

Impact of Employer Branding and Social Media Informativeness on Job Pursuit Intention Among Generation Z Job Seekers: The Mediating Role of Organizational Attractiveness

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the effect of employer branding and social media informativeness on job pursuit intention among Generation Z and to examine the mediating role of organizational attractiveness. This research uses a quantitative approach with the Structural Equation Modeling method based on Partial Least Squares. The sample consisted of 160 Generation Z individuals as potential job seekers, with PT. Biro Klasifikasi Indonesia Batam Branch as the research context. The results show that employer branding has a positive and significant effect on job pursuit intention, while social media informativeness has a positive but not significant effect. Both variables significantly influence organizational attractiveness. Furthermore, organizational attractiveness significantly affects job pursuit intention and mediates the relationship between employer branding and job pursuit intention, but does not mediate the relationship between social media informativeness and job pursuit intention.

Keywords: Employer Branding, Social Media Informativeness, Job Pursuit Intention, Organizational Attractiveness, Generation Z.

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1. Introduction

The development of digital technology and the openness of access to information have significantly transformed the dynamics of the labor market. Job seekers today are faced with a wide range of organizational choices and abundant sources of information that are easily accessible. However, this abundance of information has, in fact, created uncertainty regarding organizational reputation, job characteristics, and long-term career prospects. Under these conditions, job seekers are required to conduct more selective evaluations, making the quality and clarity of information crucial factors in the career decision-making process.

This phenomenon aligns with the perspective of Signaling Theory introduced by Spence, which explains that under conditions of information asymmetry, organizations as parties possessing more information convey signals to communicate qualities and characteristics that cannot be directly observed by job seekers [1]. The effectiveness of organizational signals becomes increasingly important in the context of Generation Z, which possesses unique characteristics in information seeking and career decision-making [2]. Generation Z, born between 1997 and 2012 and known as digital natives [3], tends to rely on digital platforms, particularly social media, as the primary source of career information [4]. Globally, this generation is projected to comprise approximately 27% of the workforce by 2025 [5], making it a strategic group in the competition for talent acquisition.

In practice, Generation Z is recognized as picky job seekers who are highly selective in choosing employment [6]. Although the State-Owned Enterprise (SOE) sector remains an attractive option, with 58% of Generation Z showing interest in this sector [7], the level of job pursuit intention toward a specific organization tends to be unstable. This generation tends to consider multiple job alternatives simultaneously [8], which implies a low initial commitment to a single organization. This condition is further exacerbated by lengthy and complex recruitment processes, which have the potential to trigger candidate withdrawal or ghosting phenomena, where 68% of Generation Z reportedly withdraw from the selection process due to prolonged procedures [9].

This condition is also reflected in PT. Biro Klasifikasi Indonesia (BKI) Batam Branch as one of the SOEs in the maritime services sector. The multi-stage recruitment process, along with the dissemination of information through social media that is still dominated by institutional and operational content, potentially reduces the effectiveness of organizational signals in attracting job seekers' interest [10] [11] [12]. This indicates that an organization's success in attracting talent is not solely determined by formal reputation, but also by how the organization communicates relevant and meaningful information to job seekers.

In the literature, job pursuit intention is defined as an individual's intention to actively pursue employment opportunities within an organization, reflected in the level of interest, willingness to exert effort, and

commitment to participating in the recruitment process [13] [14]. This intention is formed through the evaluation of various organizational signals, including employer branding and social media informativeness. Employer branding is understood as an organizational strategy to build and communicate an image as an attractive employer that is distinct from competitors [15] [16]. Meanwhile, social media informativeness refers to the extent to which an organization's social media provides relevant, useful, and sufficient information for job seekers in evaluating the organization [17] [18].

Both signals contribute to shaping job seekers' perceptions, which are reflected in organizational attractiveness, defined as the degree to which an organization is perceived as an attractive place to work [19] [20]. Several previous studies have shown that employer branding and social media informativeness have a positive effect on job pursuit intention, both directly and indirectly through organizational attractiveness [21] [22] [23] [24] [25] [26] [27]. Furthermore, organizational attractiveness has consistently been found to play a mediating role in the relationship between organizational signals and job seekers' behavioral intentions [28] [29] [30] [31] [26].

