Materials and methods

Materials

The assessment of the employer's brand development was conducted based on the survey of leading experts of the surveyed enterprises in the retail and catering sector by EVP components.

To assess the state of the employer's brand, 6 companies were selected that are popular and well-known among consumers and job candidates. The companies were selected according to the following criteria: scale of operations, size of the coverage network (number of stores), number of officially hired employees (more than 5000), number of internship offers and vacancies on career sites, availability of the department or specialists engaged in employer's brand management, and previous employer's brand ratings. Six companies were selected for the survey: ATB, Auchan, McDonald's, Epicenter K, METRO, Fozzy Group. Half of the selected companies (Auchan, McDonald's, METRO) are international and operating in many global markets.

The survey was conducted in 2022. There were 7 HR and Employer's Branding specialists who understand the company's internal culture and external perception of it as an employer were involved in the survey. Google Forms was conducted for the survey.

The topic of employer's brand development is narrow-purpose; the goal was to obtain a qualitative assessment of the state of employer's brand development rather than a full quantitative analysis, so the sample of experts is sufficient to obtain objective results. The data was obtained directly from professionals who work in this area that ensures its significance.

Methods

For generalized brand assessment, it is proposed to use the TOPSIS (Technique for Order Preference by Similarity to Ideal Solution) method, one of the analytical methods for making multi-criteria decisions (Madanchian and Taherdoost, 2023). This method is used to compare alternatives by means of similarity to the ideal and anti-ideal solutions, taking into account the weighting of the criteria. It allows generalizing the employer's brand assessment by many criteria, which are used as value propositions. TOPSIS is a convenient, practical method that has a simple mathematical apparatus and can be used with Excel.

The algorithm for using the TOPSIS method to assess an employer brand can be described as follows:

1. Identification of criteria: determination of key value propositions that are important for employer's brand assessing.
2. Conducting an expert survey by Likert scale on the level of development of each component of the employer's brand value proposition.
3. Normalize the data to bring the values of each criterion to the same scale to ensure an adequate level of comparison.
4. Creating a decision matrix: rows – the studied employers, columns – normalized values of the employer's brand of value proposition indicators.
5. Identification of the ideal and anti-ideal employer for each value proposition in order to determine the best and the worst characteristics.
6. Setting the weight for each criterion according to their importance in the assessment.
7. Calculate the similarity to the ideal solution: use the Euclidean distance to determine the similarity of each employer to the ideal and anti-ideal solution.
8. Determination of the employer's brand ranks by the criterion of generalized evaluation.

The best message about the state of each EVP component was identified in the previous questionnaire for the expert. Below are the linguistic characteristics of the best message about each EVP component:

1. Dress code: the company provides restrained, modern, comfortable, easy-to-clean work wear that is not paid for by the employee at their own expense or does not impose special requirements for it.
2. Social projects of the company: the company has social projects to support the environment, low-income groups, and IDPs.
3. Possibility of moving to another city/country: the company helps with relocation to another place of work, provides financial support.
4. Business rating of the company: the company is high in the ranking of the largest taxpayers, has a large network of retailers, a high level of market recognition among consumers and positive feedback on the company's activities.
5. Creativity/design of the office, comfortable workplace: modern design, provision of computer equipment (if necessary), open space for work and communication with the team, a place to relax.
6. Reviews about the company on various portals: positive feedback about work, teamwork, salary and financial bonuses.
7. Rating of the company as an employer: high positions in the rating of the most attractive employers according to the results of a survey of candidates in the labor market, the company's nomination for the implementation of a successful HR project.
8. Location of the office: proximity to a transport interchange or residential area, the ability to get to the place of work by public transport or with the help of a company shuttle service.
9. Additional benefits (insurance, healthcare, transportation, etc.): availability of health insurance, reimbursement of transportation costs, and a system of bonuses with gifts from the company and bonus programs.
10. Official employment: compliance of the employment relationship with the employee with the labor legislation.
11. Products/services created by the company: certification of products/services according to international standards, high requirements for employee service, creation of a positive experience and customer impression.
12. Company's values: the company's internal and external communication of values when making business decisions or hiring new employees, and the actions taken to increase loyalty to the company.
13. The company's image as an employer: a clearly formed positive feedback on the interaction with recruiters during the selection stages of the vacancy, positive feedback on working in the company.
14. Opportunity to gain international experience: the company's provision of opportunities to work on projects with colleagues or contractors from other countries, the availability of a relocation program during work or career development.
15. Training and development system in the company: a formed and structured training system from the initial position to a high-level manager, which is available to every employee of the company, there is a career development system.
16. Work schedule: the ability to combine work and study as needed, a flexible approach to planning work shifts for the month, the ability to work remotely (if the position requires).
17. Salary level: compliance with the average level of pay in the labor market or even higher, timely payment of wages, 100% official payment to the employee's bank account.

