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# **The impact of employer branding on job application intention: Evidence from business undergraduates in Vietnam**

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## **Abstract**

*This study aims to figure out the impact of employer branding perception on job application intention of business undergraduates in three main provinces of Southeast Vietnam, including Binh Duong, Dong Nai, and Ho Chi Minh City. The result shows that Task Attractiveness, Payment Attractiveness, and Working Atmosphere positively affect business undergraduates' job application intention. However, our findings also show that the participants do not put a lot of attention on the Work-life Comfort factor and the Career Opportunities factor.*

**Key words:** Employer Branding, Working Atmosphere, Career Opportunities, Work-life Comfort, Task Attractiveness, Payment Attractiveness, Intention to Apply

JEL Classification: M12, M51; M54; O15

## **1. Introduction**

Recruiting is a critical task for practitioners in human resource management (HRM) which includes multiple steps in order to finally get potential employees (Barber,

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1998). Its role is even more significant in case of the existence highly competitive talent pool (Aiman-Smith et al., 2001). A report of Asia region showed that corporations are coping with labour shortage, especially skilled employees, due to lacking of well-trained employees and changing demand of workforce (Fransen, 2016). Hence, companies are now paying more attention to building stronger HRM system, specifically recruiting tool to get more talented employees (Sil, 2017).

Vietnam - as an emerging market in Southeast Asia region - is no doubt facing the same issue since the Vietnamese government applied the Renovation (Meyer & Nguyen, 2005). Accompanied with attracting foreign products (Nguyen & Huynh, 2022) and green consumption (Ho & Huynh, 2022) is foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows and high demand for laborers. In the past two decades, more and more FDI inflows have come to Vietnam to seek opportunities for cheap and young workforce, as well as a new emerging market. Especially, the Southern key economic region is a leading zone for advanced manufacturing and is encouraging investments in knowledge-based and high-tech industries and services in Vietnam. Consequently, domestic and oversea employers have to fight with each other to get talented employees. Building a strong employer brand as a credible employer and a good place to work is a great incentive so that they can pull talented candidates to join their team.

Employer branding of a company prefers to set of actions that generate the envisioned benefit or so, in order to increase good perception of the potential candidates which then motivates them to work for a company/organization (Berthon et al., 2005; Ewing et al., 2002). This study aims to investigate how the five factor of employer branding (Working atmosphere, Career opportunities, Work-life comfort, Task attractiveness, and Payment attractiveness) affect the job application intention of business undergraduates in three main provinces of Vietnam's Southern key economic

region, including Ho Chi Minh City, Binh Duong, and Dong Nai. The findings are expected to give more evidence for HRM practitioners to design strategic plan to effectively attract employees for their enterprises. This paper also provides a case study in the field for an example of emerging and transitioning economies.

## **2. Literature review and hypotheses**

### ***2.1. Intention to apply for job***

Application intention initially prefers to passive thinking about the company which then motivates candidates taking further actions involving actively pursuit for a job (Highhouse et al., 2003). Although it is difficult for candidates in examining the job themselves and the brand behind than the attitudes of current recruiters during interview period, they still keen on perceiving future job attributes for application intention (Powell, 1984). Therefore, building a strong employer brand is significant in order to attract potential candidates. In the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991), intention plays a central role which is assumed to hold all motivational factors to perform a behavior. It is no doubt that the greater intention rate to apply for the job, it may lead to a higher chance that candidates will make the decision on applying for that job. In spite of the fact that there are several factors that had been proven affecting intention to apply for a job (such as company size, recruiter skills – recruiting practices, and stock investment support...), the employer branding factors play an important role in attracting potential candidates (Collins & Stevens, 2002; Harris & Fink, 1987; Lemmink et al., 2003; Powell, 1984; Uggerslev et al., 2012). Previous studies have shown that employer brand factors positively affect intention to apply for job vacancies (Baum & Kabst, 2013; Collins, 2007; Collins & Stevens, 2002; Gomes & Neves, 2011; Highhouse et al., 2003; Lievens & Highhouse, 2003; Powell, 1984; Taylor & Bergmann, 1987). In this study, we focus of five dimensions of the employer

brand, including Working atmosphere, Career opportunities, Work-life comfort, Task, and Payment attractiveness.