However, empirical findings indicate inconsistencies. Several studies report that employer branding does not have a significant effect on job pursuit intention, particularly among Generation Z [32], or only has a partial effect through certain dimensions [23]. Moreover, although the role of organizational attractiveness as a mediator has been widely examined, there is still no study that simultaneously integrates employer branding and social media informativeness into a single model based on Signaling Theory with organizational attractiveness as the primary mediating mechanism, particularly in the context of SOEs in the service sector in Indonesia. This limitation indicates a gap in understanding how the combination of organizational signals comprehensively influences Generation Z's job pursuit intention.

Based on this gap, this study aims to analyze the effect of employer branding and social media informativeness on the job pursuit intention of Generation Z job seekers, with organizational attractiveness as a mediating variable at PT. Biro Klasifikasi Indonesia (BKI) Batam Branch. Theoretically, this study contributes by developing an integrative model based on Signaling Theory that explains the simultaneous role of various organizational signals in shaping job seekers' behavioral intentions. Contextually, this study extends the literature within the setting of SOEs in developing countries, which remains relatively limited in prior research. Practically, the findings of this study are expected to provide strategic implications for organizations in designing more effective employer branding and digital communication to attract and retain Generation Z talent.

2. Research Method

This study employs a quantitative approach with a causal design to examine the cause-and-effect relationship between employer branding and social media informativeness on job pursuit intention, with organizational attractiveness as a mediating variable among Generation Z job seekers at PT. Biro Klasifikasi Indonesia (BKI) Batam Branch. The research data were collected through the distribution of questionnaires and analyzed using statistical techniques to test the formulated hypotheses.

The population in this study consists of Generation Z job seekers, defined as individuals born between 1997 and 2012 [3], who have an interest in or have applied for a job at PT. Biro Klasifikasi Indonesia (BKI) Batam Branch. The sampling technique uses a non-probability sampling method with a purposive sampling approach, which involves selecting samples based on predetermined criteria. The respondent criteria include belonging to the Generation Z category, currently seeking or having previously sought employment, and having accessed company information through digital media, particularly social media. The determination of sample size refers to the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) approach, which recommends a minimum sample size of 10 times the number of indicators or the largest number of structural paths in the research model [33]. Based on this consideration, the sample size in this study is set at a minimum of 160 respondents.

The data used are primary data obtained directly from respondents through questionnaires. The research instrument was developed by adapting indicators from previous studies, including the variables of employer branding, social media informativeness, organizational attractiveness, and job pursuit intention. Variable measurement uses a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The questionnaire was distributed online to align with the characteristics of Generation Z respondents, who are actively engaged in digital technology [34].

Data analysis was conducted using the Structural Equation Modeling-Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) method with the assistance of SmartPLS software. This method was selected because it is capable of simultaneously analyzing relationships among latent variables and is suitable for research models involving mediating variables [35]. The analysis was carried out in two stages: evaluation of the measurement model (outer model) to assess construct validity and reliability, and evaluation of the structural model (inner model) to test the relationships among variables and the hypotheses through a bootstrapping procedure.

3. Result and Discussion

This study involved 160 respondents who are Generation Z job seekers in Batam City who have an interest in or have accessed information regarding PT. Biro Klasifikasi Indonesia (BKI) Batam Branch. The

presentation of respondent descriptions aims to provide a general overview of the basic characteristics of individuals participating in this study. These respondent characteristics are presented concisely in Table 1, which contains information related to the respondent profile as the research sample, including age, gender, domicile, education level, and employment status.

