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Mapping the landscape of employer value propositions in Asian hotels through online job postings analysis

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ABSTRACT

This study explores how Asian hotels leverage job postings, an often-overlooked branding channel, to communicate Employer Value Propositions (EVPs) as an employer branding tactic. Analyzing 4603 job postings from *Indeed*, a prominent job search website, the research categorizes EVPs into Economic, Functional, and Psychological types (E−, F-, P-EVPs) and reveals their frequency of communication across five key Asian cities. The findings indicate that approximately three-quarters of job postings convey at least one type of EVP, with F-EVPs and P-EVPs being more prevalent than E-EVPs. Chain hotels demonstrate a higher frequency of EVP communication compared to independent hotels, with no discernible differences between non-managerial and managerial positions. These findings offer valuable resources for hotels to assess their EVP strategies through benchmarking and identifying areas for improvement. It also pioneers the application of signaling theory to job advertisements, contributing to the theoretical fields of employer branding, talent management, and recruitment research.

1. Introduction

The hospitality and tourism industry struggles with a negative employment image and high labor turnover due to demanding work conditions, such as physically intensive tasks, and unstable employment structures, including temporary and short-term contracts. These challenges are further exacerbated by weekend and holiday shifts, low wages, and limited career advancement opportunities (Casado-Díaz & Simón, 2016; Dogru et al., 2023). Despite the industry's expansion, reaching a market size of 1.5 trillion U.S. dollars in 2023 (Statista, 2024a), it continues to face difficulties in attracting and retaining qualified talent amid a persistent labor shortage and growing demand. To address these recruitment and retention challenges, employer branding has become a crucial and widely adopted human resource management strategy (Martin et al., 2011), aimed at cultivating an attractive employer image for both prospective and current employees (Lievens, 2007).

Employer value propositions (EVPs) are crucial to the employer branding process by clearly articulating the advantages, benefits, and values an organization offers its employees, serving as precursors that shape and enhance the overall employer brand (Edwards, 2010). Acting as both a reflection of organizational culture and an effective communication tool, EVPs serve as signals that shape perceptions among job seekers, current employees, investors, and other stakeholders. Signaling theory (Spence, 1978) explains how these signals reduce information asymmetries and uncertainties by conveying reliable information. This theory is widely applied in HRM and organizational behavior (OB) studies (Chang & Chin, 2018; Connelly et al., 2011; Taj, 2016). For instance, CEOs often use financial statements to signal the unobservable quality of their firms to potential (Zhang & Wiersema, 2009). Similarly, employer branding research demonstrates that a well-articulated EVP can promote a positive employer image, thereby attracting and retaining top talent (Celani & Singh, 2011; Martin et al., 2011; Suazo et al., 2009).

Recognizing the multidimensional nature of EVPs, it is essential to adopt a distinct approach that classifies EVPs to effectively address the diverse needs of employees (Minchington, 2014). While a universally agreed-upon classification for EVPs is lacking, scholarly discourse frequently alludes to the typology proposed by Moroko and Uncles

(2009), which classify EVPs into *economic, functional, and psychological* categories. *Economic EVPs* (E-EVPs) emphasize the financial aspects of employment, including salary, bonuses, retirement plans, and health benefits. *Functional EVPs* (F-EVPs) revolve around tangible elements such as career advancement opportunities, training programs, and a secure work environment. *Psychological EVPs* (P-EVPs) encompass intangible factors like fostering a diverse and inclusive organizational culture, providing recognition and appreciation, and instilling a sense of purpose and meaningful work. Additionally, the instrumental and symbolic framework (Keller, 1993), commonly used in marketing to categorize the characteristics of products or services, where instrumental attributes denote tangible benefits and symbolic attributes convey emotional meanings and status, may also provide valuable insights for classifying EVPs. Nevertheless, these classifications are grounded in universal organizational frameworks, which are often too broad and general. Consequently, the distinct themes and sub-categories of EVPs employed by contemporary hotel employers remain undefined, particularly as the COVID-19 pandemic has shifted employee priorities toward work-life balance, job security, and mental well-being (Karatepe et al., 2021).

Previous research demonstrates that employer branding can be communicated through traditional channels, such as print advertisements and recruitment events, as well as digital platforms, like corporate websites, career platforms, social media, and online employee reviews (Bharadwaj, 2024; Ganesan et al., 2018; Li et al., 2024; Mičík & Mičudová, 2018). However, communication of the employer image through online job postings, such as thoseon job boards, has been largely overlooked in recruitment research. Despite over 97% of job seekers using the Internet to explore career opportunities (Singh, 2017), job postings typically provide minimal information, often confined to the "four basic skeletons": employer identity, job descriptions, requirements, and contact details (Petry et al., 2022). Research indicates that job advertisement content is critical for shaping potential applicants' perceptions and influencing their attitudes, perceptions of attractiveness, and intention to apply (Phillips et al., 2014; Roberson et al., 2005). Therefore, it is crucial for employers to leverage job postings as a strategic signaling channel to communicate their EVPs, ultimately strengthening their employer brand and distinguishing themselves from competitors, particularly in competitive sectors like the hotel industry. This study addresses the research gap regarding the role of job postings as a medium to communicate EVPs, exploring the extent to which hotel employers utilize this medium to convey different types of EVPs.

The Resource-Based View (RBV) posits that unique resources and capabilities are essential for achieving competitive advantage (Barney, 1991), with human capital being a critical internal resource (Ployhart et al., 2011). To attract top talent, companies leverage varying EVP resources tailored to job applicants. In contrast, the Market-Based View (MBV) emphasizes external environmental factors, such as labor market competitiveness, economic conditions, and regional cultural contexts, which shape a firm's competitive strategy and overall performance (Porter, 1997). As a result, EVP communication may vary across hotel affiliation types, job level, and market areas. While current research on hotel employer branding has largely focused on the EVPs valued by specific employee demographics, such as Generation Z and frontline positions candidates (Davern et al., 2019; Kim & Legendre, 2023; Zhong et al., 2024; Zhou et al., 2024), it remains unclear whether hotel employers adopt varying employer branding practices. The RBV and MBV offer a rationale for exploring whether hotel employers tailor their EVPs based on factors such as market location, affiliation type (independent versus chain), and the level of the advertised job positions (non-managerial versus supervisory/managerial).

This study examines how hotels in Asia communicate their EVPs on the widely used third-party career platform *Indeed*. The hotel industry in the Asia Pacific showed signs of recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic since 2022. Lifted travel restrictions and the pent-up travel demand facilitated the increase in business and leisure travel ensuring that travel demand was expected be on par with pre-COVID levels. The Asian hotel market plays a pivotal role globally, with the Asia Pacific (excluding China) reporting a record-high hotel construction pipeline of 2085 projects and 412,358 rooms under development as of the fourth quarter of 2024 (Lodging Econometrics, 2025). The growing hotel supply is expected to drive increased workforce demand, making it essential for hotels to understand how to attract and retain talent through a well-defined employer brand. According to the Asia Pacific hotel market report published by HVS Asia Pacific (Chee, 2022), Hong Kong, Thailand, and Singapore were the top three markets in terms of transaction volume increase from Q3 2021 to Q2 2022, with Hong Kong serving as a prime example, experiencing a sixfold increase. Additionally, Bali, Phuket, Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, and Ho Chi Minh City are the top five cities that demonstrated significant increases in hotel performance, specifically in occupancy rates and average daily rates, during the post-COVID recovery period in 2022. For this study, Bangkok was selected to represent Thailand, while Bali and Phuket were excluded due to their focus on leisure and highly seasonal labor demands. Consequently, the five cities chosen for this study are Hong Kong (HKG), Singapore (SIN), Bangkok (BKK), Kuala Lumpur (KUL), and Ho Chi Minh City (SGN), representing the most significant post-COVID recovery cities in 2022 when the study was conceived. These hotel market recoveries after the pandemic are likely to intensify competition for skilled labor, highlighting the importance of effective employer branding strategies.

The findings from this study offer valuable insights into how hotels position themselves as employers in highly competitive labor markets. By analyzing how EVPs are communicated in job postings, this research highlights the ways in which hotels differentiate to attract new talent and retain existing staff, ultimately contributing to the development of competitive and sustainable employer branding practices. The analysis of these job postings aims to address the following research questions:

1) What specific attributes (themes and sub-categories) of EVPs are communicated in job postings as signals for employer branding across the selected Asian cities based on the established classification of Economic, Functional, and Psychological EVPs?
2) What is the overall distribution and proportion of job postings that convey EVP attributes across the selected Asian cities?
3) Are there any differing patterns in the frequency of EVP communication in job postings across cities, EVP types, affiliation types, and job position levels?

2. Literature review

2.1. Employer branding and employer value propositions (EVPs)

Evolving business landscapes, intensified market competition, and globalization challenge talent management, pushing organizations to foster employer brands to effectively tackle these obstacles (Azhar et al., 2024). Ambler and Barrow (1996) defined the employer brand as a bundle of functional, economic, and psychological benefits provided by employers. Backhaus and Tikoo (2004) described the employer brand as highlighting the unique aspects of a firm's employment offerings and environment, differentiating it from competitors while attracting, motivating, and retaining current and potential employees. Employer branding is the process of establishing and communicating this brand (Bharadwaj et al., 2022).

The employer brand concept exhibits resemblances to several interconnected concepts. Employer attractiveness is defined as the perceived benefits that potential employees associate with working for a specific organization (Berthon et al., 2005). Employer identity refers to the unique characteristics and values that define an organization as an employer, reflecting the perceptions held by current employees (Lievens & Slaughter, 2016). Highhouse et al. (2009) describe employer reputation as a stable and enduring evaluative judgment about an organization as an employer, shared by both external stakeholders and internal

employees. Employer image specifically addresses the perceptions of current and potential employees, while organizational image encompasses broader perceptions held by diverse groups such as society, stakeholders, and customers (Lievens & Slaughter, 2016). Table 1 presents a detailed comparison of these concepts, highlighting their similarities and differences across various dimensions.

