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The Effect Of Employer Branding And E-Recruitment On Intention To Apply Through Corporate Reputation And The Moderation Role Of Social Media Use On Jobstreets In South Tangerang City

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ABSTRACK

This study analyzes the influence *of Employer Branding* and *E-Recruitment* on *Intention to Apply* through *Corporate Reputation* and the moderation of *Social Media Use on Jobstreet* users in South Tangerang City. This explanatory quantitative study used purposive sampling of 250 respondents and was analyzed with SEM-PLS through SmartPLS 4. The results show that *Employer Branding* and *E-Recruitment* do not directly influence *Intention to Apply* , but both have a positive influence on *Corporate Reputation* . *Corporate Reputation* has a positive influence on *Intention to Apply* and mediates both relationships. *Social Media Use* moderates the relationship between *Corporate Reputation* and *Intention to Apply* in a weakening direction. The findings confirm the role of corporate reputation as an important mechanism in shaping application intentions in the context of digital recruitment.

INTRODUCTION

Advances in information technology have transformed the recruitment process from a traditional mechanism to one that is increasingly integrated with the internet, company websites, social media, and job search platforms. By 2024, 72.78% of Indonesia's population will have internet access, up from 69.21% in 2023 (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2024). This change expands job seekers' access to job vacancy information and enhances candidates' ability to compare companies before deciding which organization to apply to.

Jobstreet is a digital recruitment platform used in Indonesia and is part of the SEEK ecosystem. Official information from *Jobstreet* by SEEK states that the platform has a user base of over 15 million professionals in Indonesia (Seek, 2023). This large user base demonstrates the broad reach of digital recruitment, but the availability of vacancies does not necessarily translate into a desire to apply. Candidates can evaluate a company's value as an employer, the quality of the recruitment process, the organization's reputation, and additional information through social media before forming *an Intention to Apply* (Wijaya *et al* ., 2023; Silva & Dias, 2022).

The context of South Tangerang City is relevant because the local labor market continues to exhibit job search dynamics. The August 2024 National Labor Force Survey (Sakernas)

recorded 633,930 people in the labor force, consisting of 601,673 employed residents and 32,257 unemployed, with an Open Unemployment Rate of 5.09% (South Tangerang City Statistics Agency, 2025). In this context, digital recruitment platforms serve as a channel connecting job seekers with companies and increasing the need for candidates to assess an organization's credibility before applying.

Employer branding reflects the values and benefits that prospective employees associate with a company as a place to work, including interest value, social value, economic value, development value, and application value (Berthon *et al* ., 2005). This information can signal working conditions that potential applicants cannot directly observe. Several studies have found a positive relationship between *employer branding and intention to apply* and *corporate reputation* (Setiawan & Marginingsih, 2021; Silva & Dias, 2022; Wijaya *et al* ., 2023). However, Rohmania (2025) showed that *employer branding* had no effect on *intention to apply* in the context of his study. These differences in results indicate that the influence *of employer branding* is not consistent across various job seeker groups and contexts.

In this study, *e-Recruitment is not only understood as the availability of online application channels, but also includes process efficiency, ease of use, completeness and clarity of information, transparency or fairness, and candidate experience during the recruitment process. Wijaya et al* . (2023) found that *e-Recruitment* did not independently predict *Intention to Apply* , while Yuspita *et al* . (2025) showed a positive effect on job application intention. This inconsistency creates an empirical gap that needs to be re-examined on job seekers who actually have experience using *Jobstreet* .

Corporate reputation then becomes an important evaluative mechanism because prospective applicants do not yet have complete information about the company's internal conditions. Setiawan & Marginingsih (2021) and Silva & Dias (2022) show that reputation can mediate the relationship between *employer branding* and *intention to apply* , while Soeling *et al* . (2022) did not find the same mediation function. This difference indicates a mechanism gap regarding how company information is translated into intention to apply.

Social media expands potential applicants' sources of information after finding a company through a job platform. Candidates can use LinkedIn, Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, official websites, or other digital channels to obtain and verify information about work culture, company activities, career development, and the experiences of others. Thang & Trang (2024) and Yuspita *et al* . (2025) show that the availability or use of social media information can alter the strength of the relationship between reputation and intention to apply. Therefore, this study positions *social media use* as a moderator in the relationship *between corporate reputation* and *intention to apply* .

