



IMPACT OF EMPLOYER BRANDING ON EMPLOYEE RETENTION

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Abstract

Retaining talented employees is the priority of many organizations and it is the key differentiator of human capital management. Even major IT companies today are facing the challenge of retaining their talent competes in the global markets. As people, intellectual capital and talent are ever more critical to organizational strategic success and existence of an organisation, in the current competitive business environment, retention of highly talented employees is very important as they contribute positively in improving the organizational productivity. Thus, companies are in search of effective mechanisms for increasing the retention rate in the organizational. Therefore, the perception or the values that an employee gives to an employer is quite important and that the organizations are also focusing on adding up a new employee experience. Hence the analysis of the dimensions of employer branding on the employee retention is quite significant.

Keywords:-Employer Branding, Employee Retention.

I. Introduction

The war for talent continues to gather momentum, increasingly, as employers are in need of turning their attention to innovative new methods to attract and retain talent. IT companies are doubling down on efforts to prevent young employees skilled in digital technologies and other high-performers from leaving the current organizations that resulting in rising attrition rates. The software services providers are looking to stem the talent outflow through better salary increases, promotions and bonuses for top talent, as well as overall employee value proposition, which includes career growth, learning and re-skilling opportunities. As information technology services companies move full speed to train employees in digital skills, some are beginning to reckon with a new problem – there are more trained employees than digital projects, an imbalance that is resulting in newly-skilled workers looking for other jobs. These companies are spending crores of rupees re-skilling their talent and need to retain them to recoup their investment.

The Human Resource team plays an important role in employee retention. Whenever an employee resigns from his current assignments, it is the responsibility of the HR to intervene immediately to find out the reasons which prompted the employee to resign. No one leaves an organization without a reason. There has to be one and the human resource team must probe into it. There can be innumerable reasons for an employee to leave his current job. The major ones are conflict with the superiors, lesser salary, lack of growth, negative ambience etc. One of the more strategic methods seen used to combat this in recent years has been through the use of employer branding, with many large organizations investing significantly in it. The Employer Branding as a strategic attempt is now used to enhance the employee experience and establishing their organization as an employer of choice.

Employer Branding refers to the methods an organization uses to engage, motivate and retain their employees through their internal efforts, that makes the organization the best place to work. The desired result of these efforts is to deliver a sustained competitive advantage through their human capital and not in the typical manner of business practices and procedures. For an employer brand to be successful, it is critical that its values are aligned with what its employees' values. If it could be achieved this could also be used as sword to retain the employees, in the organization, which is studied under the scope of this paper.

The increase in the attrition rate has ruined the normal work flow of a firm. The turnover can be of two types- one being internal to the firm, where employees leave one project or function in an organization and move to another one. This is mostly a positive change and a skilled professional stay within an organization. This generally happens under organized HR process and under the company's policies. While the second case may be the external to the firm, where employees leave their organization and join competitors or the like firms. This results in the losses like, decreased overall performance, difficulty in managing daily tasks, increased costs, losing and paying the previous employee, hiring a new one, training cost for the new employee, lack of knowledgeable employees, hinders the employee development and even create a negative image, as a consistent number of employees leave the organisation. This contributes to the negative image or hampers the brand of the organization. There are a lot of retention strategies followed by the firms, to retain the talents. Thus, it is inevitable for the organisation to retain the employees, which in current scenario, may be considered as the human capital.

II.Literature Review

Sullivan (2004) defines employer branding as "a targeted, long-term strategy to manage the awareness and perceptions of employees, potential employees, and related stakeholders with regards to a particular firm". The result of successful employer branding gives the organization, that is an increasing reputation and exposure, coherence among its employees and a high number of applicants as the organization will be described as a great place to work. This indicates that employer branding is vital when retaining current employees and attracting new ones. Hence, employer branding is strategically developed by managers and is consistent of thoughtful actions and values. The more desirable an organization is to its potential employees the stronger its employer brand gets. Hence the analysis of attitude of the employees towards the employer will in turn affect the retention of these employees in the firm. After attracting and recruiting the employees, it is essential for the firm to communicate the values to the employees, as well as to assess the relative importance of the values given by the employees. Hence the dimensions of employer branding are assessed and the influence of employer branding to employee retention is studied.