Drawing on the literature (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004; Hieronimus et al., 2005; Robertson & Khatibi, 2012), the employer branding process consists of five stages: examining the current employer image, formulating a desired employer image, developing EVPs, implementing EVPs, and evaluating and modifying it. Therefore, EVPs are precursors that contribute to the development of employer branding and related concepts when the target audience includes potential and current employees (Edwards, 2010; Theurer et al., 2018). To gain a competitive edge and attract top talent, organizations must develop, define, and effectively communicate EVPs that align with employee aspirations (Wijaya et al., 2023).

Research has demonstrated numerous positive effects of employer branding. For instance, Azhar et al. (2024) found that employer branding enhances both organizational commitment and employer brand loyalty, which in turn boosts employee retention and overall organizational performance. Similarly, Kim and Legendre (2023) demonstrated that employer branding positively influences brand love, reflected in greater brand intimacy, brand passion, and brand commitment. Additionally, attractive EVPs significantly increase employees' intention to stay with an organization (Binu Raj, 2021).

2.2. The typology of EVP

EVPs encompass tangible and intangible benefits offered through HR policies to attract and retain employees (Tumasjan et al., 2020). The content of EVPs in employer branding and employer attractiveness exhibits dynamic characteristics and varies across previous research. Mouton and Bussin (2019) identified five dimensions of employer branding: work-life balance, ethics and corporate social responsibility, training and development, healthy work atmosphere, and compensation and benefits. Berthon et al. (2005) outlined five components of employer attractiveness: interest value, social value, economic value, development value, and application value. Bellou et al. (2018) highlighted key aspects of employer attractiveness, including development opportunities, attractive rewards, appealing working environment, recognition, healthy working relationships, and social responsibility. Li et al. (2024) analyzed employee reviews from *Glassdoor* and revealed several attributes influencing employee satisfaction, including non-monetary rewards, monetary rewards, coworker relationships, work atmosphere, promotion opportunities, senior management and communication, work-life balance, company culture, and the nature of the work itself.

Although various categorizations of EVP attributes can be found in the literature, a widely recognized and established categorization in marketing is instrumental and symbolic attributes (Keller, 1993). This categorization has also been applied in recruitment research by Lievens and Highhouse (2003). Instrumental attributes pertain to the tangible

and functional aspects of an organization that hold utilitarian value for job seekers, such as location, compensation, benefits, and advancement opportunities, while symbolic attributes encompass subjective, emotional, and social values offered by an organization (Lievens & Highhouse, 2003). This typology aligns seamlessly with Moroko and Uncles' (2009) classification of EVPs into three distinct categories: economic (E-EVPs), functional (F-EVPs), and psychological (P-EVPs). Scholars frequently refer to this classification because it effectively captures the multifaceted nature of EVPs and aligns with the intricate dynamics inherent in various organizational types (Binu Raj, 2021; Paadi et al., 2019). Drawing from the literature and EVP definitions, each EVP type can contain specific components: E-EVPs (such as compensation, stipends, insurance, etc.), F-EVPs (including training and development opportunities, leave policies, etc.), and P-EVPs (relating to wellness initiatives, organizational culture, etc.) (Ahmad & Scott, 2015; Ambler & Barrow, 1996; Moroko & Uncles, 2009; Paadi et al., 2019). Conclusively, E-EVPs predominantly emphasize financial considerations, F-EVPs revolve around concrete and tangible elements of the employment relationship, and P-EVPs encompass intangible and emotional factors.

2.3. Job postings as signaling mechanisms

Signaling theory (Spence, 1978), explains how signals help to reduce information asymmetries and uncertainties between parties by sending signals that convey reliable information. Originally developed to understand the role of employees' education credentials as signals of unobservable productivity to employers, signaling theory has been applied in marketing, entrepreneurship, and HRM research (Celani & Singh, 2011). Job postings, as the initial point of contact between employers and job seekers, provide a valuable opportunity to analyze how companies communicate their employer brand during the early stages of recruitment, when applicants have limited knowledge of potential employers (Petry et al., 2022). These postings function as strategic signaling tools, allowing organizations to convey key information about their image, values, and benefits, shaping job seekers' perception of job positions and companies (Ganesan et al., 2018). By presenting instrumental and symbolic attributes, job postings reduce uncertainties, enhance job seekers' understanding of the organization, and significantly influence their attitudes, perceptions of employer attractiveness, and intentions to apply.

Online job postings analysis has emerged as a valuable method for understanding labor market demands and informing curriculum development (e.g., Boselli et al., 2018; Messum et al., 2016). Empirical studies further underscore the signaling power of job postings. Phillips et al. (2014) found that job advertisement content substantially influences applicants' attitudes toward both the job and the organization, while Roberson et al. (2005) demonstrated that detailed recruitment messages positively impact perceptions of organizational image and job application intentions. Ganesan et al. (2018) highlighted that well-crafted job advertisements that incorporate employee testimonials, visuals, and HR offerings significantly enhance applicants' perceptions of organizational

Table 1
Differences and similarities between employer branding and related concepts.

	Purpose	Target Audience	Precursors	References
Employer Branding	Attract and retain talent	Current Employees, Potential Employees	EVPs	Ambler and Barrow (1996); Backhaus and Tikoo (2004)
Employer Attractiveness	Increase appeal to candidates	Potential Employees	EVPs	Berthon et al. (2005)
Employer Identity	Define organizational values	Current Employees	EVPs	Lievens and Slaughter (2016)
Employer Reputation	Build trust and credibility	Stakeholders, Current Employees, Potential Employees	EVPs, Reputation metrics	Highhouse et al. (2009)
Employer Image	Shape perception as an employer	Current Employees, Potential Employees	EVPs	Lievens and Slaughter (2016)
Organization Image	Shape public perception	Stakeholders, General Public	Public relations	Lievens and Slaughter (2016)

culture and corporate image.

Despite the extensive use of job postings in recruitment, limited research has examined how employers in specific industries, such as hospitality, communicate EVPs through job postings on third-party websites. This is particularly notable given that previous studies have focused on other recruitment channels, including print advertisements, networking events, corporate websites, career platforms, social media, and online reviews (Bharadwaj, 2024; Ganesan et al., 2018; Li et al., 2024; Mičík & Mičudová, 2018). While some research has explored job advertisements in traditional print media, such as Ganesan et al. (2018), which analyzed print job ads to investigate how different message contents influence job seekers' perceptions and application intentions. Other research has similarly explored the signaling effects of job and organizational attributes in recruitment ads, primarily within conventional media formats (Muruganantham et al., 2021). However, the dynamics of digital platforms differ significantly from those of traditional media, necessitating focused research to comprehend how employer signals are crafted and interpreted in an online context. Addressing this gap is crucial for developing effective recruitment strategies in the evolving landscape of digital job search platforms. This study aims to bridge this gap by analyzing online job postings in the hospitality sector, investigating how employers leverage their EVPs to attract talent and strengthen their employer branding.

2.4. Resource-based view and market-based view

The primary objective of any firm's management is to achieve competitive advantages over rivals (Peters et al., 2011). This pursuit extends to human resource management, where human capital is recognized as a crucial asset for organizations (Collins, 2022). Two prominent frameworks that inform strategic management are the Resource-Based View (RBV) and the Market-Based View (MBV), which offer complementary perspectives on how firms achieve and sustain competitive advantage. The RBV emphasizes the internal resources and capabilities of a firm as the main source of competitive advantage. It suggests that unique organizational assets, including specialized skills, proprietary technologies, and institutional knowledge, provide a stable foundation for long-term strategies (Grant, 2002). In the hotel industry, chain hotels leverage their substantial financial resources, advanced technology, and established brand recognition to implement standardized operational procedures and marketing strategies. In contrast, independent hotels often rely on their ability to deliver personalized service, utilize local knowledge, and emphasize distinctive character, creating memorable guest experiences (Carlbäck, 2012).

Conversely, the MBV focuses on the influence of external market factors on competitive positioning. Using frameworks like Porter's Five Forces, the MBV examines the impact of market dynamics such as bargaining power of suppliers and buyers, threats from substitutes and new entrants, and industry rivalry (Porter, 1997). In the context of recruitment, HR strategies are influenced by external conditions, including economic development, labor market supply and demand, competitive dynamics, and regional cultural influences (Jackson & Schuler, 1995). For example, in a robust economy, intensified competition for skilled labor may compel organizations to enhance their compensation packages and benefits to attract talents. Similarly, local cultural nuances may necessitate tailoring recruitment messaging to resonate with specific audiences. The MBV posits that hotel employers may adjust their EVP communication according to external factors such as location, while the RBV highlights the influence of internal factors such as hotel affiliation (chain or independent) and position levels (non-managerial or supervisory/managerial). Examining these variations enables organizations to tailor their strategies more effectively, ensuring they meet the unique needs and expectations of different segments within the industry.

3. Methodology

3.1. Data

Nine popular job search websites for hotel jobs were initially identified in the chosen five Asian cities. They include *Indeed, JobsDB, Glassdoor, CTgoodjobs, CareerJet, LinkedIn, Jora, Hosco*, and *Hoteljob.vn*. Among these, *Indeed* was selected for the study based on two main criteria. First, it provides coverage of job postings across all five cities, ensuring consistency and eliminating structural variations. Second, it offers a substantial volume of job postings, making it suitable for comprehensive data analysis.