Table 1. Respondent Characteristics (n=160)

Characteristics	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Age	13-17 years	9	6%
	18-22 years	81	51%
	23-28 years	70	44.8%
Gender	Men	89	56%
	Women	71	44%
Domicile (District)	Batam Kota	39	24%
	Batu Aji	10	6%
	Batu Ampar	26	16%
	Belakang Padang	1	1%
	Bengkong	34	21%
	Lubuk Baja	27	17%
	Sagulung	19	12%
	Sekupang	4	3%
	High School (SMA/SMK)	67	42%
Education Level	Diploma's Degree (D3)	23	14%
	Bachelor's Degree (D4/S1)	70	44%
Employment Status	Unemployed	82	51%
	Employed (Non-permanent)	78	49%

The sample in this study consists of 160 Generation Z job seekers in Batam City who have an interest in or have accessed information regarding PT. Biro Klasifikasi Indonesia (BKI). As presented in Table 1, respondents are dominated by the early productive age group (18–22 years; 51%), followed by those aged 23–28 years (44.8%), reflecting strong representation of individuals in the early stage of entering the labor market. The gender distribution is relatively balanced (56% male; 44% female) and geographically concentrated in urban areas such as Batam Kota (24%) and Bengkong (21%), which are associated with greater access to information and employment opportunities. In terms of education, the majority of respondents have a D4/S1 background (44%) and Senior High School/Vocational High School (42%), indicating a transition phase from education to the workforce. In line with this, 51% of respondents are unemployed and 49% are in non-permanent employment, thereby reinforcing the relevance of the sample in examining job pursuit intention among early-stage job seekers.

Common Method Bias (CMB) was rigorously controlled through both procedural and statistical approaches. Procedurally, this study ensured respondent anonymity, data confidentiality, and voluntary participation. Statistically, the Full Collinearity test showed VIF values ranging from 1.418 to 2.887, all of which are below the conservative threshold of 3.3 [36]. These results indicate the

absence of collinearity issues and confirm that CMB does not pose a threat in this study, thereby supporting the robustness of the model used.

The evaluation of the measurement model (outer model) began with testing convergent validity through outer loading values. The initial evaluation results indicated that several indicators within the employer branding construct, namely EB2, EB3, EB4, EB5, EB6, EB7, EB9, EB11, EB12, EB13, EB14, EB16, EB18, EB20, EB21, EB22, EB23, and EB24, had outer loading values below the threshold of 0.70 and therefore did not meet the criteria for convergent validity. Nevertheless, these indicators were retained in the reporting as part of transparency in the model evaluation process. Subsequently, a purification process was conducted by retaining only indicators that met the criteria, resulting in an improved measurement model. The final results show that all indicators used in the model have outer loading values ≥ 0.70 , indicating that the latent constructs are adequately measured [33]. Next Indicators, Construct Reliability, dan Convergent Validity on Table 2.

Table 2. Indicators, Construct Reliability, dan Convergent Validity

Variables	Items	Loadings	CA	rho_A	CR	AVE
Job Pursuit Intention	JPI1	0.750	0.737	0.738	0.835	0.559
	JPI2	0.747				
	JPI3	0.762				
	JPI4	0.731				
Employer Branding	EB1	0.709	0.845	0.846	0.882	0.517
	EB8	0.729				
	EB10	0.714				
	EB15	0.723				
	EB17	0.709				
	EB19	0.721				
	EB25	0.727				
Social Media Informativeness	SMI1	0.789	0.712	0.727	0.838	0.634
	SMI2	0.848				
	SMI3	0.788				
Organizational Attractiveness	OA1	0.731	0.734	0.736	0.834	0.557
	OA2	0.725				
	OA3	0.731				
	OA4	0.797				

As shown in Table 2, all retained indicators in the model have outer loading values above 0.70, indicating good indicator reliability. In addition, internal consistency reliability is also satisfied, as reflected by Cronbach's Alpha (CA) values ranging from 0.712 to 0.845, rho_A values between 0.727 and 0.846, and Composite Reliability (CR) values between 0.834 and 0.882, all of which exceed the recommended threshold of 0.70. Furthermore, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values range from 0.517 to 0.634, exceeding the minimum threshold of 0.50.