## ***2.2. Employer branding***

Firms usually use their branding strategy to build corporate image and to enhance sales volume, it can also be used in the human resources field which is called 'Employer Branding'. However, it has just started to be closely looked into quite recently (Baum & Kabst, 2013; Collins, 2007). Employer branding is defined as "the package of functional, economic and psychological benefits provided by employment, and identified with the employing company" (Ambler & Barrow, 1996). According to Ewing et al. (2002), employer branding is a critical task which is related with "building an image in the minds of the potential labor market that the company, above all others, is a great place to work". Similar to building the product branding which to attract outsiders, employer branding is created by the company to attract potential employees via "their perceptions of the attributes of the firm, the perceived benefits, and their assessment of the brand image" (Backhaus, 2004). On top of that, the application of employer branding to enhance intention to apply is widely used as a HRM tool in different industries (such as engineering, banking, military, technology and business administration), testing on undergraduates as well as current employees (Baum & Kabst, 2013; Collins, 2007; Lievens & Highhouse, 2003; Lievens et al., 2005).

## ***2.3. Previous studies on the impact of employer branding on job application intention***

### ***2.3.1. Working atmosphere***

Working atmosphere or working environment is defined as the collective set of "knowledge sharing among team members, motivation, and procedural justice that

encourage employees to produce more creative ideas” (Tsai et al., 2015). It is considered as an important sub-factor while making a job application decision (Powell, 1984). Particularly, the working atmosphere is among the strongest factors that affect intention to apply for a job (Baum & Kabst, 2013; Turban et al., 1998). Several studies have proven that a good working environment strongly impacts the applicants’ intention. According to Chapman et al. (2005), the job seekers put a lot of attention on perceived future work environment while considering whether to apply for the position. Rau and Hyland (2003) claim that applicants will be more attracted by a good working atmosphere, especially when they perceive the job is done by a positive teamwork.

Hypothesis 1: Working atmosphere has a positive effect on the intention to apply for a job in the perception of business administration undergraduates.

### *2.3.2. Career opportunities*

Career opportunity is defined as the perception of employees about employers’ support such as training courses and opportunities may be provided for their future career development (Kraimer et al., 2011). In the research of Lievens and Highhouse (2003), 275 final year students and 124 bank workers were asked to scale several factors affecting their perceived attractiveness of an employer. It showed that they were quite attracted to the employers who provided them ideal career opportunities. Moreover, various researchers have proved that career opportunity plays an important role in the mind of participants while considering whether to apply for a job (Baum & Kabst, 2013; Berthon et al., 2005; Highhouse et al., 2003; Lievens, 2007; and Lievens & Highhouse, 2003).

Hypothesis 2: Career opportunity has a positive effect on the application intention for a job in the perception of business administration undergraduates.

### *2.3.3. Work-life comfort*

Work-life comfort is explained as the individual perception that work and non-work activities are compatible and promote growth in accordance with an individual's current life priorities (Kalliath & Brough, 2015). According to Carless and Wintle (2007), companies improving the work-life balance of their employees indicate that they really care about their staffs' living. Additionally, the Baby Boomers are quite loyal to the company, and are most workaholic and stable in the organization. Whereas, the millennial generation tends to change company to company until they find the one that fit them, and put more attention on work-life comfort (Gursoy, Maier, & Chi, 2008; Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010). In a cross-nation study, the undergraduates in India is attracted by an employer that provides a good sense of work-life balance, but the undergraduates in China do not worry much about this factor (Baum & Kabst, 2013).

Hypothesis 3: Work-life comfort positively affects the intention to apply for a job in the perception of business administration undergraduates.