The research framework is explained through Signaling Theory. Spence (1973) explains that when information asymmetry occurs, the party with the information can send signals to reduce uncertainty. In the recruitment context, the company acts as the signaler, *Employer Branding* and *E-Recruitment* become observable signals, job seekers become receivers, *Corporate Reputation* represents the evaluation of the signal, and *Intention to Apply* is the

response after the evaluation is carried out. *Social Media Use* expands the process of receiving and verifying signals because candidates can compare information from various channels (Connelly *et al* ., 2011).

The novelty of this research lies in the integrated testing *of Employer Branding* and *E-Recruitment* as antecedents, *Corporate Reputation* as a mediator, and *Social Media Use* as a moderator on the relationship between *Corporate Reputation* and *Intention to Apply* in the context of job seekers using *Jobstreet* in South Tangerang City. Respondents were asked to rate one company whose vacancies they had viewed or applied for through *Jobstreet* in the last twelve months so that all constructs refer to the same company. This study tests eight hypotheses: H1 *Employer Branding* on *Intention to Apply* ; H2 *E-Recruitment* on *Intention to Apply* ; H3 *Employer Branding* on *Corporate Reputation* ; H4 *E-Recruitment* on *Corporate Reputation* ; H5 *Corporate Reputation* on *Intention to Apply ; H6 Social Media Use* moderation on the relationship between *Corporate Reputation* and *Intention to Apply* ; H7 *Corporate Reputation mediation* on the relationship between *Employer Branding* and *Intention to Apply* ; and H8 *Corporate Reputation mediation* on the relationship between *E-Recruitment* and *Intention to Apply.*

RESEARCH METHODS

This study used a quantitative approach with explanatory research to test causal relationships between variables. The analysis was conducted using Partial Least Squares-based Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) through SmartPLS 4 because the model contained direct, mediating, and moderating effects, which were tested simultaneously (Hair *et al* ., 2022).

The study population was job seekers domiciled in South Tangerang City and used *Jobstreet* to search for vacancy information or apply for jobs. Sampling used non-probability sampling with purposive sampling. The respondent criteria were domiciled in South Tangerang City, having used *Jobstreet* , having seen or applied for vacancies through *Jobstreet* in the last twelve months, and having and using social media to search for or verify company information. Based on 25 indicators with an operational target of ten respondents per indicator, the number of research samples was set at 250 respondents.

Primary data was collected through a questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale. At the beginning of the questionnaire, respondents were asked to recall one company whose vacancies they had viewed or applied for through *Jobstreet* in the past twelve months. This company served as the same reference when assessing *Employer Branding* , *E-Recruitment* , *Corporate Reputation* , *Social Media Use* , and *Intention to Apply* .

Employer Branding is measured through interest value, social value, economic value, development value, and application value. *E-Recruitment* is measured through process efficiency/benefit, ease of use, completeness and clarity of information, transparency/fairness, and positive experiences. *Corporate Reputation* is measured through good feelings, trust, admiration, respect, and overall reputation. *Social Media Use* is measured through information access, completeness of information, cultural and development information, reviews, and

interactions. *Intention to Apply* is measured through offer acceptance, first choice, interview attendance, effort, and recommendations.

Evaluation of the measurement model includes outer loading, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), construct reliability, and Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT). Evaluation of the structural model includes Variance Inflation Factor (VIF), coefficient of determination (R^2), effect size (f^2), predictive relevance (Q^2predict), Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR), and hypothesis testing through bootstrapping. The mediation effect is tested through the indirect effect *of Employer Branding → Corporate Reputation → Intention to Apply* and *E-Recruitment → Corporate Reputation → Intention to Apply* , while the moderation effect is tested through the interaction of *Social Media Use × Corporate Reputation* on *Intention to Apply*.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondent characteristics

A total of 250 respondents met the research criteria. The respondents were predominantly female, aged 21–25, with a Diploma IV/Bachelor's degree, and recent graduates seeking employment. This composition indicates that the study predominantly represents highly educated job seekers in the early stages of their careers who actively utilize digital recruitment channels.