The EVP was assessed by Likert scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is completely inappropriate and 5 is completely appropriate. The greatest advantages of this scale are its ease of use and relative reliability even with a small number of judgments.

The next step in the proposed employer's brand assessment methodology is to normalize the identified expert assessments. The normalization of the matrix of the determined ratings is carried out by the formula (Madanchian and Taherdoost, 2023):

$$t_{ij} = \frac{x_{ij}}{\sqrt{\sum_{i=1}^n x_{ij}^2}} \quad (1)$$

where x_{ij} – expert evaluation j -th component of the EVP for i -th enterprise; i – is the index of the analyzed enterprises; $i=1 \dots n$ n – is the number of enterprises under study; j – is the index of the EVP, $j=1 \dots m$; m – is the number of EVP.

The next step in assessing the employer brand is to form a normalized dimensionless matrix, which is obtained because of the normalization behavior according to formula 1 and in which all values range from 0 to 1.

The weightiness of the criteria in the evaluation is determined by the formula (Madanchian and Taherdoost, 2023):

$$w_{ij} = \frac{M(x_{ij})}{\sum_{j=1}^m M(x_{ij})} \quad (2)$$

where $M(x_{ij})$ – expert evaluation of the weight j -th component of the EVP, $\sum_{j=1}^m w_{ij} = 1$.

The weight of EVPs in this study will be considered the same (0.059), since their number is large and it is impossible to identify the most significant ones.

The normalized scores are weighted according to the weighting of the EVP of the company. The normalized weighted scores are determined by the formula (Madanchian and Taherdoost, 2023):

$$T_{ij} = t_{ij} w_{ij} \quad (3)$$

where w_{ij} – is the weight j -th component of the EVP, $j=1, \dots, 17$.

The next step is to calculate the squares of the distances of the expert assessment of the value proposition components. To do this, we calculate the squares of the distances from the ideal level – T_j^+ (the maximum value of T_{ij} to j) and the anti-ideal level – T_j^- (the minimum value of T_{ij} to j).

For each component of the value proposition, we calculate S_i^+ and S_i^- by formulas (Madanchian and Taherdoost, 2023):

$$S_i^+ = \sqrt{\sum_{j=1}^n (T_{ij} - T_j^+)^2} \quad (4)$$

$$S_i^- = \sqrt{\sum_{j=1}^n (T_{ij} - T_j^-)^2} \quad (5)$$

The generalized employer's brand score is determined by the formula (Madanchian and Taherdoost, 2023):

$$R_i = \frac{S_i^-}{S_i^- + S_i^+} \quad (6)$$

The proposed model will help to assess the state of development of the employer's brand.

In the process of using the TOPSIS methodology, the appraisal of the ideal (T_j^+) and anti-ideal (T_j^-) solutions are used as intermediate estimates. Such estimates can be used to justify the directions of forming the desired employer's brand in the context of individual components of its EVP.

T_j^+ reflects the key strengths of each company; T_j^- identifies the weaknesses that are least attractive to experts and need to be improved; average values demonstrate the company's balance according to the certain criteria.

This data can help each company to focus on improving its weaknesses and assign its strengths. For this purpose, we used equal division of the T_{ij} scores into 3 categories: strengths; average values; and weaknesses.

The interval for dividing the scores was determined by the formula:

$$(T_{ij\ max} - T_{ij\ min})/3 = I$$

The interval of EVP strengths was determined by the formula:

$$T_{ij\ max} \div T_{ij\ max} - I$$

The interval of average EVP values was determined by the formula:

$$T_{ij\ max} - I \div T_{ij\ max} - 2 * I$$

The interval of EVP weaknesses was determined by the formula:

$$T_{ij\ max} - 2 * I \div T_{ij\ max} - 3 * I$$

Hypothesis

The main hypothesis of the research is that in order to determine whether the current state of the employer's brand meets the desired views of the target audience, it is advisable to form the list of EVP brand, assess the level of their development, conduct a generalized assessment of the employer's brand in terms of all EVP components development and determine which EVP components are strong, medium or weak points of the employer's brand development.

