

Strategic Employee Branding: A Catalyst for Retaining Talent

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Abstract-

Employer branding is a strategic step for attracting and keeping both new and existing employees in this modern and competitive era.

The study is based on the fierce competition that characterizes the Indian IT sector; as it continues to grow, the sector must contend with significant attrition. Young people who are prepared to take risks and constantly shift professions in search of better prospects or work-life balance make up most of the human resources in IT organizations.

The objective of this empirical work is to evaluate the elements of employer branding and how they affect employees' intentions to remain with a company.

A modified version of Berthon et al. (2005)'s standardized scale is used in the Indian setting to measure the allure of potential employers. The convenience sampling approach is utilized, with a sample size of 100 current employees from Bangalore-based IT organizations.

Regression and factor analysis are both used for data analysis. Seven factors—growth possibilities, Organizational culture, brand view, creativity and learning, belongingness, socio-ethical responsibility, and reward and recognition—are culled from the data once it has been reduced. Multiple regression is also used to investigate the connection between employer branding elements and the intention to remain with an IT organization.

The results imply that brand image and a sense of belonging have a beneficial impact on employees' intentions to remain with a company. To retain more talent, organizations may benefit from suggestions based on the findings to enhance their workplace branding strategy.

Keywords: Employee retention, IT organization, Strategic tool, Brand image, Employee Growth

INTRODUCTION

Companies strive to hire and keep the best talent in today's highly reasonable climate to outperform their rivals. The high attrition rate in the Indian IT sector is a consequence of the young workforce's inclination to frequently switch jobs in search of better chances. The organization's ability to develop is hampered when its talented and skilled workforce begins choosing to work for other companies. When experienced workers leave, other current employees become discouraged and less productive. Organizations began implementing various strategies to keep talented workers to address these issues. Organizations become companies because of creative retention and recruitment strategies.

"Branding" was first used to distinguish visible goods, but over time it has been used to distinguish population, locations, and businesses." (Peters, 1999). The purpose of Branding is to differentiate merchandise from those of competitors and make them more appealing to customers to obtain a market advantage. (Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004). An establishment can increase market share, awareness, and loyalty with the aid of a powerful brand by establishing credibility, dominating the price war, and improving customer dealings. (Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004; Kotler et al., 2005; and Doyle and Stern, 2006). Employer labeling is a novel strategy to set a company apart from its rivals. This is a long-term tactic. Employer labeling is "the array of operational, commercial, and emotional benefits given by employment and identified with the employing company," according to Ambler and Barrow (1996). Employer branding has been used to modify the methods and tools for inspiring and keeping workers, in addition to communicating the organization's character as an establishment of choice. (Barrow and Mosley, 2005). Employers must provide the best working circumstances, benefits, pay, salary package, work environment, work-life balance, etc. To invite and retain the best employees. Employees have several options to switch to the company they believe will be more rewarding if they are unhappy with their present employer. Thus, it is crucial for businesses to concentrate on keeping their current workforce. The topic of employing the concept of labeling to appeal to and hold employees has received little attention in studies that have concentrated on how to attract and keep prospective employees.

LITERATURE REVIEW

To confirm the efficacy of branding tactics in the field of HRM, Ambler and Barrow (1996) carried out research. They contend that clear communication and fostering a brand-centric organizational culture are key to building a successful brand. Using a framework that Backhaus and Tikoo (2004) presented, strategic human resource management can be organized using employer branding as a helpful tool. According to their research, employer branding develops two key assets, namely brand associations and brand loyalty. Employer branding benefits an organization by boosting the number and quality of applicants as well as organizational performance. (Collins and Han, 2004). It enables the business to stand out from other employers vying for potential and draw applicants who ideally share the same values as the company if not the same ones. A targeted, long-term strategy to manage workers', prospective employees, and related stakeholders' awareness and perception of a specific organization has also been described as it (Sullivan, 2004).

According to Armstrong (2006), Organization Branding is building the image of a company in employees' minds. Organizations with powerful employer brands may be able to lower the cost of hiring new employees, enhance employee relations, and increase employee retention, according to Ritson (2002). According to Beunger (2006), keeping the talent that helps an organization succeed in the market must be a top priority for the organization. The positive effects of holding are acknowledged as raised selling progress and better employee morale along with organization profitability and market value, according to Allen et al. (2010). One of the most important elements of an organization's success in the cutthroat business world is its ability to retain talented employees by Wheeler et al, 2006. The investigation by Berthon et al. (2005) has received the most citations (887), making it the most widely used study to gauge job attractiveness. Their study's goal was to create and validate a scale for assessing an employer's attractiveness to prospective employees. They concluded that organizations can successfully recruit and keep talent if they are aware of the elements that influence an employer's appeal. A scale called "EmpAt" with 25 statements about career possibilities, workplace customs, label representation, innovation and knowledge, socio-moral accountability, and reward and perception were created and verified. For carrying out the current investigation, researchers modified the scale.