Table 1. Characteristics of dominant respondents

Characteristics	Dominant category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Woman	202	80.8%
Age	21–25 years	132	52.8%
Education	Diploma IV/S1	137	54.8%
Status	Fresh graduate and looking for a job	106	42.4%

The predominance of female respondents indicates that survey participation in this study was predominantly female job seekers. The predominance of 21–25 year olds and those with a Diploma IV/Bachelor's degree reflects a group relatively close to the transition from education to the workforce. Fresh graduates also constitute the largest status category, making the use of *Jobstreet* and social media to search for company information relevant in the pre-application evaluation process.

Evaluation of measurement and structural models

All constructs met convergent validity because the AVE value was above 0.50. *Employer Branding* obtained an AVE of 0.697, *E-Recruitment* 0.672, *Corporate Reputation* 0.680, *Social Media Use* 0.696, and *Intention to Apply* 0.688. Discriminant evaluation using HTMT in the thesis also showed that the constructs could be adequately distinguished. Thus, the indicators used were suitable to represent the research constructs.

Table 2. Summary of model evaluation

Evaluation indicators	Core values	Interpretation
AVE	EB 0.697; ER 0.672; CR 0.680; SMU 0.696; ITA 0.688	Meet convergent validity
VIF	1,392–2,888	Does not show multicollinearity problems
R^2 *Corporate Reputation*	0.414	The model explains 41.4% of the variation in CR
R^2 *Intention to Apply*	0.516	The model explains 51.6% of the variation in ITA
SRMR	Saturated 0.050; Estimated 0.084	The suitability of the model is still within the research evaluation limits.

The VIF values of all relationships are below 3.00, namely EB → ITA of 2.358, ER → ITA of 2.175, EB → CR of 1.392, ER → CR of 1.392, CR → ITA of 1.814, and the interaction of SMU × CR → ITA of 2.888. The R^2 value shows that *Employer Branding* and *E-Recruitment* explain 41.4% of the variation *in Corporate Reputation , while the combination of predictors in the Intention to Apply* model explains 51.6% of the variation in the construct. The Q^2predict value of all *Corporate Reputation* and *Intention to Apply* indicators is positive, which indicates the presence of predictive relevance in the model.

Hypothesis testing

Table 3. Results of hypothesis testing

Hypothesis	Connection	Coefficient	T	P	Results
H1	EB → ITA	0.005	0.080	0.936	Not supported
H2	ER → ITA	-0.039	0.678	0.498	Not supported
H3	EB → CR	0.388	5,763	<0.001	Supported
H4	ER → CR	0.347	5,188	<0.001	Supported
H5	CR → ITA	0.155	3,018	0.003	Supported
H6	High School × CR → ITA	-0.298	7,278	<0.001	Supported; moderation weakens
H7	EB → CR → ITA	0.060	2,417	0.016	Supported
H8	ER → CR → ITA	0.054	2,334	0.020	Supported

Employer Branding* on *Intention to Apply

Employer branding has not yet had a direct impact on *intention to apply* . Positive assessments of a company as a place to work can create attraction, but are not yet a primary consideration in determining the decision to apply. Descriptive results indicate that economic value is the most prominent aspect *of employer branding* , while development value is relatively lower. This means that respondents pay attention to salary, benefits, job security, and career opportunities, but these attractions are not sufficient to directly generate intention to apply. This finding is in line with Safitri & Novianti (2024), Prasetio & Setyaningrum (2024), Fatah (2026), and Marshela & Turangan (2026), which show that *employer branding* is not always a direct determinant *of intention to apply* . Within the framework of signaling theory, signals regarding company values still require an interpretation process before being translated into behavioral responses.

E-Recruitment* on *Intention to Apply

E-Recruitment also has not had a direct impact on *Intention to Apply* . Ease of use and completeness and clarity of information were the aspects that received the strongest ratings, while positive experiences during the online recruitment process were relatively lower. These findings indicate that easy and informative digital recruitment systems serve more to assist the information search process, while the decision to apply still considers position suitability, job benefits, development opportunities, and assessment of the company. These results align with Diningrum & Suratman (2026), Prasetyawati & Supriatin (2025), Pangenan *et al* . (2024), and Tampi & Ariwibowo (2026).

