



UNDERSTANDING THE INFLUENCE OF EMPLOYER BRANDING ON EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

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Abstract

Purpose -This study aims to systematically review existing literature on employer branding to examine its influence on employee satisfaction.

Design/methodology/approach - A systematic literature review was conducted by synthesizing empirical and conceptual studies across multiple countries and sectors. The reviewed studies were analyzed based on research methods, employer branding dimensions, theoretical foundations, and key findings.

Findings - The review reveals that employer branding is a multidimensional construct encompassing functional, economic, and psychological attributes. Employer branding consistently shows a positive impact on employee satisfaction, engagement, commitment, and retention. Job satisfaction emerges as a key mediating mechanism, while contextual factors such as organizational support, sustainability orientation, and technological advancements act as important moderators.

Originality/value -This study provides an integrative understanding of employer branding as an internal human resource strategy by highlighting underlying mechanisms and contextual influences. It offers a consolidated framework for future research and practical insights for organizations seeking to strengthen employee-centric employer branding practices.

Keywords: Employer Branding, Internal Branding, Employee Satisfaction, Systematic literature review

Introduction

Branding, traditionally viewed as a marketing tool, is referred to as building an image in the minds of consumers towards the products and services. In past decades, it was only related to attracting consumers towards the products of the company by highlighting unique features of the products different to their competitors. A brand image shapes the positive image of the company's products. Similarly, organizations now use branding as a tool for attracting new, talented employees and retaining their existing ones. In this competitive era, where there is a lack of skilled employees and a high turnover rate, organizations have to provide extra benefits to be attractive in the market.

Consequently, a new concept has emerged known as "Employer Branding", introduced by Ambler and Barrow in terms of functional, economic, and psychological benefits. Further, this concept has gained significant importance in the field of Human Resource Management, since the firms are using it as a competitive strategy to become an employer of choice (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2025).

Employer branding consists mainly of two goals: attracting skilled employees and retaining them in the organization, which is a challenging task in this cut-throat competitive environment. This has classified employer branding as external and internal branding, where the former is related to potential employees, and the latter is related to the current employees. (Hoppe, 2018) has identified the influence of various dimensions of employer branding on employee turnover intentions. These values provided by the employer have reduced their intention to quit the organization. (Chhabra & Sharma, 2014) has identified employer branding as a recruitment strategy for attracting management students in terms of compensation, organization culture, and brand name. Existing studies identified the growing challenge of hiring, and retaining talented employees. Firms give more importance to human capital than hard assets (Aldousari et al., 2017). Human capital can be influenced by providing psychological benefits, which leads to enhanced employee engagement, organizational citizenship behaviour, and increased employee motivation. Employees are found to be motivated and engaged when they are satisfied with the organization culture, resulting in increased employee performance (Azhar et al., 2024). Satisfaction is a leading factor for the success of an organization as it enhances employees' overall performance.

In this context, this paper aims to investigate the influence of employer branding practices on employee satisfaction. Several studies have investigated the effect of employer branding activities on potential employees. Literature shows that very limited studies have been conducted from the perspective of current employees. Hence, this study is motivated to gain a deep understanding of the relationship between employer branding and employee satisfaction. To provide a general summary, this study used a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) as an analytical method to assess the scientific topics highlighted in the introduction. Depending on the Eligible Studies Article for Systematic Review and Meta Analysis, SLR (PRISMA).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Table 1. Key findings of the reviewed studies