The Web Scraper Chrome extension was used for data extraction due to its efficiency and scalability (Sirisuriya, 2015). Data was extracted separately for each city using five unique sitemaps, as the URLs for *Indeed* differed across the five cities. Nevertheless, the webpage structure remained identical, ensuring a uniform structure of outputs. For each sitemap, the keyword "hotel" was entered in the "Job title, keyword, and company" field, enabling the scraper to extract all relevant job postings, capturing the hotel name, job title, and the full text of the posting. Both front-of-the-house roles that involve direct guest service (e.g., receptionists, food and beverage attendants, guest service officers) and back-of-the-house positions that support hotel operations behind the scenes (e.g., sales, accountants, human resources officers, maintenance officers) are included, provided these roles are based within hotel properties. Data was collected in three rounds at two-week intervals in April 2024, based on the observation that most hotel job postings remain active for two to four weeks. After removing duplicates, the dataset comprised 4603 useable unique job postings for the month (Table 2). The data was matched with the Smith Travel Research (STR) Hotel Census Report of each city to incorporate affiliation type (independent, chain) of the hotels into the dataset (STR, 2024). Job position levels (non-managerial, supervisory/managerial) were inferred from the job titles. Positions were classified as supervisory/managerial if the title included keywords such as "supervisor," "manager," "director," "leader," "president," "chief," or "management," (Li et al., 2024). Out of 4603 postings, 531 (11.54%) are in non-English languages, including Chinese, Thai, and Vietnamese. Due to the large volume of postings, they were translated into English using machine translation by *Google Translate*, which effectively preserves semantic content across languages (Chew et al., 2023) and is widely regarded as accurate by scholars (Rockliffe, 2022), followed by a review and correction by professional translators.

3.2. Method

A combination of deductive and inductive thematic analysis was employed to identify and categorize specific themes and sub-categories of EVPs. The three types of EVPs (E, F, and P) served as the deductive framework. Initial specific EVP codes were developed from the literature to align with these three categories (Ahmad & Scott, 2015; Ambler & Barrow, 1996; Moroko & Uncles, 2009; Mouton & Bussin, 2019; Paadi et al., 2019). Then, a stratified random sample of 200 job postings was reviewed to identify any new codes that emerged inductively, with the sample proportionate to the number of job postings from each city relative to the total. Finally, the merged codes were organized into sub-categories and overarching themes under three types of EVPs (Economic, Functional, and Psychological) to provide a comprehensive understanding of the EVPs communicated in these postings.

Evaluating qualitative research quality involves assessing thematic saturation, which no new themes emerged from the observations and analysis (Faulkner & Trotter, 2017), indicating sufficient information to address the research questions (Lowe et al., 2018). Four marketing and HR professors collaboratively refined and validated the codes, iteratively modifying, adding, deleting, and confirming them to ensure comprehensiveness and precision without overlap (Guest et al., 2020). Thematic saturation confirmed 11 main themes and 34 sub-categories

Table 2

Useable sample size of job postings and number of hotels in each city.

City	HKG	SIN	KUL	BKK	SGN	ALL
Independent	379 (26.52%)	452 (36.51%)	190 (28.23%)	32 (4.36%)	315 (59.55%)	1368 (29.72%)
Chain	1050 (73.48%)	786 (63.49%)	483 (71.77%)	702 (95.64%)	214 (40.45%)	3235 (70.28%)
Total	**1429**	**1238**	**673**	**734**	**529**	**4603**
Non-managerial	929 (65.01%)	819 (66.16%)	438 (65.08%)	411 (55.99%)	403 (76.18%)	3000 (65.17%)
Supervisory/managerial	500 (34.99%)	419 (33,84%)	235 (34.92%)	323 (44.01%)	126 (23.82%)	1603 (34.83%)
Total	**1429**	**1238**	**673**	**734**	**529**	**4603**
No. hotels with ≥50 rooms	226	301	191	537	149	1404

Table 3

Number and percentage of job postings conveying EVPs.

Codes	HKG		SIN		KUL		BKK		SGN		ALL	
	1429		1238		673		734		529		4603	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Economic EVPs	239	16.72	239	19.31	230	34.18	57	7.77	342	64.65	1107	24.05
A **Allowance and sponsorship**	63	4.41	46	3.72	16	2.38	2	0.27	40	7.56	167	3.63
1) Child-related allowance	0	0.00	39	3.15	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	39	0.85
2) Education or training sponsorship	17	1.19	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	17	0.37
3) Housing allowance	0	0.00	3	0.24	3	0.45	0	0.00	6	1.13	12	0.26
4) Meal allowance	31	2.17	3	0.24	13	1.93	2	0.27	40	7.56	89	1.93
5) Transportation allowance	15	1.05	1	0.08	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	16	0.35
B **Compensation**	174	12.18	81	6.54	187	27.79	35	4.77	285	53.88	762	16.55
6) Bonuses	97	6.79	26	2.10	77	11.44	21	2.86	131	24.76	352	7.65
7) Overtime pay and shift allowance	3	0.21	13	1.05	51	7.58	3	0.41	11	2.08	81	1.76
8) Salary and wages	109	7.63	72	5.82	127	18.87	17	2.32	261	49.34	586	12.73
9) Yearly salary increment	0	0.00	13	1.05	1	0.15	2	0.27	17	3.21	33	0.72
C **Financial security and retirement plan**	108	7.56	115	9.29	114	16.94	31	4.22	206	38.94	574	12.47
10) Insurance coverage and health benefits (e.g., medical, social, accident, unemployment, life insurance, etc.)	91	6.37	115	9.29	114	16.94	31	4.22	206	38.94	557	12.10
11) Retirement plans	18	1.26	1	0.08	3	0.45	1	0.14	0	0.00	23	0.50
D **Perks and rewards**	69	4.83	150	12.12	61	9.06	2	0.27	49	9.26	331	7.19
12) Duty meals	22	1.54	52	4.20	55	8.17	1	0.14	24	4.54	154	3.35
13) Employee discounts program	28	1.96	59	4.77	3	0.45	1	0.14	16	3.02	107	2.32
14) Free hotel stays and outing activities	0	0.00	61	4.93	3	0.45	0	0.00	10	1.89	74	1.61
15) Monetary incentives for special occasions (e.g., new hires, birthday, work anniversaries)	23	1.61	23	1.86	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	46	1.00
Functional EVPs	834	58.36	534	43.13	385	57.21	534	72.75	139	26.28	2426	52.70
E **Career development**	234	16.38	174	14.05	41	6.09	193	26.29	55	10.40	697	15.14
16) Opportunities for growth and promotion	36	2.52	62	5.01	11	1.63	8	1.09	36	6.81	153	3.32
17) Training and professional development programs	200	14.00	151	12.20	33	4.90	185	25.20	25	4.73	594	12.90
F **Supportive work environment**	611	42.76	420	33.93	259	38.48	514	70.03	61	11.53	1865	40.52
18) Employee communities (e.g., intra-group career opportunities, networking and connections)	166	11.62	95	7.67	30	4.46	213	29.02	27	5.10	531	11.54
19) Equal access to opportunities	568	39.75	337	27.22	236	35.07	466	63.49	50	9.45	1657	36.00
20) Open communication	62	4.34	160	12.92	55	8.17	111	15.12	15	2.84	403	8.76
G **Work-life balance**	84	5.88	87	7.03	116	17.24	17	2.32	37	6.99	341	7.41
21) Flexible work schedule	2	0.14	10	0.81	11	1.63	3	0.41	0	0.00	26	0.56
22) Paid holiday and leave policy	83	5.81	56	4.52	106	15.75	14	1.91	37	6.99	296	6.43
23) Overall work-life balance	1	0.07	21	1.70	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	22	0.48
Psychological EVPs	674	47.17	668	53.96	323	47.99	599	81.61	138	26.09	2402	52.18
H **Employee well-being initiatives**	144	10.08	114	9.21	13	1.93	174	23.71	4	0.76	449	9.75
24) Overall well-being support	53	3.71	108	8.72	10	1.49	169	23.02	4	0.76	344	7.47
25) Support for personal pursuits and interests	91	6.37	6	0.48	3	0.45	5	0.68	0	0.00	105	2.28
I **Meaningful work**	337	23.58	470	37.96	197	29.27	431	58.72	47	8.88	1482	32.20
26) Clear mission and vision	187	13.09	295	23.83	81	12.04	304	41.42	36	6.81	903	19.62
27) Pride on creating an impactful guest experience	132	9.24	216	17.45	145	21.55	196	26.70	36	6.81	725	15.75
28) Sense of honor in representing a reputable brand	157	10.99	261	21.08	72	10.70	253	34.47	8	1.51	751	16.32
J **Organization culture**	542	37.93	446	36.03	254	37.74	495	67.44	124	23.44	1861	40.43
29) Commitment to CSR/ESG	17	1.19	41	3.31	3	0.45	11	1.50	10	1.89	82	1.78
30 Dynamic, vibrant, friendly and happy working environment	76	5.32	99	8.00	22	3.27	152	20.71	67	12.67	416	9.04
31) Inclusive and diverse culture	378	26.45	399	32.23	243	36.11	483	65.80	52	9.83	1555	33.78
32) People-oriented and team-oriented culture	403	28.20	293	23.67	218	32.39	441	60.08	47	8.88	1402	30.46
K **Recognition and appreciation**	212	14.84	140	11.31	27	4.01	188	25.61	20	3.78	587	12.75
33) Employee recognition program	212	14.84	140	11.31	27	4.01	188	25.61	19	3.59	586	12.73
34) Regular feedback and performance evaluations	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	11	2.08	11	0.24
Total (Unique)	1012	70.82	818	66.07	528	78.45	650	88.56	410	77.50	3418	74.26

Notes: The letters (A, B, C) indicate the themes of EVPs, while the numbers (1, 2, 3) denote the sub-categories of EVPs.

(Table 3).

After defining the EVP framework, content analysis was utilized as a systematic and objective technique to quantify the job posting dataset and assess the frequency of communication for each EVP code across five Asian cities. NVivo provides a cost-effective and user-friendly alternative for researchers focused on content analysis without

requiring advanced programming or machine learning expertise. Its automatic coding feature using existing patterns facilitated the quantification of large volumes of data. Specifically, the established codes served as the coding framework, and NVivo 14's automatic coding feature, which uses existing coding patterns (one of the Auto Code Wizard options), enabled efficient "broad-brush" coding of a substantial amount of text data (Lumivero, n.d). This approach aligns with the exploratory and interpretative nature of this research. While classical text mining methods are powerful for identifying thematic patterns, they typically count the presence of themes based on those discovered from the data using word frequencies or machine learning algorithms. However, these methods often lack the capability to reference a pre-defined EVP structure (Economic, Functional, and Psychological Employer Value Propositions) from existing literature when counting the frequencies of each theme's presence.