Employer Branding* and *E-Recruitment* on *Corporate Reputation

Employer branding positively impacts *corporate reputation* . The values associated with a company as a place to work help shape assessments of its quality, credibility, and suitability. These findings support those of Silva & Dias (2022), Thang & Trang (2024), and Setiawan & Marginingsih (2021). *E-recruitment* also positively impacts *corporate reputation* . An easy-to-use, informative, transparent, and well-organized recruitment system signals a company's professionalism in managing candidate relationships. Thus, a potential applicant's experience on digital recruitment channels extends beyond a technical assessment of the system to an overall evaluation of the company.

Corporate Reputation* on *Intention to Apply

Corporate reputation positively influences *intention to apply* . When a company is perceived as trustworthy, admired, respected, and has a good overall reputation, prospective applicants have a stronger basis for considering the company as a place to work. This finding supports Silva & Dias (2022), Rohmania (2025), and Permatasari & Ahsani (2026). In signaling theory, reputation serves as an indicator of a company's quality and credibility when candidates lack direct experience working within the organization.

The role of moderation *in social media use*

Social Media Use moderates the relationship between *Corporate Reputation* and *Intention to Apply,* with a weakening effect. The higher the use of social media as a source of company information, the less dominant the company's reputation is in shaping application intentions. This suggests that candidates do not rely solely on general assessments of reputation but instead use additional information from social media to broaden their evaluation base. These results contrast with Yuspita *et al* . (2025) and Thang & Trang (2024), who found that social media information tends to strengthen the role of reputation. This difference suggests that social media can function not only as a reputation enhancer but also as a verification channel that allows candidates to conduct more critical evaluations and not rely solely on the company's general reputation.

The mediating role *of Corporate Reputation*

Corporate Reputation mediates the influence *of Employer Branding* on *Intention to Apply* . Good *Employer Branding does not directly determine intention to apply, but the company's value as an employer can first establish a positive reputation that then increases candidates' confidence in considering the company. These findings are in line with Diningrum & Suratman (2026) and Wahyuningtyas & Waskito (2025). The same pattern occurs in E-Recruitment* . The quality of online recruitment forms an impression of how the company manages candidates, this impression develops into *Corporate Reputation* , and reputation then drives *Intention to Apply* . These results support Ekhsan & Ernasari (2022), Diningrum & Suratman (2026), and Wahyuningtyas & Waskito (2025). Thus, *Corporate Reputation* is a central mechanism connecting *Employer Branding* and *E-Recruitment signals* with prospective applicants' decisions.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

This study shows that *Employer Branding* and *E-Recruitment* have not directly determined *the Intention to Apply* of job seekers using *Jobstreet* in South Tangerang City. These two variables actually play a role in shaping *Corporate Reputation* . *Corporate Reputation* then increases *Intention to Apply* while also being a mediator in the relationship between *Employer Branding* and *E-Recruitment* on *Intention to Apply* . *Social Media Use* is proven to change the relationship between *Corporate Reputation* on *Intention to Apply* in a weakening direction, which indicates that the more widely candidates utilize social media, the more sources of information are used so that decisions do not only depend on the company's reputation in general.

Practically, companies need to consistently manage *Employer Branding by not only highlighting economic benefits but also clarifying competency and career development opportunities. Companies also need to improve the quality of E-Recruitment* throughout the candidate experience through clear stages, communication, transparency, and follow-up. Because *Corporate Reputation* is a crucial pathway to *Intention to Apply* , every point of contact with candidates should reflect the company's credibility and professionalism. Information on

social media should be delivered consistently, relevantly, and verifiably because candidates use these channels as a source of comparison before making decisions.

This study was limited to job seekers using *Jobstreet* residing in South Tangerang City and employed a cross-sectional design, so the results reflect respondents' perceptions over a single period. Future research could explore different regions, recruitment platforms, industry sectors, or job seeker groups, and consider a longitudinal design to observe changes in candidate perceptions from the information search stage to the actual application decision.

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