### *2.3.4. Task attractiveness*

According to Ryan and Deci (2000), task attractiveness is defined as a set of tasks or assignments that help employees to reach their self-motivated stage so that they could happily accomplish the assignments (Bailey & Fessler, 2011). It will be measured by various items, such as challenging/ interesting assignments, latitude for independent creative work, and chance to use own ability (Baum & Kabst, 2013). The candidates seem to be attracted by a more challenging position which they can develop themselves as they work, and the job attractiveness was really correlated to the job acceptance (Turban et al., 1998). On top of that, Vietnam undergraduates are struggling in finding the right job with their academic knowledge, and a great deal

number of fresh undergraduates has to take alternatives instead of their desired career path. Therefore, task attractiveness is important for undergraduates to choose a job.

Hypothesis 4: Task attractiveness positively affects job application intention in the perception of business administration undergraduates.

#### *2.3.5. Payment attractiveness*

An attractive payment is defined as the market wage or higher salary payment plus other related benefits (for example insurance, paid-time off and retirement plan) offered by the employer to compensate for employee effort (Sheffield, 2016).

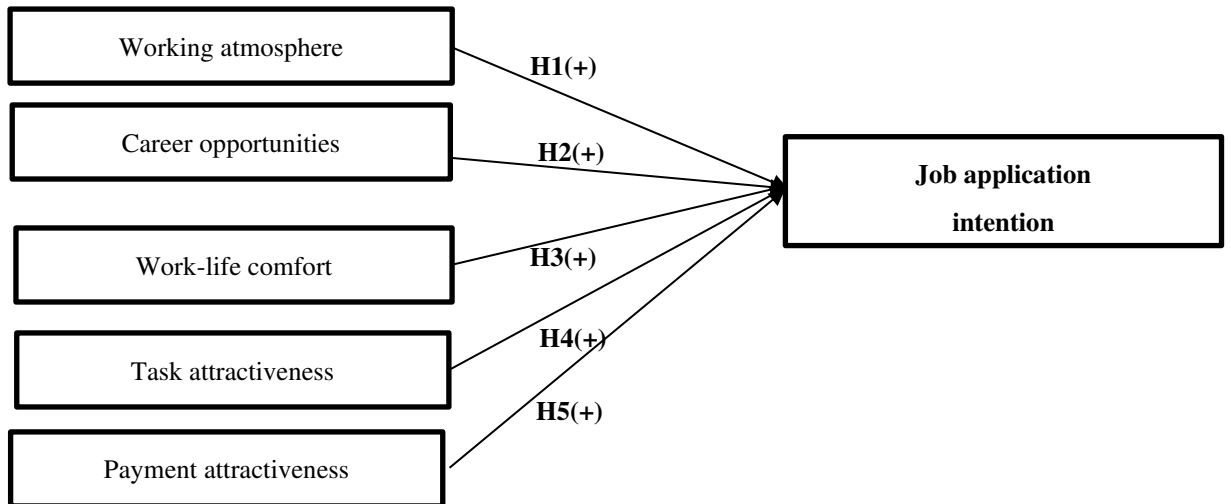
Although several empirical research have claimed that the wage and benefit are quite impactful on how candidates intend to pursue the job (Aiman-Smith et al., 2001), Baum and Kabst (2013) proved that the payment attractiveness factors affects inconsistently among surveyed nations. To be more detailed, Hungarian students had a higher impact level when it came to payment, while Chinese and Indian students do not solely focus on payment attractiveness. This could be explained by accessing the different cultural and economic factors (Baum & Kabst, 2013). Kakinuma (2015) claimed that the talented Vietnamese freshly undergraduates are not only attracted by higher payment, but they also tend to chase for training, development, and promotional opportunities.

Hypothesis 5: Payment attractiveness positively affects the application intention for a job in the perception of business administration undergraduates.

#### **2.4. Research model**

Based on Baum and Kabst (2013) and previous studies discussed in the literature review above, we propose a conceptual framework to analyse the impact of employer branding on job application intention of business undergraduates in Vietnam as follows:





**Figure 1:** Proposed conceptual framework

### 3. Data and research methodology

In this research, we apply quantitative research method examine the impacts of employer branding with five facets on job application intention of business undergraduates in three main provinces of Vietnam’s Southern key economic region, including Ho Chi Minh City, Binh Duong, and Dong Nai. Online survey and face-to-face survey with the non-probability convenience sampling method have been utilized to collect data.