Results and discussion

Assessing the components of the EVP employer's brand.

The purpose of the employer brand rating is to study the level of attractiveness of the EVP for candidates (Fedulova et al., 2024). Based on the results of the literature review and job search websites, main features and characteristics of companies that help them form the employer's brand and create its attractiveness in the labor market for job candidates the list of EVPs was formed, (Table 2).

The average expert assessment of EVPs of the surveyed companies is shown in Table 3.

Based on the data obtained on the average expert assessments of EVP employer's brand components for the surveyed companies, the following conclusions can be made. The main advantages of the employer's brand of the surveyed companies are official employment (4.27); products and services (4.07); and social projects (3.97) of the companies. Thus, the surveyed companies provide transparency and stability, are associated with quality products or services, which also increases their attractiveness as employers, and social responsibility is the important element for the employer's image.

The weaknesses of the employer's brand of the surveyed companies are the opportunity to gain international experience (1.42) and the possibility of relocation to another city/country (1.55). This indicates limited globalization or lack of international career opportunities in the companies, as well as the local orientation of the surveyed companies.

Table 3

Averaged expert assessment of EVP of employer brand of studied companies

Components of the EVP	ATB	Auchan	METRO	McDonald's	Epicenter K	Fozzy Group	Average value
Dress code	3.1	4.2	3.2	3.3	2.1	4.1	3.33
Social projects of company	4.1	5.0	4.1	3.3	3.1	4.2	3.97
The possibility of moving to another city/country	1.4	2.4	2.2	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.55
Business rating of company	4.1	4.3	3.1	4.1	3.2	4.1	3.82
Office creativity/design, comfortable workplace	3.3	4.4	3.2	2.1	3.1	4.1	3.37
Reviews about company on various portals	3.1	3.1	3.2	2.2	2.1	3.1	2.80
Rating of company as employer	3.4	3.2	3.2	2.3	2.1	3.1	2.88
Office location	4.1	4.1	2.1	2.3	3.1	4.2	3.32
Additional benefits (insurance, transportation, etc.)	3.3	4.1	4.1	3.1	3.1	4.2	3.65
Official employment	5.0	5.0	5.0	3.1	3.2	4.3	4.27
Products/services that the company creates	4.4	5.0	4.2	3.2	3.2	4.4	4.07
Company values	3.1	5.0	4.2	3.3	3.4	4.2	3.87
The image of company as employer	3.3	4.1	3.1	3.1	2.1	3.1	3.13
Opportunity to gain international experience	1.4	1.7	2.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.42
The system of training and development in company	3.3	5.0	3.1	3.2	2.4	3.1	3.35
Work schedule	3.3	5.0	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.1	3.50
Salary level	4.1	3.1	4.1	3.1	3.3	3.1	3.47

Source: Own study based on expert assessment

The company's rating as an employer (2.88) and reviews on portals (2.80) are relatively low, points out the defects in the perception of the company among employees and potential job seekers. This requires working on the corporate image. Fringe benefits (3.65) are relatively high, but there is still space for improvement in working conditions, which could increase the overall brand appeal.

Generalized employer's brand assessment.

The company's rating as an employer is an important indicator of attractiveness for candidates, as it is a generalized opinion of job seekers and employees about working for the

company. Thus, employer's brand assessment is the key element of human resource management strategy and corporate management in general (Tanwar and Prasad, 2016).

Table 4 shows the weighted normalized matrix of experts' ratings and the ideal T_j^+ and anti-ideal T_j^- appraisal.