Author (year)	Country	Methodology	EB Dimensions	Key Findings
Fernandes et al. (2023)	Portugal	Qualitative approach. Semi-structured interview and content analysis. Three sectors: Micro, Small, and Large enterprise.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Internal communication 2. Digital communication 3. Employer image 4. Organizational culture 5. Employee communication 6. Employee value proposition 	<p>Employees perceive their organization as having a positive brand image.</p> <p>Digital communication practices do not significantly influence employee satisfaction.</p> <p>Social media and digital platforms are found to be highly effective for strengthening a positive employer image.</p>
Ashrafi et al. (2023)	Bangladesh	Quantitative research approach. Sector: Banking. Sample size: 211 employees.	Functional, economic and psychological benefits.	<p>Employer branding has a positive effect on organizational citizenship behaviour and employee satisfaction.</p> <p>Job satisfaction partially mediates the relationship between EB-OCB.</p> <p>Organization commitment positively moderates satisfaction-OCB relationship.</p>
Sharma et al. (2025)	India	A mixed-method research approach. Sector: IT. Sample size: 220 employees.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Training & development 2. Work-life balance 3. Compensation & benefits 4. Ethics and CSR 	<p>Employer branding has a strong positive impact on employee satisfaction.</p> <p>A strong employer brand enhances retention intention and employee well-being.</p>

			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Career growth & advancements 6. Conducive work environment 	
Bharadwaj, (2025)	India	<p>A quantitative research approach.</p> <p>Sector: IT</p> <p>Sample size: 352 full-time employees.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work environment 2. Compensation & benefits 3. Training & development 4. Career growth 5. Organizational reputation 	<p>Employer branding has a positive effect on employee retention.</p> <p>Job satisfaction partially mediates the EB retention relationship.</p> <p>Organizational identification also mediates the employer branding retention relationship.</p>
Davies et al. (2025)	UK & Ireland	<p>A quantitative research approach.</p> <p>Sector: Multiple service sector.</p> <p>Sample size: 509 employees.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Distinctiveness 2. Organizational values 3. Trustworthiness 4. Prestige 5. Credibility 	<p>Employer brand image has a positive influence on employee satisfaction and employee engagement.</p> <p>Employee satisfaction mediates employer brand image and employee engagement relationship.</p> <p>A strong employer brand image significantly enhances employees' emotional attachment.</p>
Tkalac Vercic (2021)	Solvenia	<p>A quantitative research approach.</p> <p>Sector: Multiple Service sector.</p> <p>Sample size: 748 employees</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Employer branding 2. Employee engagement 3. Perceived organizational support 	<p>Employee engagement and organizational support have a strong positive effect on internal communication satisfaction.</p> <p>Employer branding has a positive effect on internal communication satisfaction.</p>

		from multiple organizations. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA).	4. Internal communication satisfaction	Engagement is found to be the strongest predictor among all the variables.
Karmana et al. (2025)	Indonesia	A quantitative research approach. Sector: Indonesian Customs and Excise organization. Sample size: 221 employees. (SEM) Bootstrapping technique.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work environment 2. Organizational policies and support 3. Organization reputation 4. Career growth opportunities 	<p>Employer branding has a significant negative effect on intention to leave.</p> <p>Employer branding has a positive effect on employee satisfaction.</p> <p>Job satisfaction partially mediates the relationship between employer branding and intention to leave.</p>
Nanjundeswara swamy et al. (2025)	India	A quantitative research approach. Sector: Manufacturing and Service sector organizations. Sample size: 421 employees. EFA, CFA, and SEM model.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Organization culture 2. Work-life balance 3. Compensation & benefits 4. Training & development 5. Organizational reputation 6. Job security 	<p>Employer branding is a multidimensional construct</p> <p>The developed scale is reliable and valid for measuring employer branding perceptions</p> <p>EB dimensions capture both functional and psychological benefits.</p>