We collect data from 874 business administration undergraduates in Ho Chi Minh City, Binh Duong, and Dong Nai. We use the Likert scale to measure one dependent variable, and five independent variables. Likert scale is a five-point scale to allow the individual to express how much they agree or disagree with a particular statement including 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, and 5 = Strongly Agree (Saul, 2019). The measurement for all variables is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1.** The measurement for independent variables.

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Measurement</b>	<b>Items</b>	<b>Source</b>
<b>Independent Variable</b>	<b>Working Atmosphere (WA)</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A job at this organization would have a good working environment.</li> <li>2. I may have competent and sociable co-workers there.</li> <li>3. The organization may have a pleasant work environment.</li> <li>4. I believe that I can work in this working environment.</li> </ol>	Collins, 2007; Harris & Fink, 1987
	<b>Career Opportunities (CO)</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. This organization has good opportunities for career advancement.</li> <li>2. Employees in this organization are frequently promoted.</li> <li>3. This organization may provide opportunities for learning.</li> <li>4. The training is available at the company.</li> </ol>	Collins, 2007; Harris & Fink, 1987; Lievens & Highhouse, 2003
	<b>Work-life Comfort (WLC)</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. This organization would provide jobs with good prospects for work-life balance.</li> <li>2. This company is close to where I live.</li> <li>3. This company has flexible working hours.</li> <li>4. This company provides a job that fits with my lifestyle.</li> </ol>	Collins, 2007; Harris & Fink, 1987; Lievens & Highhouse, 2003

	<p><b>Task Attractiveness (TA)</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A job at this organization would have interesting assignments and responsibilities.</li> <li>2. This organization would provide me with the type of job that I want.</li> <li>3. When you work there, it will always be busy.</li> <li>4. When I work there, I will have opportunities to use abilities.</li> <li>5. I may have freedom to do the job my own way.</li> </ol>	<p>Collins, 2007; Harris &amp; Fink, 1987; Lievens &amp; Highhouse, 2003</p>
	<p><b>Payment Attractiveness (PA)</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A job at this organization would have above average pay.</li> <li>2. This organization would provide me with above average benefits.</li> <li>3. Salaries are high in this company.</li> <li>4. This company has a good benefit package.</li> </ol>	<p>Collins, 2007; Harris &amp; Fink, 1987; Lievens &amp; Highhouse, 2003</p>
<p><b>Dependent Variable</b></p>	<p><b>Application Intention (AI)</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I would make this company one of my first choices as an employer.</li> <li>2. If this company invited me for a job interview, I would go.</li> <li>3. I would exert a great deal of effort to work for this company.</li> <li>4. I would recommend the company to a</li> </ol>	<p>Highhouse et al., 2003</p>

		friend looking for a job.	
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#### **4. Results and discussions**

There were a total of 900 respondents the online and offline surveys. However, however, some observations were removed to improve the reliability of the sample. Ultimately, we got 874 valid answers from business administration undergraduates. We employed Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) software version 20.0 for data analysis with procedure including descriptive statistics, reliability test, exploratory factor analysis (EFA), and multiple linear regression.

##### ***4.1. Descriptive statistics***

In 874 respondents, females accounted for 57.8% while 42.2% were males. In term of age group, we selected undergraduates which are from 21 to 26 years old. The undergraduates who aged 21-22, 23-24, and 25-26 were accounted for 54.6%, 35.3%, and 10.1 % of the whole sample, respectively. In term of provinces, 28.4%, 52.3%, and 19.3% of respondents come from Ho Chi Minh City, Binh Duong, and Dong Nai, respectively. Working experience is also included in order to check if there are any differences in the time of working experience and the application intention. It is shown that 21.5% of participants have more than a year experience, 43.8% of them have no experience, and 34.7% has working experience from 6 months to a year.