The process involved several steps. First, a coding framework was developed based on established codes from the thematic analysis (Table 3). Second, 10% of the sample job postings, selected proportionally to represent the distribution of postings across each city, were manually coded by one author to train NVivo in recognizing patterns. During this step, NVivo learned which sentences or content to associate with each EVP code. For instance, for the code "Child-related allowance," NVivo identified relevant terms such as "Adoption assistance," "Allowance for childcare expenses," and "Child education assistance," which would aid in the automatic coding process. Third, the remaining data was automatically coded based on these established patterns. To ensure validity and reliability, all auto-coded codes were meticulously reviewed, with any incorrect codes amended or removed. Reliability was further strengthened by reviewing the output of autocoding. One author first examined the entire result across the 34 sub-categories, removing and correcting any incorrect codes. The second author then reviewed all coded content based on the first author's corrections, and no discrepancies were identified after this review. Finally, frequency counts of the identified attributes were conducted to quantify their prevalence across the dataset.

4. Results

4.1. Number and percentage of job postings conveying EVPs

Table 3 displays the overall distribution and proportion of job postings conveying EVPs. The number listed under each code represents the count of postings that convey that specific code. The total postings reflect the recruitment activity, with HKG (1429) and SIN (1238) having

significantly higher volumes of job postings, reflecting their larger market sizes.

4.2. Differences in the frequency of job postings conveying EVPs across the selected Asian cities

Fig. 1 illustrates the percentage of job postings conveying EVPs across the chosen Asian cities. The overall percentage stands at 74.26%. Among the cities, BKK has the highest proportion at 88.56%, while SIN has the lowest proportion at 66.07%. The remaining three cities display marginal deviations ranging from 70.82% to 78.45%.

To ascertain whether there are significant differences among the five cities in terms of the frequency of job postings that convey EVPs, the Chi-square test of independence was utilized. The Chi-square statistic ($\chi 2$) was calculated using the following formula.

$$\chi 2 = \sum \frac{(O - E)^2}{E}$$

where:

O is the observed frequency

E is the expected frequency

Expected frequency = (row total * column total)/grand total

The contingency table (see Supplementary Material 1) for city comparison was constructed using the specified equation, yielding a chi-square test statistic (χ^2) being 139.82. The degrees of freedom (df) is 4, calculated using the formula (number of groups in variable 1 - 1) * (number of groups in variable 2 - 1), based on five groups in the intervention variable (five cities) and two groups in the outcome variable (conveyed, not conveyed). Referring to the chi-square critical value table provided by Scribbr (2022) for a significance level of 0.05 and df of 4, the critical value is determined to be 9.488. Since the χ^2 of 139.82 far exceeds the critical value of 9.488, it is concluded that there is a significant difference among the five cities in the frequency of job postings conveying EVPs.

Post hoc tests were conducted to delve into the specific pairwise differences between the groups, with results detailed in Supplementary Material 2. The df for each test is (2 − 1) * (2 − 1) = 1. To adjust for the 10 tests conducted, a Bonferroni correction was applied, yielding a significance level of α = 0.05/10 = 0.005. According to Scribbr (2022), the chi-square critical value at α = 0.005 and df = 1 is 7.879. With the exception of the pairwise comparisons between SIN and KUL (6.93) and between KUL and SGN (0.16), all other eight pairwise comparisons exhibited χ^2 values surpassing the critical value, indicating significant differences in the frequency of job postings conveying EVPs across these
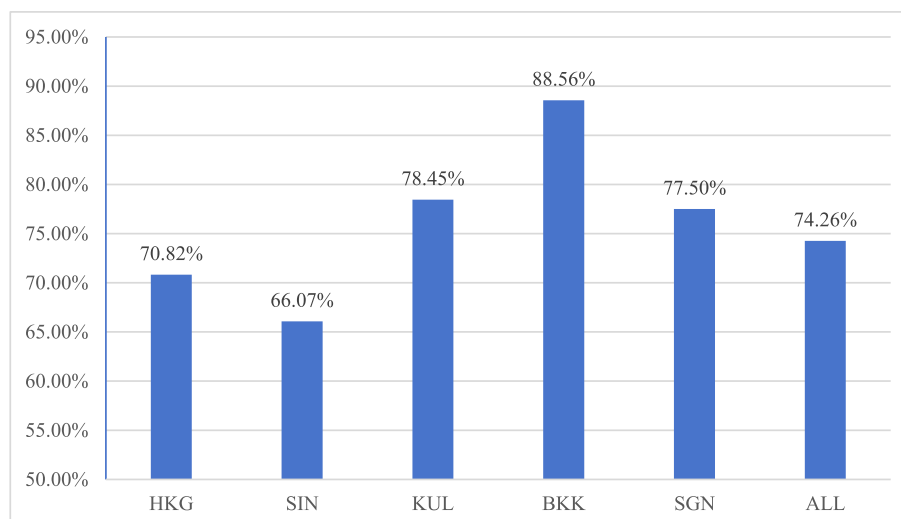

Fig. 1. Proportion of job postings conveying at least one EVPs by cities.

cities.

4.3. Differences in the frequency of job postings conveying EVPs across three types of EVPs

Fig. 2 depicts the proportion of job postings conveying three distinct types of EVPs across selected Asian cities. Based on data on ALL cities, F-EVPs and P-EVPs displayed a similar distribution around 52%, while E-EVPs accounted for a lower percentage at 24.05%. Divergent patterns emerged across the five cities, with HKG, SIN, KUL, and BKK exhibiting higher proportions of F-EVPs and P-EVPs compared to E-EVPs. However, SGN saw the opposite side with E-EVPs significantly surpassing F-EVPs and P-EVPs. Notably, BKK boasted the highest percentage of P-EVPs at 81.61% and F-EVPs at 72.75%, while SGN led with the highest percentage of E-EVPs at 64.65%.

χ^2 values were computed to assess potential significant differences in the frequency of job postings conveying EVPs across three distinct types of EVPs in each city. Supplementary Material 3 displays the findings. The df for each city were calculated as $(3 - 1) * (2 - 1) = 2$. Referring to the chi-square critical value table provided by Scribbr (2022) for $\alpha = 0.05$ and df = 2, the critical value is determined to be 5.991. As the χ^2 values for all cities notably exceed the critical value of 5.991, it can be inferred that all cities present three types of EVPs with statistically significant differences.

Post hoc tests were undertaken to explore specific pairwise differences, with detailed results provided in Supplementary Material 4. The df for each test was calculated as $(2 - 1) * (2 - 1) = 1$. A Bonferroni correction was implemented, and since there are a total of 3 tests, the significance level was adjusted to $\alpha = 0.05/3 = 0.017$. As per Scribbr (2022), the chi-square critical value at $\alpha = 0.017$ and df = 1 is 6.635. Except for the pairwise comparisons between F-EVPs and P-EVPs (0.25) in ALL cities, and between F-EVPs and P-EVPs (<0.01) in SGN, all other pairwise comparisons demonstrated χ^2 values exceeding the critical value, indicating significant differences in the frequency of job postings conveying EVPs.

4.4. Differences in the frequency of job postings conveying EVPs between chain and independent hotels

The detailed distribution of the number of job postings in chain and independent hotels that communicate three types of EVPs across five cities can be found in Supplementary Material 5. Fig. 3 visually illustrates the proportion of this data. As a whole, chain hotels (81.14%) display a higher proportion compared to independent hotels (57.97%). A consistent trend emerges where chain hotels obviously surpass independent hotels in F-EVPs and P-EVPs. Conversely, independent hotels exhibit a notably higher proportion than chain hotels in E-EVPs. This trend remains steady across all cities, except for SIN's E-EVPs where chain hotels exceed independent hotels.

χ^2 values were calculated to evaluate potential significant differences in the frequency of job postings conveying EVPs between chain and independent hotels in each city. The results are presented in Supplementary Material 6. The df for each city were computed as $(2 - 1) * (2 - 1) = 1$. Consulting the chi-square critical value table provided by Scribbr (2022) for $\alpha = 0.05$ and df = 1, the critical value is determined to be 3.841. With the χ^2 values for all cities and EVP types significantly exceeding the critical value of 3.841, except for Any type of EVPs in KUL and SGN, it can be concluded that chain hotels have a statistically higher proportion of EVP communication than independent hotels, with only two minor exceptions.

4.5. Differences in the frequency of job postings conveying EVPs between non-managerial and supervisory/managerial positions

The detailed distribution of the number of job postings in non-managerial positions and supervisory/managerial positions that communicate three types of EVPs across five cities is available in Supplementary Material 7. Fig. 4 visually represents the proportion of this data. By and large, the difference between non-managerial postings (72.67%) and supervisory/managerial postings (77.23%) is relatively small. No discernible and consistent pattern emerges in the comparison of EVP-conveying job postings frequency between non-managerial and supervisory/managerial positions, except for some deviations noted in KUL and SGN.

