Examining the Link between Employer Branding Practices and Employee Retention in Healthcare Sector: Role of Person-Organization Fit as a Mediator

Mezhar Hussain & Attia Aman-Ullah

Scan for the Issue

EXAMINING THE LINK BETWEEN EMPLOYER BRANDING PRACTICES AND EMPLOYEE RETENTION IN HEALTHCARE SECTOR: ROLE OF PERSON-ORGANIZATION FIT AS A MEDIATOR

Mezhar Hussain,[1] Attia Aman-Ullah [2]

Abstract: This study endeavors to examine the employer branding-employee retention linkage with emphasis on the mediating effect of person-organization fit within the healthcare sector in Pakistan. It seeks to fill the existing theoretical gaps by employing social identity theory as a core underpinning framework to validate the research findings. A quantitative approach has been adopter in which the structured questionnaires were administered to 468 nurses in the hospitals of Islamabad and Rawalpindi. The results indicated that employer branding has a positive effect on employees retention while person-organization fit has a mediating role in the proposed relationship. it was found that with the presence of person-organization fit, the organizations with effective employer branding strategies have high likelihood of retaining their employees. To the best of the author's knowledge, there is a scarcity of research examining the proposed relationship in the context of the Pakistani healthcare sector with person-organization fit as a mediator. The study will aid top healthcare practitioners as a way forward for enhancing the healthcare staff retention.

Keywords: Employer Branding Practices, Employee Retention, Healthcare Sector, Person-Organization, Fitness, Mediator.

[1]   Ph.D. Scholar, Department of Business Management, Preston University kohat, Islamabad Campus, Pakistan. Email: malikmezharfgh@gmail.com

[2]   Assistant Professor, Department of Business Management, Preston University kohat, Islamabad Campus, Pakistan. Email: drattia@preston.edu.pk

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INTRODUCTION

Employee turnover remains a subject of interest in the field of organization since it affects the various facets of organizational performance. Reduced staff retention leads to high costs of hiring new employees, orienting and training them, and pervasively lost productivity costs estimates at between 50% to 200% of their annual salary.[1] It is, therefore, important to identify ways of minimizing such cost constraints through effective staff retention practices. Long-term employment enhances efficiency and effectiveness in an organization by leveraging the competency of staff with vast working experience. This has, thereby, resulted in enhanced efforts made by organizations in retaining employees and discouraging them from turnover.[2] Various strategies are being employed by organizations to promote their organization and make them the choice of employment.[3] One of them is an employer branding strategy that has become one of the successful HR practices to retain talented employees.[4] Branding increases organization's image as an employer, therefore important for gaining competitive advantage, by rewarding and retaining employees, as well as increasing the overall levels of their engagement.[5] Some recent and similar studies have focused on the aspect of employer

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[1] Wayne F Cascio, "15 Implications of the Changing Nature of Work for Recruitment and Retention," *The Cambridge Handbook of the Changing Nature of Work*, 2020, 318.

[2] Nawab Ali Khan et al., "Assessing the Nexus between Employer Branding and Employee Retention: Moderating Role of Organizational Identification," *Management and Labour Studies* 46, no. 4 (2021): 379–98.

[3] Shubhangi Bharadwaj, Nawab Ali Khan, and Mohammad Yameen, "Unbundling Employer Branding, Job Satisfaction, Organizational Identification and Employee Retention: A Sequential Mediation Analysis," *Asia-Pacific Journal of Business Administration* 14, no. 3 (2022): 309–34.

[4] Bharadwaj, Khan, and Yameen.

[5] Stéphane Renaud, Lucie Morin, and Anne Marie Fray, "What Most Attracts Potential Candidates? Innovative Perks, Training, or Ethics?," *Career Development International* 21, no. 6 (2016): 634–55.

branding (EB) as one of the critical success factors for an organization and may act as a driver for employee engagement and reducing turnover rates. [1] [2]

While, previous research has investigated employer branding (EB) and employee retention (ER), nonetheless, literature lacks ample research on how person-organization fit affects this link.[3] Person-organization fit (POF) in this context is a measure of how well the values, objectives, and personality of a person match the characteristics of an organization.[4] Employees who possesses similar personal values as of their organizations are likely to develop positive perceptions about workplace than those with dissimilar personal values.[5] Several other studies have also indicated that a strong level of employee-organizational value fit may leads to lower levels of employee burnout[6],

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1   Bharadwaj, Khan, and Yameen, "Unbundling Employer Branding, Job Satisfaction, Organizational Identification and Employee Retention: A Sequential Mediation Analysis.";

2   Jason Lim Chiu et al., "The Effect of Employer Branding on Turnover Intention and Employee Satisfaction of the Utility Indeustry in the Philippines," *Management Review: An International Journal* 15, no. 2 (2020): 53–76.