##### ***4.2. Reliability test***

As proposed by to Hair (1998), we use Cronbach's alpha to check the reliability of items for each variable. Reliability Test is the degree of consistency of a measure. A test will be reliable when it gives the same repeated result under the same conditions. According to Hair (1998) and Hair et al. (2010), Cronbach's Alpha must be larger than 0.6 which illustrate the strength of the reliability of measure is acceptable. The

reliability tests for all variables are reported in Table 2. It can be clearly seen that the Cronbach's Alpha values of all variables are from 0.698 to 0.891, showing that items to measure each variable are reliable.

**Table 2.** Cronbach's Alpha values and Item-Total statistics for all variables.

Items	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
WA1	13.356	2.339	.587	.749
WA2	12.877	2.342	.675	.702
WA3	12.723	2.378	.568	.729
WA5	12.989	2.573	.672	.735
<b>WA</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha of WA: .768</b>			
CO1	11.264	2.125	.537	.638
CO2	11.753	2.627	.638	.732
CO3	11.086	2.321	.623	.748
CO4	11.762	2.563	.647	.659
<b>CO</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha of CO: .752</b>			
WLC1	9.114	2.321	.645	.787
WLC2	9.521	2.416	.598	.792
WLC3	9.381	2.632	.673	.764
WLC4	9.495	2.537	.631	.786
<b>WLC</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha of WLC: .805</b>			
TA1	12.144	2.019	.516	.621
TA2	12.362	2.373	.528	.695
TA3	12.041	2.285	.642	.656
TA4	12.151	2.497	.583	.689
TA5	12.875	2.252	.574	.678
<b>TA</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha of TA: .698</b>			
PA1	9.154	2.229	.674	.872
PA2	9.942	2.512	.735	.797
PA3	9.493	2.527	.721	.853
PA4	9.492	2.172	.695	.771
<b>PA</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha of PA: .891</b>			
AI1	10.103	2.147	0.562	.811
AI2	10.381	2.284	0.664	.798

AI3	10.424	2.097	0.717	.794
AI4	10.322	2.315	0.633	.805
<b>AI</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha of PA: .825</b>			

### 4.3. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA)

EFA is a statistical technique to reduce a set of  $k$  observed items into a set of  $F$  (with  $F < k$ ) of more significant factors. For example, instead of going to study 20 small characteristics ( $k$ ) of an object, we can study only 5 major features ( $F$ ), in each of these major features there are 4 small characteristics that are correlated with each other.

With reliability test by using the Cronbach Alpha, we assess the relationship among items in the same factor, not considering the relationship among all the observed items in all factors. Meanwhile, EFA examines the relationship among items in all different factors in order to detect observed items which are loaded in many factors or observed items which are misaligned in the factor. EFA ensures the convergence and the segregation of items. Items that measure the same variable will converge into the same factor, while items that measure different variables will be segregated into different factors. Therefore, we must consider the two important values: the convergent value and separate value. The convergent value: observable items with the same properties will converge into the same factor, and these items will be grouped in the same column in the rotated component matrix. The separate value: observable items that converge into one factor must be distinguished from those items that converge into other factors, and each group of items will be separated into separate columns in the rotated component matrix.

There are five criteria that must be considered in EFA (Kaiser, 1974; Henson & Roberts, 2006). *First, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin* (KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy) is an index used to consider the appropriateness of factor analysis. The