OBJECTIVES

To influence the components of employer branding

To influence employees', aim is to stay with the same establishment.

HYPOTHESES

The main theory behind this investigation is:

H1: Employer branding elements have a clear effect on employees' intentions to remain with a company.

Following component analysis, the main hypothesis was further revised, and the next sub-hypotheses are suggested.

SUB-HYPOTHESES

H1a: The likelihood that employees will remain with a company is significantly influenced by its growth opportunities.

H1b: Workplace culture significantly affects workers' intentions to remain with a company. H1c: Employee retention intentions are significantly influenced by a company's brand reputation.

H1d: Innovation and knowledge have a significant effect on employees' goals to stay with a company.

H1e: Continuity of employment is significantly influenced by a sense of belonging.

H1f: Employees' intentions to remain with an organization are significantly impacted by socio-ethical obligation.

H1g: Employee retention intentions are significantly impacted by compensation and acknowledgment.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Sample - The research's attention is on the staff members of Indian IT firms. For this research, convenience sampling was used, considering some practical factors like approachability and participant eagerness. With the aid of a structured questionnaire, 100 IT workers from Bangalore, India, who are presently employed, were surveyed.

The survey was in two parts: -

Part A – Four demographic queries

Part B – 30 queries that were modified for the Indian context from the identical measure established by Berthon et al. (2005) to evaluate an employer's request.

A Likert measure of 1 to 5 was used, with 5 representing "strong agreement" and 1 representing "strongly disagree." As Cronbach's alpha should be equal to or higher than 0.7, the instrument should be regarded as reliable and acceptable, and its value of 0.871 confirms the questionnaire's reliability. SPSS 20 was used to analyse the data. There are 41% female respondents and 59% male respondents in the group. Many responses, or 59%, were between the ages of 21 and 25. Respondents were lying between the age of 26 and 30, only 3% of respondents were between the ages of 18 and 20 and over 30. Whole 86% of respondents were grads, 11% were postgraduates, and 3% were non-graduates.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Exploratory Factor Analysis happened for data decrease and principal component analysis and Varimax rotation happened to find pertinent factors. For factor analysis, the Kaiser-Meyer Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's test of sphericity measures are used to assess the correctness of the population. The data are suitable for factor analysis, as indicated by the KMO value of 0.748, Bartlett's test of sphericity achieving a significance level (0.000), and an approximate chi-square statistic of 1350.632 with 378 degrees of freedom. Variables with more than one eigenvalue were kept.

Variables stating the Eigenvalue of more than one happened held to constitute the deduced factors. All seven factors must stay called considering the items filled in on the factor and their loading (Table 1).

Table 1: Statements with Factor Loading

S. No.	Statement	Factor Loading
1.	Growth Opportunities	
	I want to work for a company that serves as a launching pad for my future job.	0.816
	It's critical to have good internal promotion chances	0.740
	I want to work for a company where I can develop my professional network.	0.734
	I want to work for a company where I feel confident in myself.	0.709
	I prefer to work for a company that creates cutting-edge goods and services	0.668

2.	Work Culture	
	Workplace Cultural favors businesses that put their customers first	0.704
	I like to work in a stimulating atmosphere	0.657
	It's crucial for me to get along well with my bosses.	0.644
	I favor an enjoyable place	0.627
	I want to collaborate with people who are encouraging and supportive.	0.611
3.	Brand Image	
	I would wish to work for an organization which acts as a launch pad for my future employment	0.849
	My employability will increase if I work for a company with a strong name	0.848
	My social standing will increase because of working for a company with an effective name.	0.751
4.	Creativity and Learning	
	I prefer working for a company where I can share my knowledge with others.	0.823
	I favor a company where I can gain practical cross-departmental experience	0.745
	I favor working for a company that will allow me to put my college education to use	0.697
	I would prefer to work for a company that would appreciate and utilize my creativity	0.598
5.	Belongingness	
	It is valuable for me to work in an organization where I feel that I can belong.	0.696
	I would choose to work for a company that delivers high-quality goods and services.	0.636
	I want to work for a company where I can be more secure in myself.	0.615
6.	Socio-Ethical Responsibility	
	I want to work for a company that engages in Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives to contribute back to society	0.729

	My job security within the company is significant.	0.576
	I would prefer to work for a company that upholds moral principles.	0.533
7.	Compensation and Recognition	
	When searching for a job, management recognition and appreciation are crucial	0.641
	It's crucial to have a tempting total compensation package	0.549

Multiple regression was applied to check the relation between dimensions of employer branding (independent variables) and intent to stay with the organization (dependent variables). Table 2 shows the total variance explained.