3   Vaneet Kashyap and Neha Verma, "Linking Dimensions of Employer Branding and Turnover Intentions," *International Journal of Organizational Analysis* 26, no. 2 (2018): 282–95; Hugo Mouton and Mark Bussin, "Effectiveness of Employer Branding on Staff Retention and Compensation Expectations," *South African Journal of Economic and Management Sciences* 22, no. 1 (2019): 1–8.

4   Md Sohel Chowdhury and Dae-seok Kang, "Person–Organisation Fit and Occupation Selection in Bangladesh: A Study on Bangladesh Civil Service Applicants," *South Asian Journal of Human Resources Management* 9, no. 2 (2022): 225–49; Francis Kasekende, Sentrine Nasiima, and Rodgers Byamukama, "Organizational Compassion, Person-Organization Fit and Discretionary Behaviours in Non-Governmental Organizations: A Moderated Model," vol. 10 (Emerald Publishing Limited, 2022), 349–67; Muhammad Fajar Wahyudi Rahman, Anang Kistyanto, and Jun Surjanti, "Does Cyberloafing and Person-organization Fit Affect Employee Performance? The Mediating Role of Innovative Work Behavior," *Global Business and Organizational Excellence* 41, no. 5 (2022): 44–64.

5   Alfred Presbitero, Banjo Roxas, and Doren Chadee, "Looking beyond HRM Practices in Enhancing Employee Retention in BPOs: Focus on Employee–Organisation Value Fit," *The International Journal of Human Resource Management* 27, no. 6 (2016): 635–52.

6   Steven Kilroy et al., "Perceptions of High-involvement Work Practices, Person-organization Fit, and Burnout: A Time-lagged Study of Health Care Employees," *Human Resource Management* 56, no. 5 (2017): 821–35.

improved job satisfaction[1] and higher staff retention.[2] High POF corresponds with high staff retention. It might seem as though an employee is losing a piece of themselves when their identity is strongly linked to the company's reputation and image.[3]

In light of the available literature, this study contributes significantly to the employee retention research domain by addressing several gaps in the existing research. Firstly, the study explores the relationship between EB and ER, an area with limited empirical evidence, Pakistani context in particular. Understanding how EB affects ER in Pakistan, where the job market and organizational dynamics differ from western context of studies, and could provide useful insights for both academia and industry practitioners. Secondly, this study is also valuable in the sense that it introduces and examines POF as a mediator, offering a fresh perspective on how EB can influence employee retention through POF within the organizations. Finally, the study responds to calls for further investigation into the effects of Social Identity Theory (SIT) as an underpinning theory on the proposed framework.[4] According to SIT, EB is likely to have an impact on employees' identification, which is characterized as a feeling of belonging for an organization because socially conscious businesses are better able to preserve positive relationships and fit with their workforce. [5] Thus SIT helps us understand how POF can serve as a strong mechanism in retaining employees, particularly in the healthcare sector, which is characterized by high turnover rates.

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[1]   Navneet Kaur and Lakhwinder Singh Kang, "Person-Organisation Fit, Person-Job Fit and Organisational Citizenship Behaviour: An Examination of the Mediating Role of Job Satisfaction," *IIMB Management Review* 33, no. 4 (2021): 347–59.

[2]   Shumaila Naz et al., "A Study in the Relationship between Supportive Work Environment and Employee Retention: Role of Organizational Commitment and Person–Organization Fit as Mediators," *Sage Open* 10, no. 2 (2020): 2158244020924694.

[3]   Naz et al.

[4]   Bharadwaj, Khan, and Yameen, "Unbundling Employer Branding, Job Satisfaction, Organizational Identification and Employee Retention: A Sequential Mediation Analysis."

[5]   Blake E Ashforth and Fred Mael, "Social Identity Theory and the Organization," *Academy of Management Review* 14, no. 1 (1989): 20–39.