value of KMO must reach a value of 0.5 or more ( $0.5 \leq \text{KMO} \leq 1$ ) which is the *sufficient condition* for factor analysis to be appropriate (*EFA is appropriate*). If this value is less than 0.5, then factor analysis is likely not suitable for the data. *Second, the Bartlett's test* (Bartlett's Test of Sphericity) is used to see if the observed items in the factor are correlated or not. We should note, the *necessary condition* to apply factor analysis is that the observed items reflecting different aspects of the same factor must be correlated with each other (*data is appropriate*). This point is related to the convergence value in the EFA analysis mentioned above. Therefore, if the test shows no statistical significance, then factor analysis should not be applied to the factor under consideration. The Bartlett's test has statistical significance (sig Bartlett's Test < 0.05), showing that observed items are correlated with each other in the factor or (the null hypothesis is: there is no correlation among items in the factor). *Third, the Eigenvalue* is a commonly used criterion to determine the number of factors in EFA. With this criterion, only factors with Eigenvalue  $\geq 1$  are kept in the analytical model. *Fourth, the Total Variance Explained* must be  $\geq 50\%$  to show that the EFA model is suitable. *Fifth, the Factor Loading*, also known as the factor weight, represents the correlation between the observed items and the factor. The higher the factor loading coefficient, the greater the correlation between the observed items and the factor, and vice versa. The minimum condition for an observed item to be kept is that its factor loading must be: i)  $\geq 0.5$  for data with 120 - 350 observations; ii)  $\geq 0.3$  for data with above 350 observations.

#### 4.3.1. Dependent variable (AI)

**Table 3a.** KMO and Bartlett's Test for Application Intention.

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	.785
Bartlett's Test of Approx. Chi-Square	185.316

Sphericity	df	6
	Sig.	.000

The KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy is 0.785 ( $0.5 < \text{KMO} < 1.00$ ), indicating that the sample is adequate for EFA. Furthermore, the Sig. of Bartlett's Test of Sphericity is 0.000, indicating that the items are related to each other within a factor and that data is suitable for EFA.

**Table 3b.** Total variance explained for Application Intention.

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	3.124	60.313	60.313	2.413	59.783	59.783
2	.612	14.842	75.156			
3	.593	13.308	88.464			
4	.485	11.536	100.000			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

The result of Total variance explained for Application Intention in table 3b demonstrates that the first component has Eigenvalue of 3.124 ( $>1$ ). Moreover, the Total variance explained is 59.783% ( $> 50\%$ ) which is higher than the requirement and accepted, showing that the component can explain 59.783% of the total variance.

**Table 3c.** Component matrix for Application Intention.

**Component Matrix<sup>a</sup>**

	Component
	1
AI1	.832
AI4	.793
AI2	.780
AI3	.759

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. <sup>a</sup>. 1 components extracted.

As presented in Table 3c, all four items of Application Intention have factor loading values higher than 0.5. Therefore, AI1, AI2, AI3, and AI4 are accepted and



used for further steps.

4.3.2. Independent variables (WA, CO, WLC, TA, and PA)

**Table 4a.** KMO and Bartlett's Test for independent variables

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.875
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	814.952
	df	172
	Sig.	.000

As shown in table 4a, EFA is appropriate when KMO is 0.875 ( $0.5 < \text{KMO} < 1$ ).

Additionally, the Sig. of Bartlett's Test of Sphericity is  $0.000 < 0.05$ , so the data of independent variables is appropriate for EFA.

**Table 4b.** Total Variance Explained for independent variables

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	4.617	70.288	73.129	4.617	70.288	73.129
2	3.325	64.756	75.338	3.325	64.756	75.338
3	2.387	55.193	78.296	2.387	55.193	78.296
4	1.229	40.204	79.303	1.229	40.204	79.303
5	1.082	30.635	80.302	1.082	30.635	80.302
6	.973	21.672	82.497			
7	.865	17.357	83.294			
8	.737	14.258	85.294			
9	.689	13.138	88.396			
10	.576	10.297	89.293			
11	.512	9.111	91.038			
12	.479	7.295	94.938			
13	.345	5.553	96.297			
14	.288	4.297	98.222			
15	.234	3.286	99.324			
16	.195	1.943	100.000			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

It can be seen in Table 4b that five elements that are greater than one in the initial Eigenvalues of five independent variables: element 1 (4.617), element 2 (3.325), element 3 (2.387), element 4. (1.229), and element 5 (1.082). The cumulative of Extraction Sums of Squares Loading is 80.302 % (> 50%), illustrating that five factors explain 80.302% of the data variation.