The Employee Value Proposition (EVP) is a critical tool in talent attraction in the competition for the best talents, especially for global organizations. While employer brand is the "image" of the brand – how companies are perceived as employers, the EVP is the "identity" – how companies would like to be seen. EVP is the key features of an employer that the company would most like to associate with, and it presents clear reasoning for why current and future employees should choose and stay with an employer. EVP also communicates the employer's expectations from their employees and vice versa, employees' expectations of an employer. Mosley(2017) suggests that it is much like the customer value proposition, that delivers a promise of a certain quality and key benefits of a brands goods and/or experiences, EVP should be considered similarly. EVP offers clear point of reference for everything employers do to positively enhance their employer brand experience and reputation.

Employee retention refers to the hierarchical arrangements and practices utilised as a part of the organisation to keep key workers from leaving the association. Employee retention is the exertion by a business to keep attractive employees with a specific end goal to meet business. Employee retention is keeping the capable well-performing employees in the organisation for a longer period to achieve competitive advantage. As per Berry and Morris, retention is a continuation of the employment of the workers, particularly high-caliber and productive workers. Employee retention in an organisation relies upon the way the organization maintains its HRM practices to discuss the issues and requests of its employees. However, retention is multidimensional factor of an organization's human resource policies which begins with recruiting the right people in the organisation and to stick them with the organization's business portfolio. In addition, the retention strategies, including bonuses, promotions, and personal communication from top managers.

Moroko (2009) suggests that the employer branding process is multidisciplinary in nature, and that it imbibes its concepts from other disciplines like human resources, branding, organizational behaviour and management. Miles and Sandra and Mangold in their paper 'Positioning Southwest Airlines through Employee Branding' suggested that, an organization's internal brand can be communicated through formal sources such as policies, procedures, training and development initiatives which signify the organization's obligation and value that they place in their employees. Informal sources also aid to communicate the brand such as the spread of values and messages from co-workers and managers".

Sanchez and Brock, (1996) identified that salary is related to job satisfaction and commitment of employees. Higher the salary, higher the satisfaction level of employees. Ambler and Barrow (1996) found that employer brand also provides benefits like product band in developmental, economic and psychological forms. Economic value, that is defined by Berthon, Ewing and Hah (2005), suggested that the Economic value means the benefits provided by the employer, in monetary and non-monetary forms, to the employees.

Social Value calculates the mark of appeal of an organization or a company providing a work environment with good and welcoming team spirit and decent respectable relations among coworkers. Backhaus and Tikoo, (2004) pointed out that potential employees became part of any organization on the basis of the social value of the company. They want to join the organization that will provide them social approval if they work for it. This desire could intern prove to be a factor that makes employees stick to the organisation and reduced the recruitment efforts.

Developmental value is an attribute that estimates the degree of attractiveness of an employer providing career development. Lee (1971) studied employees' perception regarding current and future growth and performance reward, and highlighted their positive relationship with

organizational commitment of employees. Tansky and Cohen (2001) investigated the positive influence of developmental programs on employee commitment and satisfaction.

Sivertzen (2013) studies the importance of social media as a factor for promoting the reputational value, that is created as a result of the other internal dimensions of employer branding and the Employee value proposition which contributes to the enhanced reputational value of the firm. This will in turn act as a gluing factor for the attractiveness in case of prospective employees to be attracted to the firm and thus intention to apply will be more.

Work life Balance is an attribute determining that a proper balance among the employees' work and life allows them to work in harmony with all their identities. Employees should be considered more than just employees. It is important to consider that they have an identity outside the work. An appropriate balance between work and social life makes employees work more efficiently and effectively.

Long-term health and success of any organization depends upon the retention of key employees. To a great extent customer satisfaction, organizational performance in terms of increased sales, satisfied colleagues and reporting staff, effective succession planning etc, is dependent upon the ability to retain the best employees in any organization. Encouraging employees to remain in the organization for a long period of time can be termed as employee retention. It is a process in which the employees are encouraged to remain with the organization for the maximum period of time or until the completion of the project.

Organizations having a strong employer brand have higher retention rates and also have highly motivated employees who are willing to stay with the organization. Indu (2016) in the paper, 'Exploring the Relationship between Employer Branding and Employee Retention', concludes that, higher the employer branding, the tendency to retain in the organization would be high. The dimensions taken for the study were the Work environment, Work Life balance, CSR, Training. Kavitha & Jublee (2015), in the paper 'Analysis of Building a successful Employer Branding', studies the employer branding with the factors, rewards/economic benefits, reputation, culture and its impact on employee retention.

III. Objectives of the study

- To study whether there exist a significant difference between the demographic factors- (Gender, Age and Experience of the respondents) and Retention.
- To study whether there exist a relationship between the dimensions of Employer Branding and Employee Retention.
- To study whether there exist an impact by the dimensions of Employer Branding on Employee Retention.