χ^2 values were computed to determine if there are significant differences in the frequency of job postings conveying EVPs between non-managerial and supervisory/managerial positions in each city. The results are outlined in Supplementary Material 7. The df for each city were calculated as $(2 - 1) * (2 - 1) = 1$. Referring to the chi-square critical value table provided by Scribbr (2022) for $\alpha = 0.05$ and df = 1, the
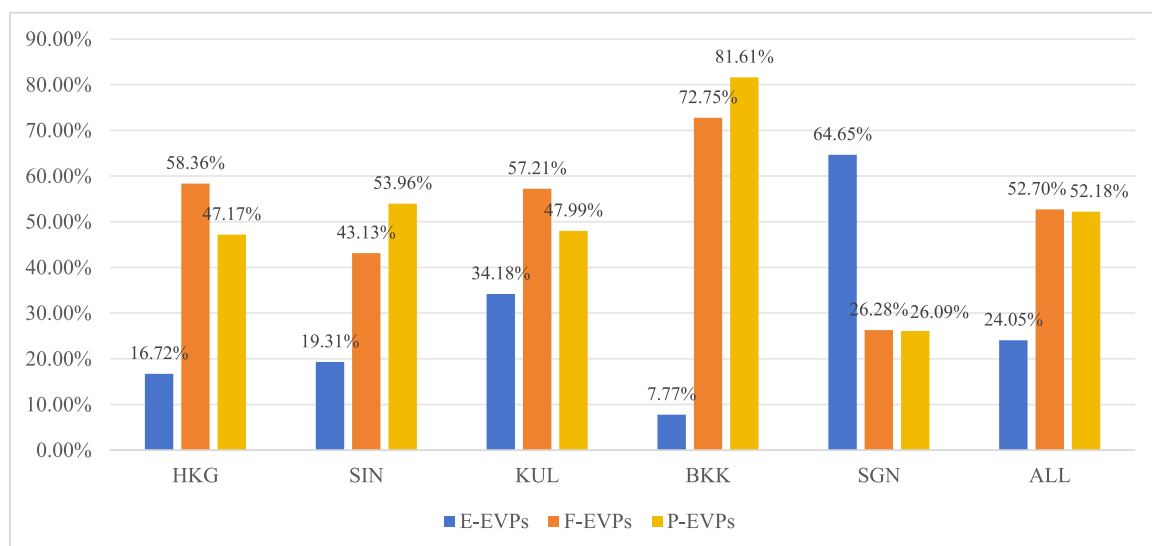

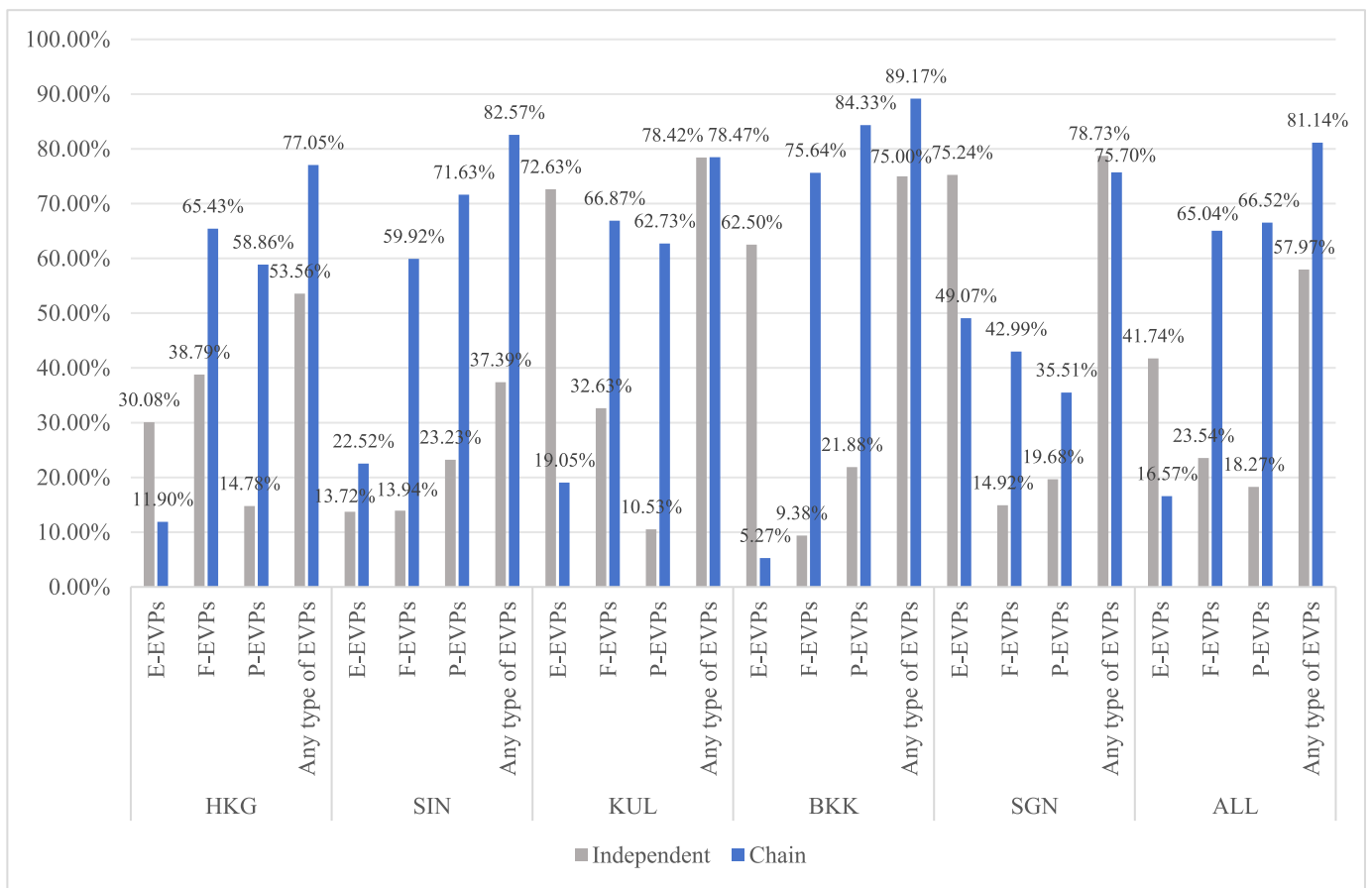**Fig. 2.** Proportion of job postings conveying three types of EVPs by cities.

Fig. 3. Proportion of job postings conveying EVPs by cities and EVP types and a comparison between chain and independent hotels.

critical value is determined to be 3.841. The majority of the χ^2 values for cities and EVP types are either lower than the critical value of 3.841 or only slightly exceed it, without any consistent pattern emerging. Consequently, it can be concluded that there are no apparent differences in the frequency of job postings conveying EVPs between non-managerial positions and supervisory/managerial positions.

4.6. Specific themes and sub-categories of EVPs

Figs. 5 and 6 respectively display the percentages of job postings conveying subdivided themes and sub-categories of E-EVPs. Based on data from all cities, compensation is the predominant theme (16.55%), followed by financial security and retirement plans (12.47%). Themes like perks and rewards, as well as allowance and sponsorship, receive fewer mentions at 7.19% and 3.63% respectively. SGN consistently exhibits the highest proportion for each theme, while BKK consistently has the lowest proportion.

Regarding sub-categories of E-EVPs across all cities, salary and wages (12.73%), insurance coverage and health benefits (12.10%), and bonuses (7.65%) are the most frequently mentioned. In contrast, retirement plans (0.50%), yearly salary increment (0.72%), transportation allowance (0.35%), housing allowance (0.26%), education and training sponsorship (0.37%), and child-related allowance (0.85%) receive minimal attention.

Figs. 7 and 8 illustrate the percentages of job postings conveying themes and sub-categories of E-EVPs, respectively. Based on data from all cities, the most prevalent theme is a supportive work environment (40.52%), followed by career development (15.14%), with work-life balance trailing at 7.41%. BKK stands out with the highest proportions for supportive work environment (70.03%) and career development

(26.29%) across cities, whereas SGN demonstrates the lowest percentages in these two themes. The theme of work-life balance is relatively consistent across all cities.

In terms of sub-categories based on the combined data from all cities, equal access to opportunities (36.00%) emerges as the most popular, while overall work-life balance (0.48%) and flexible work schedule (0.56%) are the least mentioned. The remaining sub-categories receive attention ranging from 3.32% to 12.90%.

Figs. 9 and 10 respectively depict the percentages of job postings conveying themes and sub-categories of P-EVPs. Organizational culture (40.43%) emerges as the most popular theme across Asian cities, followed by meaningful work (32.20%). In contrast, themes like recognition and appreciation, as well as employee well-being initiatives, receive fewer mentions at 12.75% and 9.75% respectively. BKK consistently leads across all four themes, while SGN consistently shows the lowest. HKG and SIN exhibit similar patterns in these themes.

Regarding sub-categories, inclusive and diverse culture (33.78%) and people-oriented and team-oriented culture (30.46%) are frequently highlighted by hotels. Conversely, sub-categories such as regular feedback and performance evaluations (0.24%), commitment to CSR/ESG (1.78%), and support for personal pursuits and interests (2.28%) receive notably less emphasis in job postings.