**Table 4c:** Rotated Component Matrix for independent variables

	Component				
	1	2	3		4
PA3	.864				
PA1	.842				
PA3	.837				
PA2	.832				
TA2		.826			
TA1		.820			
TA4		.815			
TA3		.809			
TA5		.795			
WA1			.820		
WA3			.795		
WA4			.774		
WA2			.685		
CO3				.794	
CO4				.785	
CO1				.759	
CO2				.736	
WLC1					.817
WLC3					.792
WLC2					.726
WLC4					.685

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 5 iterations.

As shown in Table 4c. The loadings of all 21 items distributed across five

components are greater than 0.5 (ranking from 0.685 to 0.864). PA3, TA2, WA1, CO3, and WLC1 contribute most to PA, TA, WA, CO, and WLC, respectively.

#### 4.4. Multiple linear regression

We estimate the impact of five independent variables (Working Atmosphere, Career Opportunities, Work-life Comfort, Task Attractiveness, Payment Attractiveness) on the dependent variable (Application Intention) by employing the Multiple linear regression. Results are provided in Tables 5, 6, and 7.

**Table 5. Model Summary<sup>b</sup>**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.758 <sup>a</sup>	.736	.712	.32974	1.816

a. Predictors: (Constant), WA, CO, WLC, TA, PA

b. Dependent Variable: AI

As given in Table 5, the value of Adjusted R-Square is 0.712, showing that 71.2% of the variance in Application Intention can be significantly explained by five independent variables including Working Atmosphere, Career Opportunities, Work-life Comfort, Task Attractiveness, and Payment Attractiveness). In addition, the value of Durbin-Watson is within a range between 1.5 and 2.5 ( $1.5 < 1.816 < 2.5$ ), indicating that there is no serial correlations in residuals of the model (Qiao, 2011).

**Table 6: ANOVA Test<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	28.637	5	8.375	65.852	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	31.071	171	.254		
	Total	59.708	176			

a. Dependent Variable: AI

b. Predictors: (Constant), WA, CO, WLC, TA, PA

The F test with the Sig. value which is less than 0.005 shows that the model is good predictor for measuring the outcomes, and that the multiple linear regression model is suitable for the data set.

**Table 7. Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1 Constant	.786	.339		9.931	.000		
1 WA	.256	.062	.249	3.593	.000	.822	1.216
1 CO	.174	.055	.158	1.621	.163	.679	1.472
1 WLC	.097	.049	.082	.953	.371	.784	1.274
1 TA	.362	.074	.348	6.387	.000	.927	1.078
1 PA	.273	.035	.256	5.274	.000	.661	1.512

a. Dependent Variable: AI

The predictors have a significant contribution to the model as the Sig. is less than 0.05. Results in Table 7 show that three predictors (TA, PA, and WA) have the Sig. value less than 0.000, implying that they all satisfy the condition of statistical significance. However, the Sig. values of CO and WLC are higher 0.01, showing statistically insignificant impacts of CO and WLC on AI.

In addition, the Unstandardized Coefficient B is not a good indicator for comparison (due to Standard Error), whereas the Standardized Coefficient Beta is a good indicator that shows how strongly each predictor influences the dependent variable, and it is used to rank the effects of predictors (Pallant, 2007). If the independent variable has the highest Beta value, it has the greatest influence on the dependent variable. As given in Table 7, the Task Attractiveness (TA) has the largest Beta (0.348), so it has the strongest impact on the Application Intention (AI).