The value of Durbin-Watson statistics for the model is 1.609 which should fall in the range of 1.5 to 2.5. Close R^2 (0.402) and adjusted R^2 (0.356) value validate that the model

Table 2: Total Variance Explained

Com- ponent	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative (%)	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative (%)	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative (%)
1	7.599	27.138	27.138	7.599	27.138	27.138	3.675	13.126	13.126
2	3.048	10.887	38.025	3.048	10.887	38.025	3.277	11.702	24.828
3	2.315	8.267	46.292	2.315	8.267	46.292	2.976	10.627	35.456
4	1.580	5.644	51.936	1.580	5.644	51.936	2.870	10.251	45.707
5	1.321	4.719	56.655	1.321	4.719	56.655	1.885	6.734	52.440
6	1.106	3.950	60.604	1.106	3.950	60.604	1.808	6.458	58.898
7	1.095	3.911	64.515	1.095	3.911	64.515	1.573	5.617	64.515
8	1.021	3.648	68.162						
9	0.959	3.427	71.589						
10	0.872	3.114	74.703						
11	0.854	3.050	77.753						
12	0.782	2.794	80.547						
13	0.686	2.450	82.997						

14	0.595	2.127	85.124						
15	0.576	2.057	87.180						
16	0.473	1.688	88.869						
17	0.464	1.656	90.525						
18	0.422	1.509	92.034						
19	0.349	1.247	93.281						
20	0.331	1.183	94.464						
21	0.305	1.089	95.553						

Employer Branding: A Strategic Tool for Emom-ponent	Initial Eigen Values			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative (%)	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative (%)	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative (%)
22	0.240	0.856	96.409						
23	0.230	0.821	97.230						
24	0.205	0.730	97.960						
25	0.192	0.685	98.645						
26	0.142	0.506	99.150						
27	0.140	0.499	99.649						
28	0.098	0.351	100.000						

Note: Extraction method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table 3 shows the model summary and Table 4 represents the statistical results of regression analysis.

Table 3: Model Summary					
Model Summary ^b					
Model	R	R ²	Adj. R ²	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	0.634 ^a	0.402	0.356	1.41425	1.609

Note: ^a Predictors: (constant), compensation and recognition, socio-ethical responsibility, belongingness, creativity and learning, brand image, Organizational work culture, growth opportunities; and ^b dependent variable: the intention of employees to stay in an organization.

Table 4: Statistical Results of Regression Analysis

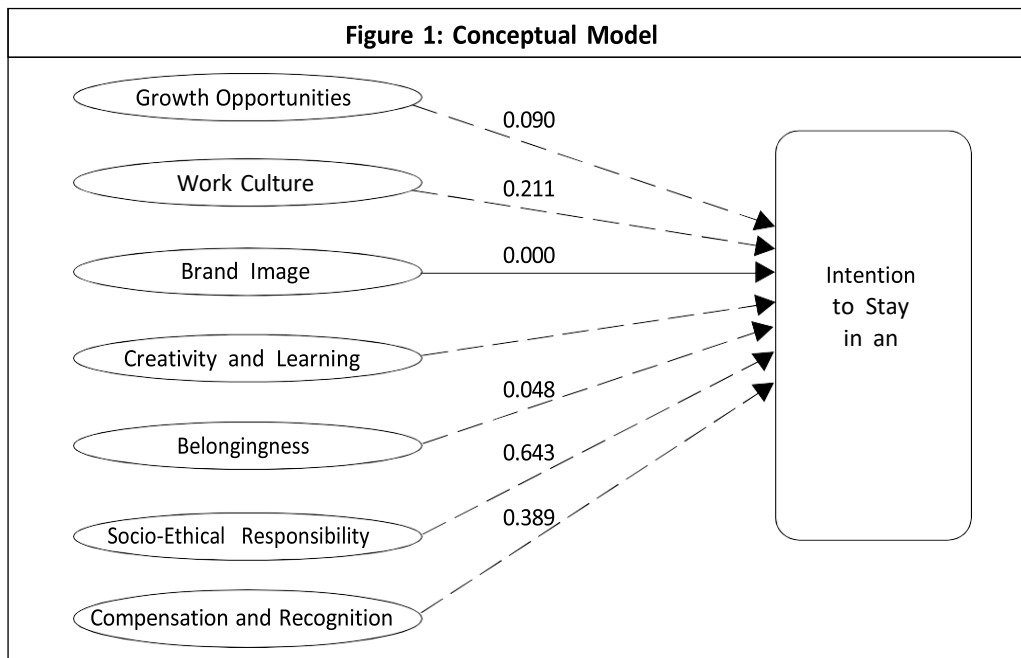
Coefficients^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	<i>t</i>	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
	(Constant)	7.730	0.141	–	54.658	0.000
	Growth	0.243	0.142	0.138	1.712	0.090