IV. Research Methodology

Throughout the study various factors influencing retention are studied and analyzed and their relationship with employee retention in the company is studied. The study collects opinion from the employees of Trivandrum , Technopark, to identify their response on the ways by which employer branding strategies are favored by the current employees, so as to prevent the layoff from the companys and increase retention, which is quite common in the IT industry. Here in the study, the respondent is an employee of the company and the data is collected through a structured questionnaire, which is shared through a google form to the employees.

The research design used was analytical and descriptive research design. The demographic characteristics of the employees used for the study were: Age, Gender, Department unit, Educational Qualification, Years of work experience and Designation. The variables used in this study can be categorized into dependent variable and independent variable. The independent variable of the study was Employer Branding and the dependent variable of the study was retention. For the study the independent variable is the internal employer branding, in which the sub variables taken are- Economic Value (EV), Social Value (SV), Work Life Balance Value (WLV), Developmental Value (DV) and Reputational Value (RV).

The questionnaire consisted of three parts namely, the demographic characteristics of the employees , the variables that were related to employer branding and employee retention. The questionnaire consists of 27 questions in total. Questions were asked on a Five-point Likert scale: Strongly Agree - 5, Agree - 4, Neutral - 3, Disagree - 2, and Strongly Disagree - 1. The sample unit selected was employees from technopark Trivandrum. The sample size taken is 85 respondents.

Descriptive Statistics				
Factors	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Economic Value (EV)	2.33	5.00	4.1961	.65120
Social Value (SV)	1.75	5.00	4.2824	.58093
Developmental Value (DV)	2.67	5.00	3.9451	.54396
Work Life Balance Value (WLV)	2.75	4.50	3.5676	.43368
Reputational Value (RV)	3.00	5.00	4.3294	.52325

The mean value of the variable- Reputational Value rated by the employees was high and is equal to 4.3294. This indicates a positive note that the employees feel privileged in working in that company. This brings a point of factor that, the employees get much respected in and among the peer groups. The employees feel privileged for working in this firm and that the deviation is only from 3 to 5. This variable is followed by the Social Value, which has a mean value of 4.1961, which is also appreciable, that the employees feel a sense of cordial and friendly life within the company. Besides that, all of the mean values are above 3, which is also a good indicator that these values are perceived by the employees.

4.2. Table showing mean and standard deviation of Employee Retention.

Descriptive Statistics				
Variable	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Employee Retention	3.00	5.00	4.3765	0.50340

The mean average score for employee retention is 4.3765 on a 5- point scale. Hence the mean percentage score for employee retention is 87.53 percentage.

4.3. Table showing the ranking of reasons for employee retention.

Variables	Mean	Rank
Compensation benefits offered by the company	2.6471	5
Career Development & training offered by the company	2.7529	4
Social Value offered by the company	3.1050	3
Work-life balance offered by the company	3.1059	2
Reputation owned by the company	3.3882	1

Among the contributing variables, the most contributing factors is the Reputation owned by the company of the company at mean=3.3882, which ranks the highest.

Table 4.4.

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.874	20

The validity of the collected data for the organizational climate scales and the employee retention scale are identified by calculating Cronbach's alpha. The alpha coefficient for the items is .874, suggesting that the variables have relatively high internal consistency. Since the calculated Cronbach's alpha values are higher than 0.5, the research can rely on the collected data for testing the research hypotheses.

H₀₁: There is no difference in opinion among the groups based on Gender with respect to Employee Retention

Table 4.5.

Group Statistics					
	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Retention	Male	48	4.2986	.52475	.07574
	Female	37	4.4775	.46175	.07591

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Retention	Equal variances assumed	.071	.791	-1.640	83	.105	-.17887	.10904	-.39573	.03800
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.668	81.493	.099	-.17887	.10723	-.39221	.03448

The table gives the mean and standard deviation of the variable gender, in which male dominates by a count of 11 from that of females. As depicted in table, it is observed that the F value 0.071 is not significant at 5% level (i.e. P= .791). Hence, the null hypothesis H₀₁ is accepted and the alternative hypothesis H₁₁ is rejected. Therefore, it is evident that distribution of two groups are not equal.

H₀₂: There is no difference in opinion among groups based on Age with respect to Employee Retention.

Table 4.6.