The VIF is then used to test the linear relationship between one predictor and

another. According to Hair et al. (2010), the VIF value should be less than 2, and the tolerance should be higher than at least 0.2, because anything less than 0.2 is considered excessive multi-collinearity. Looking more closely at Table 7, all of the predictors meet the VIF and tolerance requirements. As a result, there is no multicollinearity in this study. As a result, there is sufficient evidence to conclude findings as follows:

First, the Task Attractiveness (TA) has the strongest positive impact on the intention to apply for a job in the perception of business administration undergraduates ( $\beta = .348$ , Sig. = .000,  $t = 6.387$ ), confirming our fourth hypothesis. This finding plays a role as a confirmation for previous studies which claimed that Task Attractiveness strongly affects Intention to apply for job (Turban et al., 1998; Bailey & Fessler, 2011; Baum & Kabst, 2013). It can be said that business undergraduates in Vietnam's Southeast region are quite attracted by Task Attractiveness, and they like to work for company that they can utilize their skills, knowledge acquired, and enjoy the pleasant working.

Second, the Payment Attractiveness (PA) confirms our fifth hypothesis as it has the second strongest positive impact on the intention to apply for a job in the perception of business administration undergraduates ( $\beta = .256$ , Sig. = .000,  $t = 5.274$ ). This finding is consistent with Aiman-Smith et al. (2001), and Baum & Kabst (2013). Beside putting attention on tasks, business undergraduates in the Southeast region of Vietnam also care about the compensation paid for their effort. Additionally, for attending business schools, participants also expect to earn high salary and so on after graduation. On top of that, there is a high number of informal employment, those who are not paid appropriately and do not receive compensation/benefits. Therefore, an employer who provides formal employment offering well-paid salary with attractive

benefits and compensation is considerable..

Third, the third factor positively affecting the intention to apply for a job of business administration undergraduates is the Working Atmosphere – WA ( $\beta = .249$ , Sig. = .000,  $t = 3.593$ ), confirming our first hypothesis. This finding is supported by Chapman et al. (2005), and Baum & Kabst (2013). It can be seen that the working atmosphere is absolutely an important determinant that business undergraduates in Vietnam's Southeast region consider when they apply for a job.

Fourth, the positive impacts of both Career Opportunities (CO) and Work-life Comfort (WLC) on Application Intention (AI) are not statistically significant as expected in our second and third hypotheses. In regard to Career Opportunities, business undergraduates in the research region do not pay attention much while thinking about job application intention. Participants may favor specific factor which they think the most important to them rather than other factor (Powell, 1984). As undergraduates, they are more like to consider the employer who brings well-paid salary, good working environment and chance to apply what they learn. The career advancement may be considered after they have some working experience. Similarly, the Work-life Comfort is not considered as an important factor for business undergraduates when they apply for a job, although it is claimed that work-life balance policy is critical for attracting young job seekers (Carless & Wintle, 2007). It can be explained by the ideology of Vietnam which is collectivist and group-oriented where individuals are supposed to follow group characteristics. Besides, the flexibility of working hours and work-life balance are rarely negotiable since office hours are mostly universal for office workers. Basically, a fulltime employee come and leave work place at decided schedule. This finding is also true for the countries who share the same ideology such as China and Hungary (Baum & Kabst, 2013).

## **5. Conclusion and policy implication**

This study aims to figure out the impact of employer branding perception (with five dimensions: Working Atmosphere, Career Opportunities, Work-life Comfort, Task Attractiveness, and Payment Attractiveness) on job application intention of business undergraduates in three main provinces of Southeast Vietnam, including Binh Duong, Dong Nai, and Ho Chi Minh City. The result shows that the Task Attractiveness has the strongest positive impact on the intention to apply for a job in the perception of business administration undergraduates, followed by the Payment Attractiveness, and Working Atmosphere. However, our findings also show that the participants do not put a lot of attention on the Work-life Comfort and the Career Opportunities when they intend to apply for jobs.

The findings of this study help recruiters and employers understand the key factors that affect their potential employees' intention to apply for jobs at their companies. According to the findings, to attract young undergraduates of business administration, the employers can focus on Task Attractiveness, Payment Attractiveness and Working Atmosphere to build a desired image in the eyes of potential candidates. However, the Work-life Comfort and the Career Opportunities may be taken into account to attract older applicants. Future studies should focus on older ages of respondents in business administration to see how their perception changes, for instance whether the Work-life Comfort and the Career Opportunities become more important or not.

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**Conflict of interest: The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.**

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