5. Discussion and implications

5.1. Discussion of findings

This study offers an overview of the specific EVP attributes communicated by hotels in job postings and examines the representation of each type, theme, and sub-category of EVP is represented across five
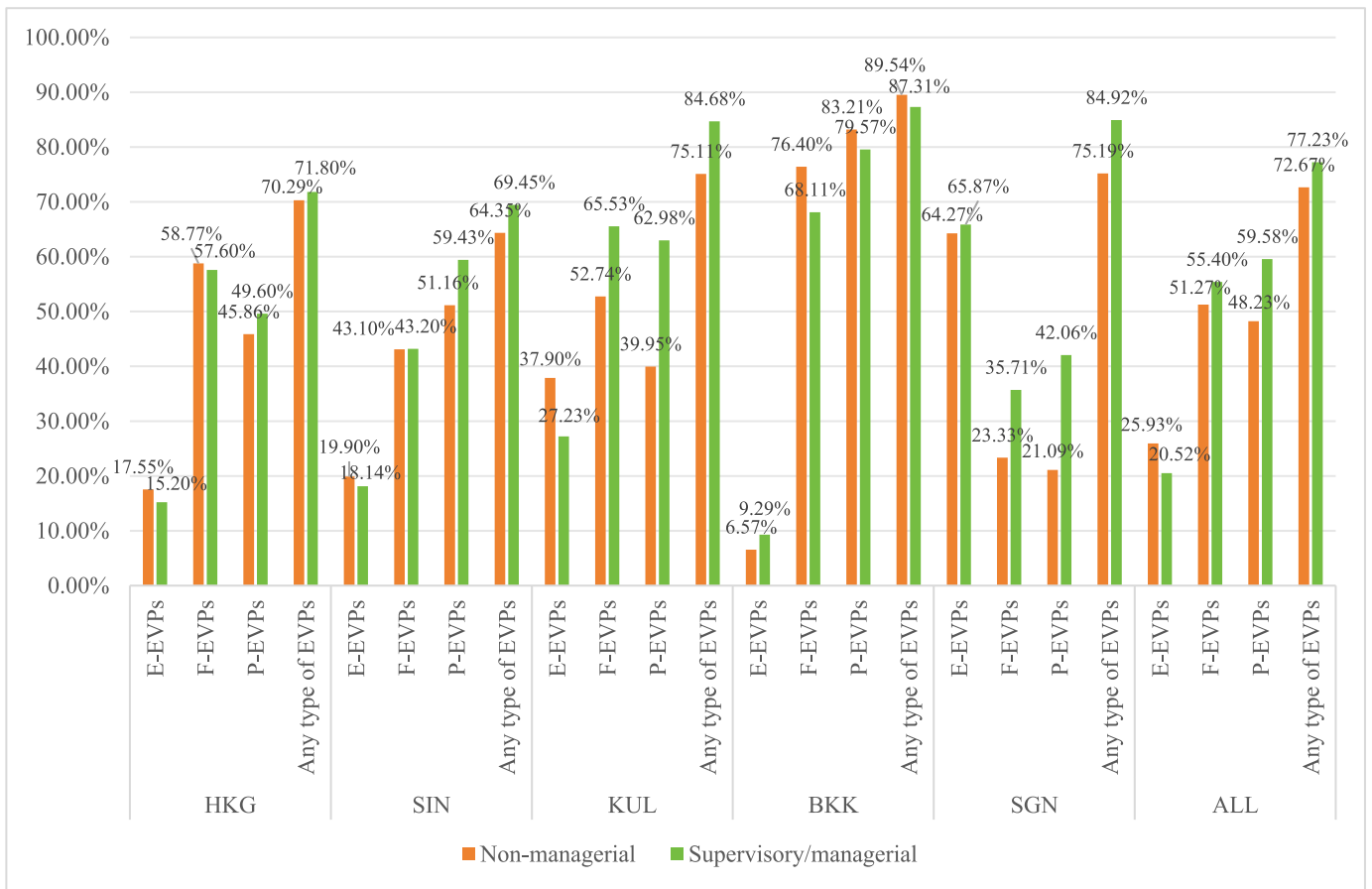
Fig. 4. Proportion of job postings conveying EVPs by cities and EVP types and a comparison between non-managerial positions and supervisory/managerial positions.
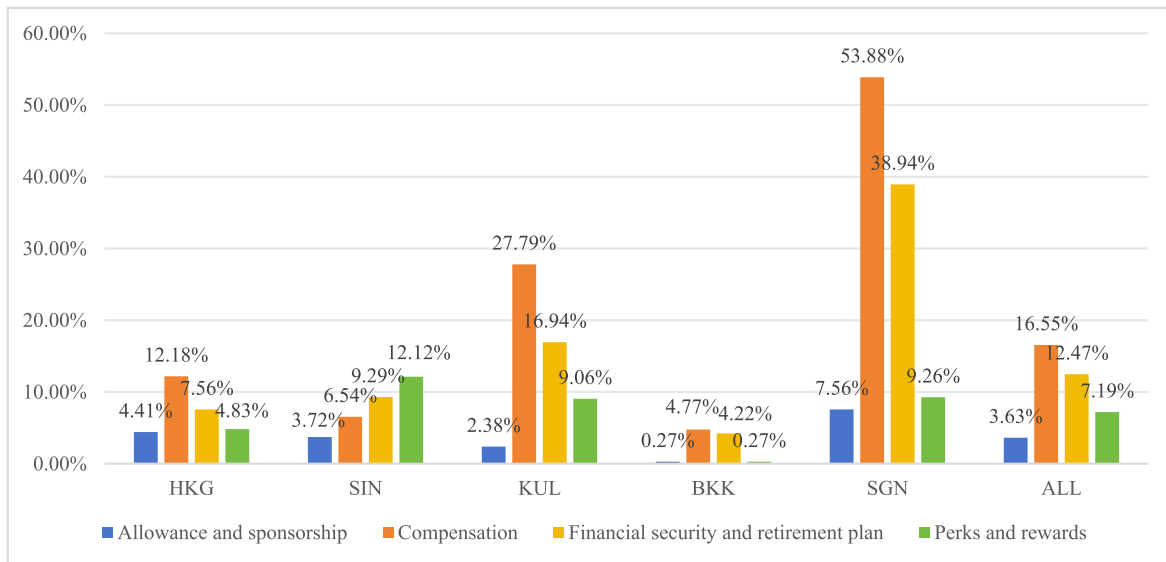

Fig. 5. Proportion of job postings conveying E-EVP themes.

Asian cities. Overall, approximately three-quarters of job postings incorporated at least one type of EVP. To the best of our knowledge, no existing research has quantified EVP communication through job postings. However, some studies have analyzed how corporate social responsibility and corporate identity are conveyed on hotel websites, including employment-related content. For example, Mohammed et al.
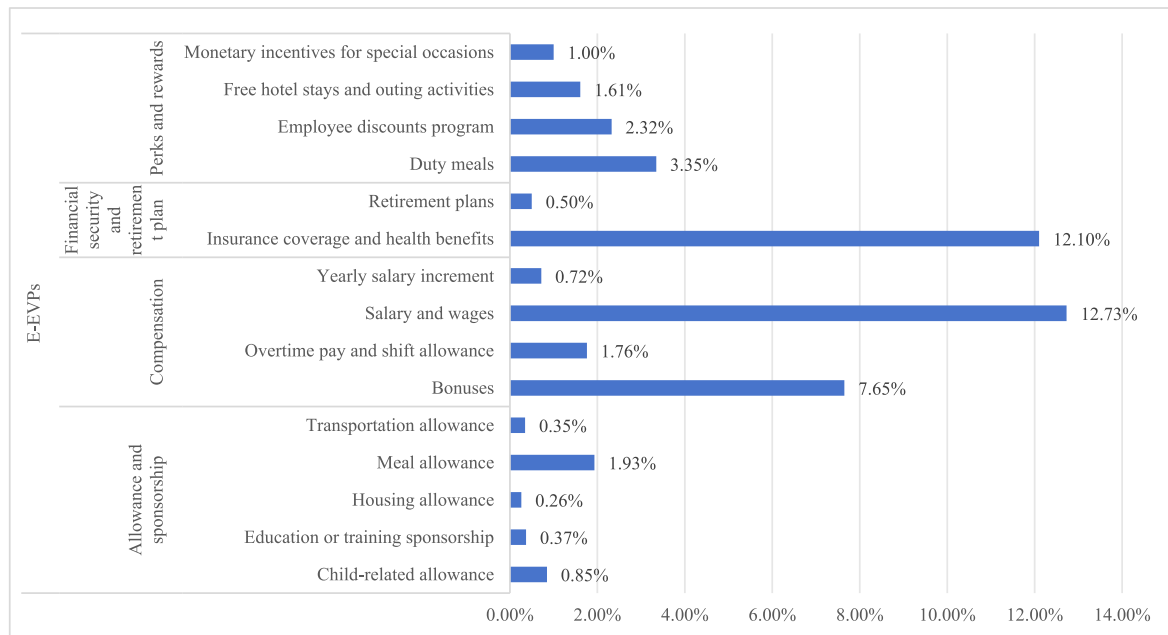
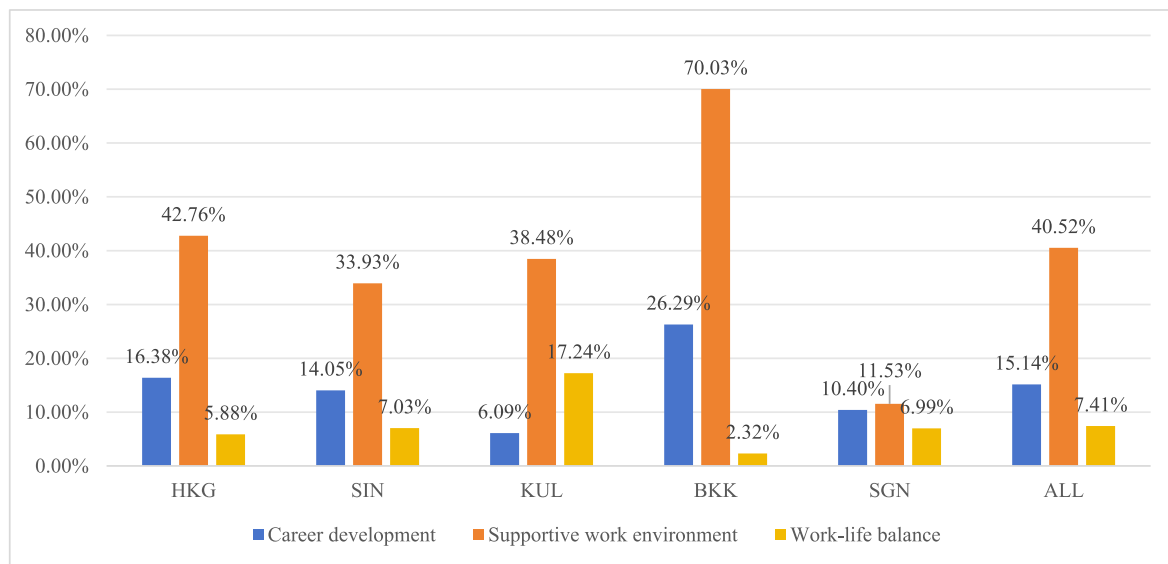**Fig. 6.** Distribution of sub-categories in E-EVPs based on data of all cities.

Fig. 7. Proportion of job postings conveying F-EVP themes.

(2016) found that 55.3% of the 123 hotel websites communicated their employment policies, while Ettinger et al. (2018) reported that 36.17% of 47 hotel websites addressed employee relations. Several potential explanations exist for why roughly a quarter of job postings missed the opportunity to communicate EVPs. First, certain third-party career sites may enforce word limitations for job postings, prompting employers to prioritize essential job requirements and qualifications content instead. For instance, *Indeed* allows a maximum of 5000 characters for the company description and 20,000 characters for the job description. Moreover, it lacks designated areas for promoting EVPs and only supports text input, which hinders employers from effectively showcasing their unique offerings. Second, apart from job advertisements, hotels might detail their EVPs more comprehensively on their own career and

corporate websites, social media platforms, professional online networks like LinkedIn, or through offline networking activities. Third, as per feedback from consulted hotel HR managers (C. Wong, personal communication, March 22, 2024), some employers prefer discussing EVPs during recruitment interviews. Moreover, certain luxury hotel brand HR managers believe in the allure of their reputation to attract ample applicants and are confident that their superior EVPs exceed industry standards and outshine competitors, leading them to rely less on external career websites to showcase their EVPs (M. Yuen, personal communication, March 22, 2024).