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LITERATURE REVIEW

Impact of Employer Branding on Employee Retention

Due to the difficulty in recruiting and retaining highly competent personnel, EB has garnered significant attention in a disruptive economy. According to a study conducted by Capgemini, the disparity between highly qualified and less skilled employees is not only substantial, but also expanding.[1] Likewise, another report showing that the United States had the greatest skill disparity at 70%, while India is in second place at 64%. [2] In response, organizations can cultivate a pool of dedicated and competent employees by implementing an effective EB strategy. This is because employees tend to judge employers based on how effectively they brand themselves[3] and are likely to remain loyal to organizations that reciprocate their loyalty through long-term appreciation and acknowledgement.[4] This is because employees tend to judge employers based on how effectively they brand themselves[5] and are likely to remain loyal to organizations that reciprocate their loyalty through long-term appreciation and acknowledgement.[6]

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[1] Karishma Banga, "Smart Technologies and the Changing Skills Landscape in Developing Countries," in *The Routledge Handbook of Smart Technologies* (Routledge, 2022), 131–47.

[2] Joseph A Rios et al., "Identifying Critical 21st-Century Skills for Workplace Success: A Content Analysis of Job Advertisements," *Educational Researcher* 49, no. 2 (2020): 80–89.

[3] Isabel Reis, Maria José Sousa, and Andreia Dionísio, "Employer Branding as a Talent Management Tool: A Systematic Literature Revision," *Sustainability* 13, no. 19 (2021): 10698.

[4] Shubhangi Bharadwaj and Mohammad Yameen, "Analyzing the Mediating Effect of Organizational Identification on the Relationship between CSR Employer Branding and Employee Retention," *Management Research Review* 44, no. 5 (2021): 718–37.

[5] Reis, Sousa, and Dionísio, "Employer Branding as a Talent Management Tool: A Systematic Literature Revision."

[6] Bharadwaj, Khan, and Yameen, "Unbundling Employer Branding, Job Satisfaction, Organizational Identification and Employee Retention: A Sequential Mediation Analysis."

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In the domain of human resource management (HRM), EB has been adopted from the marketing discipline. [12] There are two dimensions to EB: the first dimension serves as an incentive for incumbents to remain with the organization in the long term, while the second dimension serves as an attraction factor for prospective employees.[3] Consequently, both prospective and present employees have a vested interest in EB (Ahmed et al., 2022). EB as defined by [4] is a three-step procedure. To start with, an organization creates its 'value proposition' through the use of information that pertains culture of the organization, quality of the organization's product or service, and image of the current employees. This information qualifies the organization to understand what it wants, what it anticipates to achieve and its capacity to deliver those expectations. Second, the expected value proposition that is created should differ from that of rivals and competitors. This is also named as the external marketing of the employer brand.[5] The third step in the process is internal marketing which is aimed at ensuring that the brand promise is delivered to the applicants. The purpose of internal marketing is to maintain a workforce that would embraces the organization's vision with its true spirit.[6]

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[1]   R Deepa and Rupashree Baral, "Is My Employee Still Attracted to Me? Understanding the Impact of Integrated Communication and Choice of Communication Channels on Employee Attraction," *Corporate Communications: An International Journal* 27, no. 1 (2022): 110–26.

[2]   Christian P Theurer et al., "What You See Is What You Get? Measuring Companies' Projected Employer Image Attributes via Companies' Employment Webpages," *Human Resource Management* 61, no. 5 (2022): 543–61.

[3]   Theurer et al.

[4]   Kristin Backhaus and Surinder Tikoo, "Conceptualizing and Researching Employer Branding," *Career Development International* 9, no. 5 (2004): 501–17.

[5]   Karnica Tanwar and Asha Prasad, "Exploring the Relationship between Employer Branding and Employee Retention," *Global Business Review* 17, no. 3_suppl (2016): 186S--206S.

[6]   Backhaus and Tikoo, "Conceptualizing and Researching Employer Branding."

Prior studies have stressed on the need to adopt EB strategies to retain focus and goodwill of the employees while serving the organization.[1] [2] Following studies have supported and elaborated the effects of EB initiatives on employees retention[3][4], employer brand image [5]and employee engagement.[6] For example, research conducted by [7] provides empirical evidence affirming that the EB-ER relates significantly with each other. Organizations with strong EB may expereince an upward trend in their employee retention rates since the employer image influences the employees' perception of the organization and determines their level of job satisfaction. Similarly, [8] pointed out that the EB plays a crucial role in case of employee attraction and retention as well. It discovered that a favorable EB, creates an appealing image about workplaces, significantly boosts employees' intent to stay with their current organization. Based on the assumptions, the study hypothesizes that

H1: Employer branding is positively related with employee retention

[1]   S Chandrasekaran, "Impact on Employer Branding through Talent Retention and Motivation in Insurance Companies," *International Journal of Business* 1, no. 1 (2020): 54–61.