ANOVA					
Retention					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.965	3	.322	1.282	.286
Within Groups	20.322	81	.251		
Total	21.286	84			

Multiple Comparisons						
Dependent Variable: Retention						
Tukey HSD						
(I) Age	(J) Age	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
18-25	26-30	.25303	.13902	.271	-.1116	.6177
	31-40	.07204	.14696	.961	-.3135	.4575
	41 Above	.17460	.27325	.919	-.5422	.8914
26-30	18-25	-.25303	.13902	.271	-.6177	.1116
	31-40	-.18100	.13049	.511	-.5233	.1613
	41 Above	-.07843	.26476	.991	-.7730	.6161
31-40	18-25	-.07204	.14696	.961	-.4575	.3135
	26-30	.18100	.13049	.511	-.1613	.5233
	41 Above	.10256	.26902	.981	-.6031	.8082
41 Above	18-25	-.17460	.27325	.919	-.8914	.5422
	26-30	.07843	.26476	.991	-.6161	.7730
	31-40	-.10256	.26902	.981	-.8082	.6031

From the table it is observed that the F statistic value 1.282 is not significant at 5% level (i.e. $p = 0.286$). Hence, the null hypothesis H_{02} is accepted and the alternative hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, it is evident that there is no significant difference in opinion among groups based on age with respect to the retention.

H_{03} : There is no difference in opinion among groups based on Experience and Employee Retention.

Table 4.7.

ANOVA					
Retention					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.558	4	.140	.539	.708
Within Groups	20.728	80	.259		
Total	21.286	84			

Multiple Comparisons						
Dependent Variable: Retention						
Tukey HSD						
(I) Total service	(J) Total service	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Less than 1 year	1-3 years	-.04762	.19239	.999	-.5846	.4893
	3-5 years	.03727	.17255	1.000	-.4443	.5188
	5-10 years	.08242	.16874	.988	-.3885	.5534
	10 Above	.26190	.22560	.773	-.3677	.8915
1-3 years	Less than 1 year	.04762	.19239	.999	-.4893	.5846
	3-5 years	.08489	.17255	.988	-.3967	.5665
	5-10 years	.13004	.16874	.938	-.3409	.6010
	10 Above	.30952	.22560	.647	-.3201	.9392
3-5 years	Less than 1 year	-.03727	.17255	1.000	-.5188	.4443
	1-3 years	-.08489	.17255	.988	-.5665	.3967
	5-10 years	.04515	.14571	.998	-.3615	.4518
	10 Above	.22464	.20893	.819	-.3585	.8078
5-10 years	Less than 1 year	-.08242	.16874	.988	-.5534	.3885
	1-3 years	-.13004	.16874	.938	-.6010	.3409
	3-5 years	-.04515	.14571	.998	-.4518	.3615
	10 Above	.17949	.20580	.906	-.3949	.7539
10 Above	Less than 1 year	-.26190	.22560	.773	-.8915	.3677
	1-3 years	-.30952	.22560	.647	-.9392	.3201
	3-5 years	-.22464	.20893	.819	-.8078	.3585
	5-10 years	-.17949	.20580	.906	-.7539	.3949

From the table, it is observed that the F statistic value .539 is not significant at 5% level (i.e. $p = .708$). Hence, the null hypothesis H_{03} is accepted and the alternative hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, it is evident that there is no difference in opinion among groups based on Experience and Employee Retention.

H₀₄: There is no relationship between the dimensions of Employer Branding and Employee Retention.

Table 4.8.

		Economic Value	Social Value	Developmental Value	Work Life Balance Value	Reputational Value	Retention
Economic Value	Pearson Correlation	1	.683**	.542**	.539**	.550**	.531**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	85	85	85	85	85	85
Social Value	Pearson Correlation	.683**	1	.401**	.405**	.650**	.630**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	85	85	85	85	85	85
Developmental Value	Pearson Correlation	.542**	.401**	1	.373**	.417**	.371**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	85	85	85	85	85	85
Work Life Balance Value	Pearson Correlation	.539**	.405**	.373**	1	.377**	.314**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000	.003
	N	85	85	85	85	85	85
Reputational Value	Pearson Correlation	.550**	.650**	.417**	.377**	1	.679**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	85	85	85	85	85	85
Retention	Pearson Correlation	.531**	.630**	.371**	.314**	.679**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.003	.000	
	N	85	85	85	85	85	85

The result of the hypothesis testing shows that the Pearson Correlation Coefficient for the relationship between Economic value and retention for two-tailed test at .05 level is .531, Social value and retention for two-tailed test at .05 level is .630, Developmental value and retention for two-tailed test at .05 level is .371, Work life balance value and retention for two-tailed test at .05 level is .314, Reputational value and retention for two-tailed test at .05 level is .679. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected while the alternative hypothesis is accepted. This suggests that there is a significant relationship between Employer Branding and Retention.