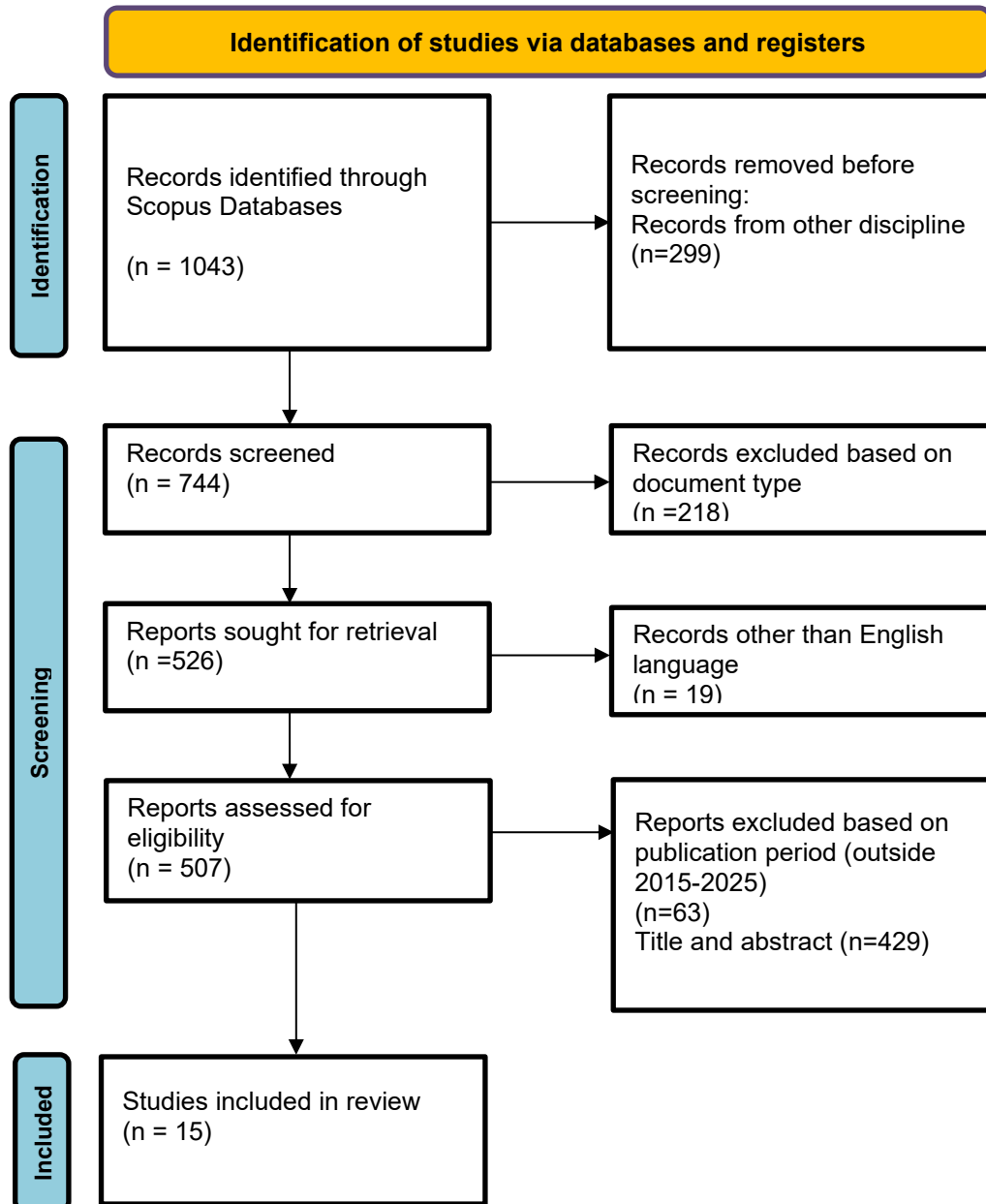
Ito and Mcfarland (2025)	Canada	A quantitative research approach. Sector: Public sector organizations. Sample size: 1,096 employees.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pay & benefits 2. Job security 3. Work–life balance 4. Career development 5. Organizational reputation 6. Meaningful work 	<p>Employee preferences for employer branding attributes change over time.</p> <p>Entry-stage employees value pay, development, and reputation more strongly</p> <p>Exit-stage employees place greater emphasis on job security and work–life balance</p> <p>Alignment between employer branding attributes and employee preferences enhances commitment, satisfaction, and retention.</p>
Azari et al. (2025)	Iran	A mixed-method research approach. Sector: Power industry. Sample size: 384 employees. Analysis technique: PLS-SEM and AMOS.	<p>Sustainable marketing</p> <p>Job satisfaction</p> <p>Internal marketing</p> <p>Artificial intelligence</p>	<p>Sustainable marketing positively influences employer branding and job satisfaction.</p> <p>Internal marketing mediates the relationship between employer branding sustainable marketing.</p> <p>AI moderates the effect of sustainable marketing and job satisfaction.</p>
Aman-Ullah et al. (2025)	Pakistan	A quantitative research approach. Sector: Healthcare. Sample size: 252 employees, including doctors, nurses, and healthcare staff.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Training & development 2. Compensation & benefits 3. Work environment 4. Organizational reputation 	<p>Employer branding has a significant positive effect on employee retention.</p> <p>Employer branding positively influences job satisfaction and organizational commitment.</p> <p>Job satisfaction and organizational commitment significantly mediate the relationship between employer branding and employee</p>