There is a significant statistical contrast in the frequency of job postings conveying EVPs across these Asian cities. Bangkok demonstrated the highest frequency in utilizing job postings to communicate
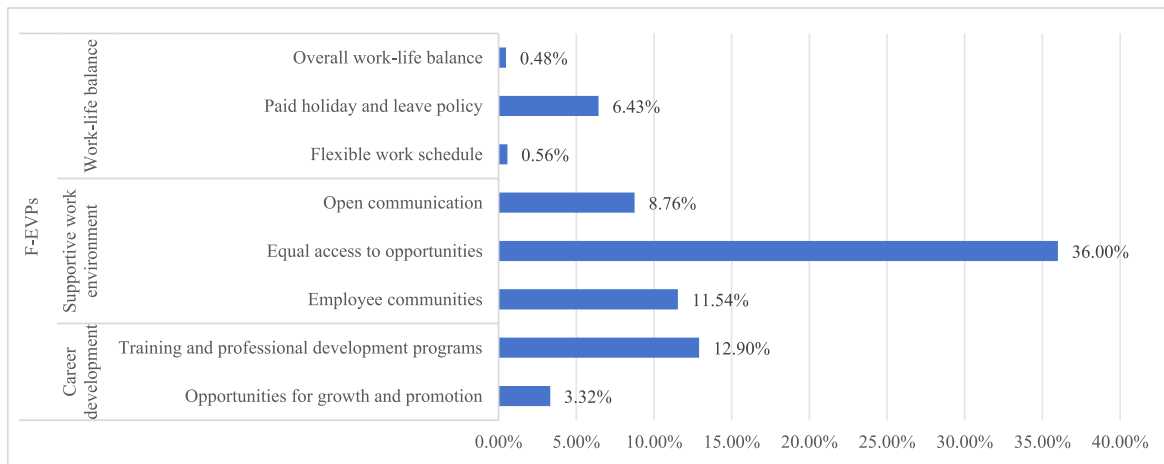
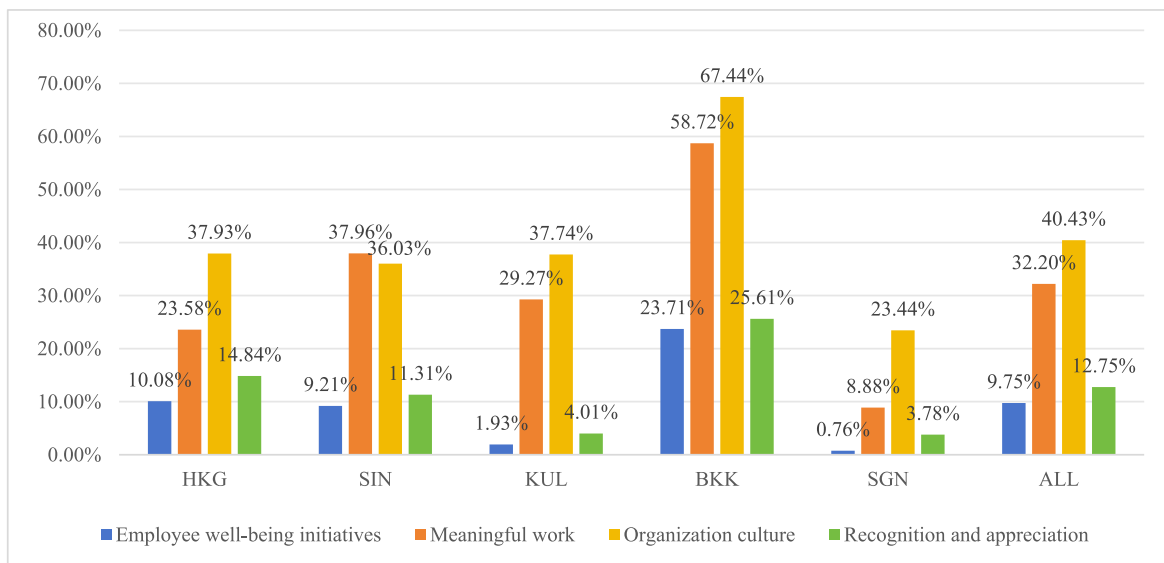**Fig. 8.** Distribution of sub-categories in F-EVPs based on data of all cities.

Fig. 9. Proportion of job postings conveying P-EVP themes.

EVPs, while Hong Kong and Singapore slightly lagged below the average level. Tourism and hospitality stand out as pivotal industries in Thailand, with tourism contributing nearly 18% to the GDP and employing around 12% of the workforce before the pandemic in 2019 (Statista, 2024b, 2024c). Moreover, by May 2024, visitor arrivals in Thailand are only 7% below pre-pandemic levels, indicating that the sector is on track for a complete recovery by the end of the year (Panorama Destination, 2024). The demand for hotel employees in Bangkok is significant, underscoring the need for a robust emphasis on employer branding to attract and retain staff. In contrast, the hotel job markets in Hong Kong and Singapore are highly competitive. Finding employment in Hong Kong and Singapore is particularly challenging for both locals and foreigners due to the city's high population density and stringent employment visa regulations for expatriates (Links Moving, 2024; Lu, 2023). Consequently, hotels in these cities typically offer more general information in their job postings, with less emphasis on explicit coverage of EVPs, as the high competition for positions guarantees a substantial influx of applicants. Additionally, during the coding process, it was noted that job postings from Hong Kong and Singapore often

include links to their websites for further details, while the postings themselves contain relatively basic information.

In the ten pairwise comparisons among cities, Hong Kong and Singapore, as well as Kuala Lumpur and Ho Chi Minh City, exhibited similar patterns, while significant differences were observed in the remaining eight comparisons. Hong Kong and Singapore, known for their developed and mature labor markets, exhibited a notably higher volume of job postings compared to other cities. These two cities are recognized as major international Asian metropolises, sharing similarities in business environments concerning taxation and regulations, funding and investment, as well as infrastructure and connectivity (InCorp, 2024). Likewise, Kuala Lumpur and Ho Chi Minh City demonstrate a comparable level of engagement in EVP communication, likely stemming from their similar economic scales (Vietnam News, 2023).

Across all cities, there is a notable disparity in the proportion of job postings conveying different types of EVPs. Generally, Functional EVPs and Psychological EVPs are more prominently featured compared to Economic EVPs, except Ho Chi Minh City stands out with a reversed
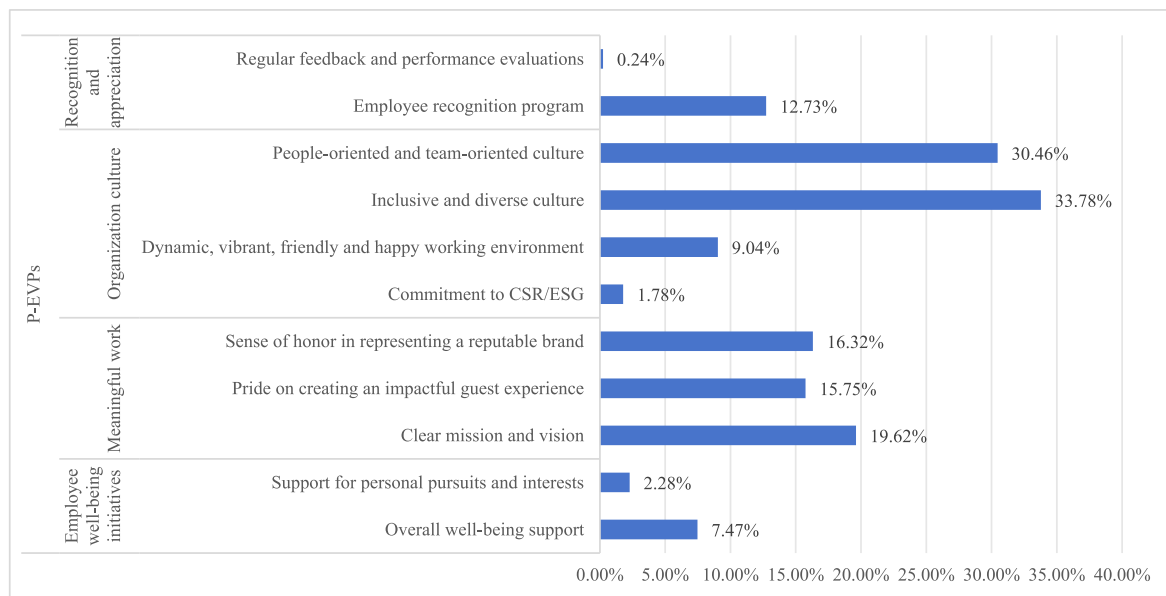
Fig. 10. Distribution of sub-categories in P-EVPs based on data of all cities.

trend, showcasing a higher proportion of postings with Economic EVPs over Functional EVPs and Psychological EVPs. Economic EVPs, as known as the financial components such as salaries, bonuses, and insurance, which are fundamental for any company. HR managers advise against disclosing specific monetary details in job postings due to individual variances and privacy considerations. They also mentioned that disclosing monetary benefits is futile if hotels cannot guarantee their offers are markedly more competitive than those of competitors (C. Wong, personal communication, March 22, 2024). On the flip side, significant potential for employer branding differentiation lies within the functional and psychological dimensions of EVPs. Functional EVPs underscore concrete facets like career advancement and training programs, whereas Psychological EVPs emphasize emotional elements such as fostering a positive company culture, promoting recognition, embracing diversity, and ensuring inclusivity. These aspects not only serve to attract applicants but also demonstrate a company's dedication to social responsibility and community engagement. Regarding the case of Ho Chi Minh City, Loan (2021) employed survival analysis to predict factors influencing employee tenure. They discovered a positive correlation between salary and job duration, indicating that individuals with higher salaries tend to remain with the organization for a longer period. Additionally, data from Salary Explore (2024) and World Salary (2024) reveals that average hotel wages in Ho Chi Minh City lag behind the overall industry average, underscoring the critical importance of economic incentives in attracting and retaining talent within the city's hotel sector.