Overall, these results confirm that all constructs in this study possess adequate reliability and convergent validity. The indicator elimination process was conducted selectively to improve model quality while maintaining transparency in reporting, thus the measurement model is considered robust and suitable for further structural model evaluation. Subsequently, the evaluation of the structural model (inner model) was conducted to examine the relationships among

constructs, including tests of multicollinearity, explanatory power, effect size, and predictive relevance.

Multicollinearity testing was conducted using the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF). Unlike the full collinearity test used to detect common method bias [36], this test focuses on inner VIF values to ensure that predictor constructs do not exhibit high correlations. The analysis results show that all VIF values are below the threshold of 5 [33], ranging from 1.463 to 2.604, specifically for the paths EB→JPI (2.604), SMI→JPI (1.512), EB→OA (1.463), SMI→OA (1.463), and OA→JPI (2.455). These findings confirm the absence of multicollinearity issues in the research model.

Next, the explanatory power of the model was evaluated using R-square values. The Job Pursuit Intention (JPI) variable has an R² value of 0.609 (adjusted R² = 0.601), indicating that 60.9% of its variance is explained by Employer Branding, Social Media Informativeness, and Organizational Attractiveness. Meanwhile, the Organizational Attractiveness (OA) variable has an R² value of 0.593 (adjusted R² = 0.588), indicating that 59.3% of its variance is explained by Employer Branding and Social Media Informativeness. These values indicate that the model has moderate to strong explanatory power [33].

Furthermore, the effect size (f-square) analysis shows that Employer Branding has a small effect on Job Pursuit Intention (0.122), but a large effect on Organizational Attractiveness (0.780). Social Media Informativeness shows a very small effect on Job Pursuit Intention (0.004) and a small effect on Organizational Attractiveness (0.033), indicating its relatively weak contribution in the model. In contrast, Organizational Attractiveness has a moderate effect on Job Pursuit Intention (0.206), confirming its role as a key variable in the research model. Finally, predictive relevance was evaluated using Q-square values. The results show that the Q² value for Job Pursuit Intention is 0.325 and for Organizational Attractiveness is 0.320, both of which are greater than zero. This indicates that the model has adequate predictive relevance [33]. Overall, the structural model evaluation results demonstrate that the research model has good quality and is suitable for further hypothesis testing. Hypothesis testing was conducted to evaluate the direct relationships among latent variables using the bootstrapping procedure in SmartPLS. The significance of relationships was determined based on path coefficient values with criteria of p-value < 0.05 or t-statistics > 1.96. The results of direct hypothesis testing are presented in the following table on Table 3.

Table 3. Direct Hypothesis Testing

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STD EV)	P values
EB → JPI	0.353	0.349	0.093	3.778	0.000
SMI → JPI	0.051	0.052	0.062	0.819	0.413
EB → OA	0.682	0.678	0.065	10.442	0.000
SMI → OA	0.141	0.142	0.071	1.974	0.048
OA → JPI	0.445	0.446	0.092	4.837	0.000

The analysis results show that employer branding has a positive and significant effect on job pursuit intention, with a coefficient of 0.353 and a t-statistics value of 3.778 (p = 0.000 < 0.05). This indicates that the stronger the employer branding perceived by job seekers, the higher their intention to apply for a job in the company. These findings are consistent with studies by [21] [22], which emphasize the importance of employer branding in shaping positive organizational perceptions. Thus, Hypothesis 1 (H1) is accepted.

The analysis results show that social media informativeness has a positive but not significant effect on job pursuit intention, with a coefficient of 0.051 and a t-statistics value of 0.819 (p = 0.413 > 0.05). This indicates that although more informative social media content tends to increase job seekers' intention, the effect is not statistically significant. These findings are consistent with [37] [38]. From a signaling theory perspective, informativeness functions only as a signal of organizational quality that requires support from other factors to influence job seekers' decisions [17]. Thus, Hypothesis 2 (H2) is rejected.