Table 4

Normalized weighted matrix of expert opinions and T_j^+ , T_j^-

Components of the EVP	ATB	Auchan	METRO	McDonald's	Epicenter K	Fozzy Group	T_j^+	T_j^-
Dress code	0.022	0.030	0.023	0.023	0.015	0.029	0.030	0.015
Social projects of company	0.025	0.030	0.025	0.020	0.019	0.025	0.030	0.019
The possibility of moving to another city/country	0.020	0.035	0.032	0.016	0.016	0.016	0.035	0.016
Business rating of company	0.026	0.027	0.019	0.026	0.020	0.026	0.027	0.019
Office creativity/design, comfortable workplace	0.023	0.031	0.022	0.015	0.022	0.029	0.031	0.015
Reviews about company on various portals	0.026	0.026	0.027	0.019	0.018	0.026	0.027	0.018
Rating of company as employer	0.028	0.026	0.026	0.019	0.017	0.025	0.028	0.017
Office location	0.029	0.029	0.015	0.016	0.022	0.029	0.029	0.015
Additional benefits (insurance, transportation)	0.022	0.027	0.027	0.020	0.020	0.027	0.027	0.020
Official employment	0.028	0.028	0.028	0.017	0.018	0.024	0.028	0.017
Products/services that company creates	0.026	0.029	0.024	0.019	0.019	0.026	0.029	0.019
Company values	0.019	0.031	0.026	0.020	0.021	0.026	0.031	0.019
The image of company as employer	0.025	0.031	0.023	0.023	0.016	0.023	0.031	0.016
Opportunity to gain international experience	0.023	0.028	0.034	0.018	0.018	0.018	0.034	0.018
System of training and development in company	0.023	0.035	0.022	0.022	0.017	0.022	0.035	0.017
Work schedule	0.022	0.034	0.021	0.022	0.022	0.021	0.034	0.021
Salary level	0.028	0.021	0.028	0.021	0.023	0.021	0.028	0.021

Source: Own study based on expert assessment

Table 5 shows the results of the generalized employer's brand assessment using the formula (6).

Table 5

Generalized evaluation of the employer brand R_i

Indicators	ATB	Auchan	METRO	McDonald's	Epicenter K	Fozzy Group
$S_i +$	0.0314	0.0097	0.0296	0.0464	0.0494	0.0341
$S_i -$	0.0308	0.0509	0.0348	0.0144	0.0103	0.0332
R_i	0.4954	0.8396	0.5405	0.2369	0.1720	0.4934
Ranking of employers by level of brand attractiveness	3	1	2	5	6	4

Source: Own study based on expert assessment

Auchan is the most attractive employer according to the results of the assessment ($R_i = 0.8396$). The employer's brand is formed among the target students during the educational process, i.e. the image of the company is formed before the job search. This is the most competitive approach compared to other selected companies. The second place is METRO ($R_i = 0.5405$), which attracts students with the opportunity to get managerial position and experience in international project after the internship. ATB ($R_i = 0.4954$) is the third most attractive employer, offering the highest salary among all other selected employers. This criterion is one of the most important when choosing your future job. Fozzy Group ($R_i = 0.4934$) ranks the 4th place in the ranking of employers surveyed. The company offers jobs not only in the retail chain but also in the office team. The competitive advantage of Fozzy Group is a quick opportunity to work and develop according to your future speciality, comparable to other selected employers. McDonald's ($R_i = 0.2369$) is losing its attractiveness for employment due to the intense workload. The least attractive employer is Epicenter K ($R_i = 0.1720$), as formed EVP are not aimed at fast and effective attraction of candidates.

Liu (2020) considered the model for assessing the level of competitiveness of employer's EVP, which is based on the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) method. However, the author determined the EVP design and employer's attractiveness only from the perspective of online recruiting. Pawar (2016) proposed the employer's branding process, but this process did not take into account the characteristics and level of individual components development of EVP employer's brand. Shanmuga (2021) considered the comparison of work life balance, job security, leadership style, working environment and in which area employees get more attractive, but the issues of assessing the state development of these EVP components were reserved.

Most scientists in their researches of employer's brand limiting themselves by the taking into account EVP from the perspective of job seekers (Volobaieva et al., 2021) or existing staff (Staniec and Kalińska-Kula, 2021; Tanwar and Prasad, 2016). However, in our opinion, it would be advisable to propose the approach to assessing the employer's brand in terms of individual EVP components development from the point of view of leading experts in this field.

Table 6 shows the categories of employer's brand assessment components.