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	<i>t</i>	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	Work Culture	0.179	0.142	0.102	1.261	0.211
	Brand Image	1.008	0.142	0.572	7.089	0.000
	Creativity and Learning	0.205	0.142	0.116	1.444	0.152
	Belongingness	0.285	0.142	0.162	2.006	0.048
	Socio-Ethical Responsibility	–0.066	0.142	–0.038	–0.466	0.643
	Compensation and Recognition	0.123	0.142	0.070	0.866	0.389
Note: ^a Dependent variable: Intention of employees to stay in an organization.						

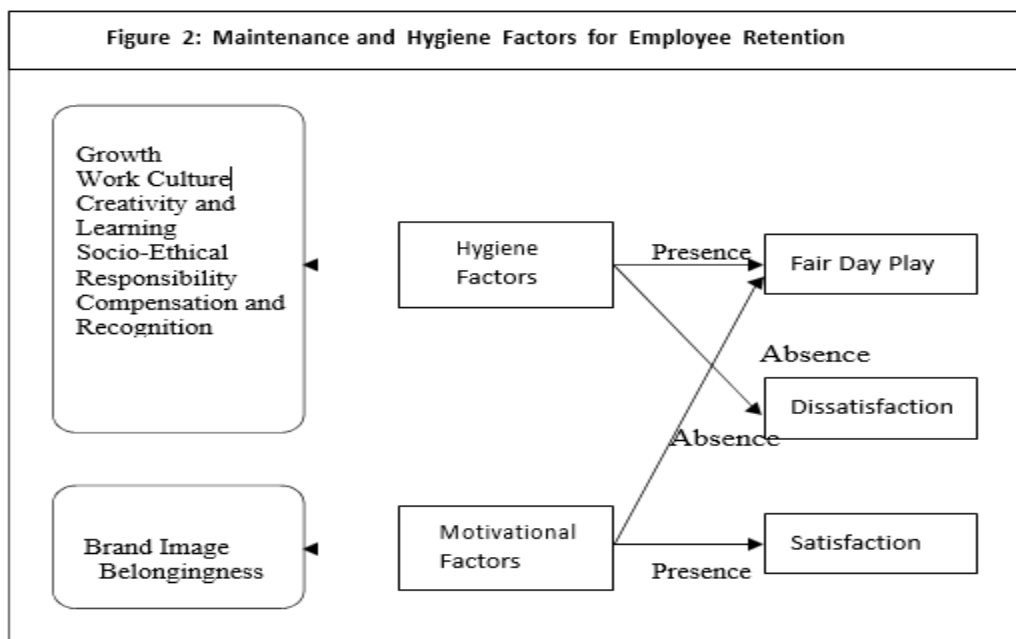
The finding reveals that, with significant values of 0.000 and 0.048 respectively. Only brand image and a sense of belonging positively influence employees' intentions to remain with an organization.

The intention of employees to remain in an organization is unaffected by other elements like career opportunities, workplace culture, creative and learning opportunities, socio-ethical responsibilities, salary, and recognition, etc. The chart below illustrates the connection between derived criteria and employees' intentions to remain in an organization.

The relationship between derived factors and the intention of employees to stay is shown with the help of a conceptual model in figure 1.