H₀₅: The dimensions of Employer Branding have no impact on Employee Retention.

Table 4.9.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.727 ^a	.528	.499	.35646
a. Predictors: (Constant), Reputational Value, Work Life Balance Value, Developmental Value, Social Value, Economic Value				

To test the above-mentioned hypothesis, the statistical technique used was Multiple Regression Analysis. The table displays the R Square and adjusted R Square value. From the above Table, it is observed that the R² value is 0.528 which means the strength of association between the dependent and independent variables is approx. 52.8%. It also means that other factors which have got an influence on Retention accounts for 47.2% which are not considered in this study.

Table 4.10.

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	11.248	5	2.250	17.705	.000 ^b
	Residual	10.038	79	.127		
	Total	21.286	84			
a. Dependent Variable: Retention						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Reputational Value, Work Life Balance Value, Developmental Value, Social Value, Economic Value						
Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.195	.412		2.897	.005
	Economic Value	.076	.095	.098	.798	.427
	Social Value	.235	.103	.272	2.292	.025
	Developmental Value	.032	.087	.034	.364	.717
	Work Life Balance Value	-.035	.108	-.030	-.320	.749
	Reputational Value	.428	.101	.445	4.225	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Retention						

It is also evident from the table, that the t statistic value for the factor Economic Value is .798 which is not significant at 5% level (i.e. $p = 0.427$). For the Social Value t statistic value is 2.292 which is significant at 5% level (i.e. $p = 0.025$). For the Developmental Value, the t statistic value is 0.364 which is not significant at 5% level (i.e. $p = 0.717$). For the Work Life Balance Value, the t statistic value is -0.320 which is not significant at 5% level (i.e. $p = 0.794$). For the Reputational Value, the t statistic value is 4.225 which is significant at 5% level (i.e. $p = 0.000$). Hence, we can conclude that, there exist a significant relationship between Reputational value and Retention and Social Value and Retention.

On scrutiny of the Beta scores, it is further evident that the variable Reputational Value ranks first ($\beta = 0.445$) which reveals that, Reputational Value alone accounts for 44.5%. It is followed by the Social value which has the ($\beta = 0.272$), which accounts for 27.2%.

V. Findings

The majority of employees (30.6%) belong to the age group 26-30, who falls under the category of millennials. The employees (51.78%), are having a work experience in between 5-10 years. Majority (58.8%) are holding post-graduation as their educational qualification. Employees are males (56.5%) and the rest are females which accounts for 43.5%.

Mean Score Analysis of the independent variable-employer branding, the mean percentage score for employer branding is 81.2824%. Dependent variable-employee retention, the mean percentage score for employee empowerment is 87.53%. Analysis of T-test, it is inferred that there exists no significant relationship between the demographic variable- Gender and Employee Retention. Annova, it is inferred that there exists no significant relationship between the demographic variable- Age and Employee Retention. Annova, it is inferred that there exists no significant relationship between the demographic variable- Experience and Employee Retention.

Correlation analysis, it is inferred that, there exists a moderate positive relation between the dimensions of employer branding and employee retention. Multiple regression analysis, it is inferred that, the R^2 value is 0.528 which means the strength of association between the dimensions of employer branding and employee retention is approx. 52.8%.

VI. Suggestions

Training programs provided in between the work is acting as a hindrance to the work. Fostering a culture that supports learning and development is essential, with respect to the rapid rate of change in the business environment. Hence these programs can be rescheduled as per the consultation of the project leads or employees, avoiding the pushing of the training programs, in case of critical project delivery.

Employees preferred to have an increased opportunity to work from home. Hence adequate measures can be taken by the firm, in giving increased chances of work from home. For this, employer may use the technological aids like, web/bridge connectivity through VoIP facility or use virtualization techniques so that, the work is not hampered.

VII. Conclusion

From this research it was found that there was impact of Employer Branding on Retention. At its heart, employer branding is a crucial piece of effective talent strategy providing competitive advantage to organizations. By strengthening the internal employer brand, organizations are able to focus less on overcoming the talent shortage, significantly enhance their talent pipeline, and improve employee retention. In this paper the five dimensions of Employer Branding taken in consideration, account for 52.8% of influence on retention. Other the further research on other factors are therefore to be considered and levels of retention can be improved accordingly.

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