Table 6

Categories of strong, medium and weak values of employer brand EVP components

Components of the EVP	Strengths	Medium	Weaknesses
Dress code	$0.015 < T_{ij} < 0.020$	$0.021 < T_{ij} < 0.025$	$0.026 < T_{ij} < 0.03$
Social projects of company	$0.019 < T_{ij} < 0.022$	$0.023 < T_{ij} < 0.026$	$0.027 < T_{ij} < 0.03$
Possibility of moving to another city/country	$0.016 < T_{ij} < 0.022$	$0.023 < T_{ij} < 0.029$	$0.03 < T_{ij} < 0.035$
Business rating of company	$0.019 < T_{ij} < 0.022$	$0.023 < T_{ij} < 0.024$	$0.025 < T_{ij} < 0.027$
Office creativity/design, comfortable workplace	$0.015 < T_{ij} < 0.020$	$0.021 < T_{ij} < 0.025$	$0.026 < T_{ij} < 0.031$
Reviews about company on various portals	$0.018 < T_{ij} < 0.021$	$0.022 < T_{ij} < 0.024$	$0.025 < T_{ij} < 0.027$
Rating of the company as employer	$0.017 < T_{ij} < 0.021$	$0.022 < T_{ij} < 0.024$	$0.025 < T_{ij} < 0.028$
Office location	$0.015 < T_{ij} < 0.020$	$0.021 < T_{ij} < 0.025$	$0.026 < T_{ij} < 0.029$
Additional benefits (insurance, transportation, etc.)	$0.02 < T_{ij} < 0.023$	$0.024 < T_{ij} < 0.025$	$0.026 < T_{ij} < 0.027$
Official employment	$0.017 < T_{ij} < 0.021$	$0.022 < T_{ij} < 0.024$	$0.025 < T_{ij} < 0.028$
Products/services that company creates	$0.019 < T_{ij} < 0.022$	$0.023 < T_{ij} < 0.026$	$0.027 < T_{ij} < 0.029$
Company values	$0.019 < T_{ij} < 0.023$	$0.024 < T_{ij} < 0.027$	$0.028 < T_{ij} < 0.031$
The image of company as an employer	$0.016 < T_{ij} < 0.021$	$0.022 < T_{ij} < 0.026$	$0.027 < T_{ij} < 0.031$
Opportunity to gain international experience	$0.018 < T_{ij} < 0.023$	$0.024 < T_{ij} < 0.029$	$0.03 < T_{ij} < 0.034$
System of training and development in company	$0.017 < T_{ij} < 0.023$	$0.024 < T_{ij} < 0.029$	$0.03 < T_{ij} < 0.035$
Work schedule	$0.021 < T_{ij} < 0.025$	$0.026 < T_{ij} < 0.029$	$0.03 < T_{ij} < 0.034$
Salary level	$0.021 < T_{ij} < 0.024$	$0.025 < T_{ij} < 0.026$	$0.027 < T_{ij} < 0.028$

Source: Own study based on expert assessment

Table 7 shows, based on the assessment categories (Table 6), which components of the employer brand assessment are classified as strengths, weaknesses, or average values for each company.

Companies should pay attention to the components marked in dark grey as the most vulnerable aspects of the brand. Improving these aspects will help to reduce negative brand perceptions among potential employees.

Table 7

Heat matrix identifies strong, medium and weak values of employer brand EVP

Components of the EVP	ATB	Auchan	METRO	McDonald's	Epicenter K	Fozy Group
Dress code	0.022	0.030	0.023	0.023	0.015	0.029
Social projects of company	0.025	0.030	0.025	0.020	0.019	0.025
The possibility of moving to another city/country	0.020	0.035	0.032	0.016	0.016	0.016
Business rating of company	0.026	0.027	0.019	0.026	0.020	0.026
Office creativity/design, comfortable workplace	0.023	0.031	0.022	0.015	0.022	0.029
Reviews about the company on various portals	0.026	0.026	0.027	0.019	0.018	0.026
Rating of the company as employer	0.028	0.026	0.026	0.019	0.017	0.025
Office location	0.029	0.029	0.015	0.016	0.022	0.029
Additional benefits (insurance, transportation, etc.)	0.022	0.027	0.027	0.020	0.020	0.027
Official employment	0.028	0.028	0.028	0.017	0.018	0.024
Products/services that company creates	0.026	0.029	0.024	0.019	0.019	0.026
Company values	0.019	0.031	0.026	0.020	0.021	0.026
The image of the company as employer	0.025	0.031	0.023	0.023	0.016	0.023
Opportunity to gain international experience	0.023	0.028	0.034	0.018	0.018	0.018
System of training and development in company	0.023	0.035	0.022	0.022	0.017	0.022
Work schedule	0.022	0.034	0.021	0.022	0.022	0.021
Salary level	0.028	0.021	0.028	0.021	0.023	0.021