All 'motivational factors' operate to build strong motivation and high job satisfaction, but their absence rarely proves strongly dissatisfying (figure 2)



CONCLUSION

The researcher found that the study's results were consistent with the "Herzberg Two-Factor Theory of Motivation." The derived factors are divided into groups based on whether they have a favorable or negative impact on employees' intentions to remain with a company. The intention of employees to remain in an organization was found not to be influenced by variables such as growth chances, work culture, creativity and learning, socio-ethical responsibility, compensation and recognition. The researchers have referred to them as "maintenance or hygiene factors," which primarily function to make workers unhappy when the conditions are present but do not significantly motivate them when present. By virtue of their position, every employee is required to maintain proper hygiene in all workplace settings. If the hygiene elements are properly managed and reinforced, they may help the organization retain talent and reduce attrition. Organizations can use well-managed hygiene factors to foster a sense of community and enhance their brand's appeal as a desirable workplace. Organizations can use managed hygiene factors to enhance their image as desirable employers by fostering a sense of connection.

RECOMMENDATIONS

As a result, the researchers suggest the following for maintaining hygiene factors and enhancing company identity and sense of belonging:

- Providing a stress-free workplace and supporting coworkers can improve employee wellness and foster a positive work culture.
- Role conflict can be the cause of employee frustration and dissatisfaction. Organizations should address this issue in manuals and clarify roles and responsibilities.
- Growth opportunities can also be given by designing the career path and providing learning opportunities and setting up the system for participatory decision-making and cross-departmental projects to give them experience of working on them.
- IT workers must collaborate with people from different cultural backgrounds; an organization may educate expatriates.
- Better employees have dedication towards the organization. Employers can foster an environment that is socially and morally responsible by having an authentic, transparent, and code of conduct.
- By designing reward programs, awarding monetary and nonmonetary benefits, performance evaluation, and offering additional benefits like flexible work schedules, spot rewards, and health and wellbeing allowances, employers can retain employees.
- Effective leadership, mentoring initiatives, work-life balance, and training and growth can all help to increase employee retention.

If followed by organizations, the discussion and suggestions may result in building a positive brand identity and a feeling of community among employees. Employees want to work for an organization that treats them fairly, as the literature review indicates. It may be concluded that if employers concentrate on the motivating elements, their involvement, and retention may result from increased employee identification with the organization and can keep more happy staff because happy workers stick with the company and recommend it to the other potential employees.

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APPENDIX

Questionnaire

Section – A

1	Gender	Male	Female
2	Age	18 – 20 Years <input type="checkbox"/>	21 – 25 Years <input type="checkbox"/>
		26 – 30 Years <input type="checkbox"/>	Above 30 Years <input type="checkbox"/>
3	Education	Below Graduation	Graduation
		Post Graduation	
4	Employment Type	Employed	Unemployed

Section – B

Please indicate the degree to which you agree/disagree with the following statements regarding your intention to join an organization (1 = Strongly Disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Agree; and 5 = Strongly Agree).

	1	2	3	4	5
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1	I like to work for an organization that produces innovative products and services.					
2	I prefer a fun-working environment.					
3	I would like to work for an organization which acts as springboard for my future employment.					
4	I would like to work for an organization where I feel good about myself.					
5	I would like to work for an organization where I gain career-enhancing experience.					
6	Having a good relationship with my colleagues is important.					
7	Having a good relationship with my superiors is important.					
8	I would like to work with supportive and encouraging colleagues.					
9	I prefer working in an exciting environment.					
10	I prefer to work for an organization which follows ethical practices.					
11	I prefer working for an organization that would both value and make use of my creativity.					
12	I prefer to work for an organization which produces high-quality products and services.					
13	Good promotion opportunities within the organization are important.					
14	I prefer an organization where I get an opportunity to apply what was learned at a tertiary institution.					
15	I prefer an organization where I get an opportunity to teach others what I have learned.					
16	It is important for me to work in an organization where I feel that I could belong.					
17	I prefer an organization that is customer oriented.					
18	Job security within the organization is important to me.					
19	I prefer an organization where I get hands-on interdepartmental experience.					
20	I prefer a happy work environment.					
21	An above-average basic salary is important while looking for a job.					

22	An attractive overall compensation package is important.					
23	I would like to work for an organization where I feel more self-confident.					
24	Recognition/appreciation from management is important while looking for a job.					
25	I would like to work for an organization that gives back to society in terms of Corporate Social Responsibility activities.					
26	Organizations with good brand image will also have good policies.					
27	Working in an organization with a good brand image shall enhance my employment.					
28	Working in an organization with a good brand image shall improve my social status.					
29	I see a future for myself within this organization.					
30	I would like to suggest my acquaintance to join this organization.					