The analysis results show that employer branding has a positive and significant effect on organizational attractiveness, with a coefficient of 0.682 and a t-statistics value of 10.442 (p = 0.000 < 0.05). This indicates that stronger perceptions of employer branding lead to higher organizational attractiveness. These findings are consistent with studies by [28] [39] [24]. Thus, Hypothesis 3 (H3) is accepted.

The analysis results show that social media informativeness has a positive and significant effect on organizational attractiveness, with a coefficient of 0.141 and a t-statistics value of 1.974 (p = 0.048 < 0.05). This indicates that more informative social media content can enhance perceptions of organizational attractiveness, although the effect is relatively small. These findings are consistent with [17] [39] [24]. Thus, Hypothesis 4 (H4) is accepted. The analysis results show that organizational attractiveness has a positive and significant effect on job pursuit intention, with a coefficient of 0.445 and a t-statistics value of 4.837 (p = 0.000 < 0.05). This indicates that higher perceived organizational attractiveness leads to stronger job pursuit intention. These findings are consistent with studies by [28] [40] [30] [26] [29]. Thus, Hypothesis 5 (H5) is accepted.

Indirect hypothesis testing was conducted to examine the mediating role of organizational attractiveness. The results are presented in the following Table 4.

Table 4. Indirect Hypothesis Testing

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics ((O/STDEV))	P values
EB → OA → JPI	0.304	0.302	0.068	4.486	0.000
SMI → OA → JPI	0.063	0.064	0.037	1.687	0.092

The analysis results show that employer branding has a positive and significant effect on job pursuit intention through organizational attractiveness, with a coefficient of 0.304 and a t-statistics value of 4.486 ($p = 0.000 < 0.05$). This indicates that employer branding not only has a direct effect but also an indirect effect through enhancing organizational attractiveness. These findings are consistent with studies by [28] [27]. Thus, Hypothesis 6 (H6) is accepted. The analysis results show that social media informativeness has a positive but not significant effect on job pursuit intention through organizational attractiveness, with a coefficient of 0.063 and a t-statistics value of 1.687 ($p = 0.092 > 0.05$). This indicates that although social media informativeness can enhance organizational attractiveness, the effect is not strong enough to significantly drive job pursuit intention. These findings are consistent with studies by [41]. Thus, Hypothesis 7 (H7) is rejected.

Overall, these findings confirm that employer branding and organizational attractiveness are the primary determinants in shaping job pursuit intention, while the role of social media informativeness tends to be limited. Further testing using Variance Accounted For (VAF) shows a value of 46% in the relationship between employer branding and job pursuit intention through organizational attractiveness. This value falls within the partial mediation category, indicating that organizational attractiveness serves as a significant mediator, but not the only pathway of influence. Thus, employer branding affects job pursuit intention both directly and indirectly through enhancing organizational attractiveness.

4. Conclusion

Based on the results of the analysis and discussion, it can be concluded that employer branding and organizational attractiveness are the primary determinants in shaping job pursuit intention among Generation Z job seekers. Employer branding is proven to have a positive and significant effect both directly on job pursuit intention and indirectly through organizational attractiveness. Meanwhile, social media informativeness does not show a significant effect on job pursuit intention, either directly or through mediation, although it has a positive effect on organizational attractiveness. In addition, organizational attractiveness is found to act as a significant partial mediator in the relationship between employer branding and job pursuit intention, indicating that enhancing organizational attractiveness is an

important mechanism in strengthening the intention to pursue employment. The findings of this study provide practical implications that organizations, particularly PT. Biro Klasifikasi Indonesia (BKI) Batam Branch, need to prioritize strengthening employer branding through the communication of organizational values, career opportunities, and a positive work environment. Furthermore, social media management should not only focus on the informative aspect but also needs to be developed to become more interactive and capable of building emotional engagement with potential applicants. Future research is recommended to extend the model by incorporating additional variables such as employer brand experience, digital engagement, and perceived person–organization fit in order to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing job pursuit intention.

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