Source: Own study based on expert assessment

Notes:

	Strengths		Medium value		Weaknesses
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For the components marked in white, it is worth maintaining the current level or investing in further development. Intensifying strengths will help the company to stand out in the labor market and increase its brand attractiveness.

Components with medium values (light grey) also deserve attention to improve competitiveness. In these cases, it is possible to focus on improving conditions that are already at a satisfactory level but still have potential for improvement.

For ATB, the strengths of the employer's brand are the company's business rating, reviews of the company on various portals; the company is rating as an employer, office

location, official employment, products/services created by the company, and salary levels. Weak messages of the employer's brand include the possibility of relocation to another place/country, company values, additional benefits (insurance, workplace, etc.), the opportunity to obtain international experience, training and development system, and work schedule.

The worst component of Auchan's EVP is the level of salary. Other components of the employer's brand are mostly well developed.

The best components of METRO's EVP are the opportunity to obtain international experience, the possibility of relocation to another city or country, official employment, salary level, additional benefits (insurance, etc.), reviews about the company on various portals, and the company's rating as an employer. The worst components of METRO's EVP are the company's business rating, office location, training and development system, and work schedule.

McDonald's has a high level of EVP in the business rating component. The dress code and the company's image as an employer have an average level. Other components have a low level of development in the labor market. Therefore, McDonald's needs to identify the reasons for this situation and improve the competitiveness of the employer's brand to better attract potential employees.

Epicenter K does not have a high-level of EVP. Epicenter K's mid-level employer's brand EVP includes office creativity/design, comfortable workplace, and office location. Other components need to be improved to increase the attractiveness of the employer's brand.

Fozzy Group's employer's brand strengths include dress code, company's business rating, office creativity/design, and comfortable workplace, reviews of the company on various portals, rating of the company as an employer, office location, and additional benefits. Weaknesses of the brand include the possibility of relocation to another city/country, the opportunity to obtain international experience, the training and development system, work schedule, and salary level.

Suggestions for the development of the employer's brand for each company should focus on maintaining strengths, improving medium strengths, and eliminating weaknesses. Such analysis helps to identify the primary problems faced by the companies, improve their image and create more attractive employer's brand.

Conclusions

It has been determined that in order to form an employer's brand, it is necessary to take into account and balance the qualities and characteristics that are important for potential job candidates. Based on the results of the analysis, the list of the main EVP employer's brands, which are important when choosing a job and internship, has been formed.

The research made it possible to use the employer's brand assessment methodology, which is based on the TOPSIS multi-criteria methodology, which includes the following steps:

- allocation of components of EVP employer's brand;
- selection of experts;
- experts assessment of the level of components of EVP employer's brand development on the Likert scale;
- normalization of the obtained estimates;

- construction of decision matrix, in which the rows show the components of the EVP employer's brand, and the columns show the surveyed enterprises;
- determination of the ideal and anti-ideal employer in terms of each component of EVP;
- calculation of the Euclidean distance to determine the degree of each employer compliance with the ideal and anti-ideal solution;
- calculation of generalized assessment of the employer's brand development level;
- establishing the employer's rank according to the generalized assessment of employer's brand;
- categorization of EVP components of the employer's brand into three levels: high, medium, and low;
- Identification of advantages and disadvantages in the employer's brand development according to the results of dividing the EVP components into strong, medium and weak points.

The main advantages of the proposed approach are the ability to calculate a generalized assessment of an employer's brand by the level of EVP components development and understanding the weaknesses and strengths for forming an effective and competitive employer's brand.

This approach can be used to substantiate the directions of employer's brand development that is important for potential job seekers.

The hypothesis has shown that assessing the level of employer's brand development at the surveyed enterprises allows substantiating the directions of its development and forming the desired level of employer's brand for the target audience.

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