Across the board, chain hotels notably outstrip independent hotels in the proportion of job postings with EVP communication. Specifically, a consistent pattern emerges where chain hotels significantly exceed independent hotels in the emphasis on Functional EVPs and Psychological EVPs. In contrast, independent hotels predominantly showcase a significantly higher emphasis on Economic EVPs compared to chain hotels. Chain-affiliated hotels often boast substantial resources, such as economies of scale, established brand image, and sophisticated HR and marketing strategies (Dogru et al., 2020), enabling them to effectively communicate their EVPs in job postings. Through consultations with chain hotel HR managers, it emerged that they are confident to offer well-structured and competitive economic benefits surpassing industry norms, often choosing not to disclose these details publicly but rather during personalized consultations or interviews (M. Yuen, personal communication, March 22, 2024). Instead, communicating Functional

EVPs and Psychological EVPs would allow them to distinguish themselves from their competitors. In contrast, independent hotels, usually operating on a smaller scale, tend to place a premium on Economic EVPs to ensure employee contentment and retention, which are more tangible and directly impact employees' financial well-being. Moreover, implementing expansive Functional EVPs and Psychological EVPs initiatives like commitment to CSR/ESG, or establishing comprehensive employer communities such as intra-group career progression paths, networking events, and connections, typically demand significant investments in terms of time, finances, and resources, which may pose challenges for independent hotels.

No discernible distinctions were observed in the comparison between non-managerial and supervisory/managerial roles regarding the frequency of conveying EVPs in job postings, with no consistent patterns emerging. During the manual coding process, it was observed that for various positions within the same hotel, employers typically employ uniform content in job postings, merely substituting specific details such as job descriptions and qualifications. Hotels generally maintain consistent branding strategies across job postings for various position levels. This approach reflects a shared set of organizational values, a commitment to internal equity, and a goal to streamline recruitment processes for greater efficiency and resource savings.

5.2. Practical implications

This study presents several managerial implications for hotel employers. First of all, the 11 main themes and 34 sub-categories identified in this study under the three types of EVPs constitute a conceptual framework for evaluating contemporary hotel employers' efforts in EVP communication, offering critical insights into industry standards and practices. Moreover, it provides a comprehensive overview of how frequently hotels in five key Asian cities communicate EVPs via job postings. One-fourth of the hotels still offer only basic information, missing the chance to enhance employer branding at no extra costs, which can improve applicants' attitudes and perceptions of the organization (Phillips et al., 2014; Roberson et al., 2005). Additionally, it supplies detailed data on current EVP communication practices, helping hotels evaluate and improve their EVP strategies, facilitating benchmarking and the identification of areas for enhancement in EVP communication. The comparative analyses on EVP conveyance across dimensions, offering market insights for hotels to tailor effective

employer branding strategies and attract talent in their respective markets based on relative positioning within the region. Independent hotels, despite limited resources, can leverage their flexibility to tailor EVPs around their unique selling points, focusing more on functional and psychological aspects rather than solely economic ones. Furthermore, branding strategies should cater to different position levels, as employee needs vary. For instance, Li et al. (2024) found that managers prioritize organizational culture and work environment, while non-managers focus more on tangible benefits.

Additionally, recommendations can be tailored for selected Asian cities based on their EVP themes and sub-categories they embraced. In terms of Economic EVPs, Bangkok falls below average, with themes like "perks and rewards" and "allowances and sponsorships" receiving minimal attention. Hotel employers can consider incorporating sub-categories like "monetary incentives for special occasions," "transportation allowances," and "housing allowances" to enhance the economic aspect of brand image. For Functional EVPs, Ho Chi Minh City shows a notably lower engagement, with "career development" and "work-life balance" needing improvement. Subcategories like "overall work-life balance" and "flexible work schedules" receive minimal emphasis, despite being a critical drawback inherent to the service industry. For Psychological EVPs, Ho Chi Minh City also falls short. Hotels should prioritize "recognition and appreciation" and "employee well-being initiatives". Additionally, "commitment to CSR/ESG" received minimal mentions but crucial for building a positive reputation and enhancing employees job satisfaction (Farmaki et al., 2022).

For job search websites providers, the findings highlight the need for improved job search website design, as many job boards lack well-designed interfaces for effectively communicating EVPs. Implementing dedicated input fields and integrating multimedia options such as images and videos can enhance engagement and provide a richer experience for job seekers.

5.3. Theoretical implications

This study enriches the literature on employer branding and recruitment research by conducting a thorough analysis of how hotels communicate EVPs in job postings on job search websites, exploring their nuanced engagement levels and specific attributes in detail. First, grounded in the instrumental and symbolic framework (Keller, 1993) and the established Economic, Psychological, and Functional dimensions of the EVP framework (Moroko & Uncles, 2009), this study extends the application of EVP communication to the hospitality industry in Asia, where empirical research has been limited. Rather than sticking to the three general EVP classifications, this study identifies 11 themes and 34 subcategories in a context-specific application. This attribute-level refinement may provide new insights into how EVP is communicated in hospitality job postings, thereby enhancing our understanding of how the specific EVP framework manifests within this particular region and industry.

Second, based on signaling theory (Spence, 1978), this study examines online job postings as a digital platform often overlooked in employer branding research. It reveals how these postings communicate a positive employer image and reduce information asymmetries. By analyzing job postings on online search platforms, the study demonstrates the transformation of signal delivery from traditional media to digital channels. This offers a new perspective on signaling theory by exploring how digital communication trends, such as keyword emphasis and structured job descriptions, influence the communication and delivery of EVPs. The analysis highlights the essential role of signal attributes in conveying the employer brand and enhancing employer attractiveness in competitive digital recruitment markets.

Third, the Resource-Based View (Grant, 2002) and the Market-Based View (Porter, 1997) provide the rationale for exploring and comparing EVP communications across various cities, affiliation types, and position levels, offering new insights into EVP comparisons among different employers in the hotel industry. RBV facilitates the comparison of EVP communication between chain and independent hotels, as well as between non-managerial and supervisory/managerial roles. Chain hotels, with their greater resources and established brand equity, tend to emphasize Functional and Psychological EVPs more strongly, while independent hotels focus on Economic EVPs to meet immediate employee needs. The consistent EVP messaging across job levels also reflects the efficient resource allocation strategies of chain hotels. Additionally, the MBV supports the analysis of EVP communication across different Asian cities, illustrating how labor market dynamics, economic conditions, local cultural contexts, and industry competitiveness influence the emphasis placed on EVPs.

5.4. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study provides valuable insights into how hotels communicate EVP attributes in job postings across five Asian cities, highlighting differences in frequency and emphasis. Approximately three-quarters of postings incorporated EVPs, with chain hotels focusing on Functional EVPs and Psychological EVPs to leverage their resources, while independent hotels emphasized Economic EVPs to address employees' financial needs. Differences among cities reflected labor market dynamics and industry competitiveness. The findings underscore the importance of tailoring EVP communication to local conditions and organizational strengths. Functional EVPs and Psychological EVPs emerged as critical differentiators in employer branding. This study provides practitioners with a framework to evaluate EVP communication, offering insights for strategic improvements, particularly for independent hotels. Theoretically, the study enriches employer branding literature by applying signaling theory, demonstrating how job postings act as tools to communicate EVPs. The RBV highlights how resource availability shapes EVP communication in chain versus independent hotels, while the MBV explains city-specific EVP emphasis based on labor market dynamics.

This study has several limitations. First, it only examines EVPs in job postings on a third-party career website, which does not imply hotels do not engage in communicating their EVPs elsewhere. Future research could include other job boards, hotels' own career websites, social media, and interviews with HR managers. Second, the findings are based on a snapshot of job postings on *Indeed* as of April 2024. Future studies could employ longitudinal analyses to track long-term trends. Third, future studies could explore factors like hotel scale (economy, mid-scale, upscale, luxury, etc.) for potential variations. Lastly, quantitative approaches can be adopted to investigate the impact of EVP presence on employees' intent to apply and remain with an organization.

CRediT authorship contribution statement

Ada Lo: Writing – review & editing, Writing – original draft, Validation, Supervision, Project administration, Methodology, Investigation, Funding acquisition, Formal analysis, Data curation, Conceptualization. **Zuwen Huang:** Writing – review & editing, Writing – original draft, Methodology, Investigation, Formal analysis, Data curation, Conceptualization. **Dimitrios Buhalis:** Writing – review & editing, Validation, Investigation. **Nicholas Thomas:** Writing – review & editing, Validation, Investigation. **Justin Matthew Pang:** Writing – review & editing, Validation, Investigation.

Impact statement

This study examines how hotels communicate Employee Value Propositions (EVPs) in job postings on third-party online platforms, using signaling theory to highlight EVP attributes as strategic signals enhancing employer brand in digital labor markets. The resource-based view highlights differences in resource utilization, revealing that chain hotels emphasize functional and psychological EVPs, while independent

hotels prioritize economic EVPs to address immediate employee needs. Additionally, the market-based view explores how regional economic, cultural, and labor dynamics shape EVP strategies across key Asian cities. Practically, the study identifies and categorizes EVP typologies, providing benchmarks for industry comparisons. Insights into EVP communication by hotel affiliation and position level enable hotels to tailor branding efforts. Recommendations include aligning EVPs with local market demands and improving job search platforms with multi-media features to boost engagement. This study offers actionable strategies for hotel employers and job board providers to optimize EVP communication and attract top talent effectively.

Acknowledgment

Appendix A. Supplementary data

Supplementary data to this article can be found online at https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2025.105184.

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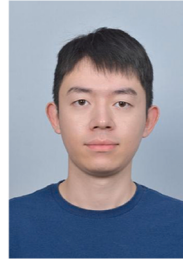
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