				retention. Organizational commitment shows a stronger mediating effect than job satisfaction.
Khanolkar (2013)	India	A quantitative research approach. Sector: Service sector organizations. Sample size: 150 employees. Analysis technique: Correlation and Regression analysis.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Compensation & benefits 2. Work–life balance 3. Training & development 4. Career growth opportunities 	Employer branding has a significant positive impact on job satisfaction among Generation Y employees. Employer branding positively influences organizational commitment.
Tanwar and Prasad (2016)	India	Quantitative research design. Sector: IT sector. Sampling technique: Convenience sampling. Data analysis technique: Correlation and Regression analysis.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Economic value 2. Development value 3. Social value 4. Interest value 5. Application value. 	The findings reveal that employer brand dimensions significantly influence job satisfaction, with economic and development values having the strongest impact. Additionally, gender moderates this relationship, indicating differences in how male and female employees perceive employer branding factors. Use the "Insert Citation" button to add citations to this document.

Methodology

For the present study, the researcher reviewed 15 peer-reviewed articles published in the English language that examine the relationship between employer branding and employee satisfaction. The articles were identified through a systematic search of the Scopus database. To retrieve relevant literature, keywords such as “Employer Brand” AND “Employee Satisfaction” and “Employer Branding” AND “Employee Satisfaction” were used.

PRISMA Flow Diagram Illustrating the Literature Search and Selection Process



Sources: Created by the author

The initial search yielded 1,043 documents. To ensure relevance, the search results were refined by limiting the subject area to Business, Management, and Accounting, which reduced the number of documents to 744. Further filtering was applied to select only journal articles, resulting in 526 documents. Restricting the search to English-language publications further narrowed the sample to 507 articles. Subsequently, the time period was limited to studies published between 2015 and 2025, yielding 444 articles.

These articles were then screened based on their titles, abstracts, and full texts to assess their relevance to the objectives of the study. Finally, 15 articles that directly addressed the relationship between employer branding and employee satisfaction were selected for detailed analysis.

Table 2. Data Inclusion Criteria

Type	Inclusion
Literature type	Research article
Year of publication	2015-2025
Language	English
Subject Area	Business, Management, and Accounting
Database/ Indexing	Scopus-indexed journal

Results and Discussion

The systematic review of the selected studies reveals several consistent and theoretically meaningful patterns regarding employer branding and employee-related outcomes. Across diverse geographical contexts (India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Iran, Indonesia, Canada, Portugal, the UK, and Ireland) and sectors (IT, banking, healthcare, public sector, power industry, manufacturing, and services), employer branding emerges as a multidimensional construct that significantly influences employee satisfaction, engagement, commitment, and retention.

A dominant finding across the reviewed studies is the positive relationship between employer branding and employee satisfaction. Empirical evidence from India (Sharma et al., 2025; Khanolkar, 2013), Bangladesh (Ashrafi et al., 2023), Indonesia (Karmana et al., 2025), Pakistan (Aman-Ullah et al., 2025), and Iran (Azari et al., 2025) consistently demonstrates that strong employer branding practices enhance employees' job satisfaction. Employer branding dimensions such as compensation and benefits, work-life balance, training and development, career growth opportunities, organizational culture, and ethical practices are repeatedly identified as key drivers of satisfaction.

Another important finding is the mediating role of job satisfaction. Several studies confirm that job satisfaction acts as a critical mechanism through which employer branding influences higher-order employee outcomes. For instance, Ashrafi et al. (2023) and Karmana et al. (2025) show that job satisfaction partially mediates the relationship between employer branding and organizational citizenship behaviour or intention to leave. Similarly, Bharadwaj et al. (2025) and Aman-Ullah et al. (2025) provide evidence that satisfaction, along with organizational identification or commitment, explains how employer branding translates into employee retention. The findings further highlight that employer branding is not static but contextual and dynamic. Ito and McFarland (2025) reveal that employee preferences for employer branding attributes evolve across the

employee lifecycle, with early-career employees valuing pay, development, and reputation, while late-career employees emphasize job security and work–life balance. This lifecycle perspective underscores the need for adaptive employer branding strategies.

In addition, emerging studies introduce boundary conditions and advanced models. Azari et al. (2025) demonstrate that sustainable marketing enhances employer branding both directly and indirectly through internal marketing and job satisfaction, while artificial intelligence strengthens these relationships as a moderating factor. Likewise, Fernandes et al. (2023) emphasize that digital communication improves employer image but does not automatically enhance employee satisfaction, indicating a gap between external employer branding and internal employee experience. Overall, the reviewed literature confirms that employer branding contributes to favorable employee outcomes, primarily through psychological mechanisms such as satisfaction, engagement, commitment, and identification.

Conclusion

The findings of this systematic review reinforce the theoretical foundations of employer branding rooted in Social Exchange Theory and Social Identity Theory. Consistent with social exchange principles, employees respond positively to organizations that offer economic, functional, and psychological benefits through employer branding, reciprocating with higher satisfaction, engagement, and retention intentions. The reviewed studies collectively suggest that employer branding functions as an implicit exchange mechanism, where perceived organizational investments lead to favorable employee attitudes and behaviors.

The strong and recurring role of job satisfaction as a mediator is particularly noteworthy. While earlier employer branding research largely focused on attraction and recruitment outcomes, the reviewed studies extend the literature by demonstrating that employer branding significantly affects existing employees through satisfaction-driven pathways. This finding aligns with contemporary employer branding scholarship, which emphasizes internal employer branding over purely external signaling. The presence of partial mediation in several studies indicates that employer branding also exerts direct effects on outcomes such as retention and commitment, but its influence is substantially strengthened when employees experience satisfaction.

Another important discussion point concerns the multidimensional nature of employer branding. Scale development and validation studies (e.g., Nanjundeswaraswamy et al., 2025) confirm that employer branding encompasses both functional (pay, job security, work conditions) and psychological dimensions (culture, reputation, meaningful work). This supports the argument that employer branding should not be treated as a single construct but as a bundle of attributes that collectively shape employee perceptions.

The review also highlights the context-dependent nature of employer branding effectiveness. Sectoral differences (IT vs. healthcare vs. public sector), generational differences (Generation Y employees), and lifecycle stages significantly influence which employer branding attributes matter most. Furthermore, emerging research integrating sustainability and technology (Azari et al., 2025) signals a shift toward more holistic employer branding frameworks, where sustainability initiatives, internal marketing, and artificial intelligence jointly shape employer brand perceptions.

Importantly, qualitative insights (Fernandes et al., 2023) caution against overreliance on digital and social media-based employer branding. While digital communication strengthens external employer image, it does not necessarily enhance employee satisfaction unless supported by meaningful internal practices. This finding underscores a critical gap between symbolic employer branding and substantive employee experience, which future research must address.

The reviewed studies are largely cross-sectional, limiting causal inference between employer branding and employee outcomes. Most research is concentrated in service-oriented sectors and specific national contexts, which restricts generalizability. Additionally, heavy reliance on self-reported data may introduce common method bias. Variations in employer branding dimensions and measurement scales across studies also limit direct comparability of findings.

Suggestions for future research

Future research should adopt longitudinal designs and include diverse sectors and cross-cultural contexts. Exploring advanced mediation and moderation models involving engagement, identification, and ambassadorship would enhance theoretical depth. Further studies should also examine digitalization, sustainability, and AI-driven employer branding using mixed methods and multi-source data.

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