[2]   Vibhash Kumar, Sonal Jain, and Ajay Kumar Singh, "A Nomological Network Study of Employer Branding with CSR, Motivation and Intention to Stay," *Asia-Pacific Journal of Business Administration* 13, no. 4 (2021): 553–73.

[3]   Deemah Alzaid and Suad Dukhaykh, "Employer Branding and Employee Retention in the Banking Sector in Saudi Arabia: Mediating Effect of Relational Psychological Contracts," *Sustainability* 15, no. 7 (2023): 6115.

[4]   Avinash Chopra, Chandan Kumar Sahoo, and Gokulananda Patel, "Exploring the Relationship between Employer Branding and Talent Retention: The Mediation Effect of Employee Engagement," *International Journal of Organizational Analysis* 32, no. 4 (2024): 702–20.

[5]   Fatih Özcan and Meral Elçi, "Employees' Perception of CSR Affecting Employer Brand, Brand Image, and Corporate Reputation," *SAGE Open* 10, no. 4 (2020): 2158244020972372.

[6]   Aasia Yousf and Shabana Khurshid, "Impact of Employer Branding on Employee Commitment: Employee Engagement as a Mediator," *Vision* 28, no. 1 (2024): 35–46.

[7]   Özcan and Elçi, "Employees' Perception of CSR Affecting Employer Brand, Brand Image, and Corporate Reputation."

[8]   Tanwar and Prasad, "Exploring the Relationship between Employer Branding and Employee Retention."

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Mediating role of Person-organization fit

Many practitioners are becoming interested in POF, as it is a critical aspect of employment and is consequently associated with organizational retention, selection criteria, job attitudes and outcomes [1]. This concept is based on the premise that aligning employees' values with those of their employer can improve organizational success and individual productivity[2]. Strategically aligning individuals who have similar tendencies with the company's culture positively contributes to an organization's competitiveness and decreases turnover[3].

While POF is vital throughout the employment lifecycle, it is particularly crucial during the recruiting phase, as it provides the basis for subsequent employment outcomes[4]. Considerations of fit during the recruiting process, for instance, is the most important predictor of organizational attractiveness. These impressions might eventually influence a job seeker's decision to proceed with the recruitment process or accept an offer to work at the organization[5]. Therefore, organizations can leverage their enhanced attractiveness to job applicants by broadening their talent pools[6]. Furthermore, careful POF assessment during recruitment can mitigate the risk of costly outcomes

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[1]   Naz et al., "A Study in the Relationship between Supportive Work Environment and Employee Retention: Role of Organizational Commitment and Person–Organization Fit as Mediators."

[2]   Zixiang Ma et al., "Team-Level High-Performance Work Systems, Self-Efficacy and Creativity: Differential Moderating Roles of Person–Job Fit and Goal Difficulty," in *Strategic Human Resource Management and Organizational Effectiveness* (Routledge, 2022), 254–87.

[3]   Laili Komariyah et al., "A Study of Relationship of Human Resource Management Practices, Competitive Advantages, And Person-Organization Fit as A Mediation Variable in Indonesian High Schools (Study of Management of Civil Servant Educa," *Educational Sciences: Theory \& Practice* 21, no. 4 (2021).

[4]   Chuan Qin et al., "An Enhanced Neural Network Approach to Person-Job Fit in Talent Recruitment," *ACM Transactions on Information Systems (TOIS)* 38, no. 2 (2020): 1–33.

[5]   Sanne Theodora Sophia Ghielen, Rein De Cooman, and Luc Sels, "The Interacting Content and Process of the Employer Brand: Person-Organization Fit and Employer Brand Clarity," *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology* 30, no. 2 (2021): 292–304.

[6]   Rebecca M Paluch and Vanessa Shum, "Organizational Mobility Preferences and Organizational Career Environments: A Person-Organization Fit Perspective," *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 139 (2022): 103806.

associated with misfit including negative work attitudes and counter work productive work behaviors that may likely arise if the unsuitable individual might join the organization. [1]

In such circumstances, the effective employer branding initiatives can contribute to the establishment of POF with the current and perspective employees[2]. Boon et al. (2011), revealed that positive reputation, sound human resource management policies and positive culture, including learning and development, proactive recruitment and communication with the employee leads to higher POF among the employees. The study by [3] also reported a direct relationship between EB, organizational fit and employee engagement. The study found that the POF partially mediates the association between corporate branding and employee engagement. It is somehow found consistent with the social identity theory (SIT), which argues that people use social categories to characterize and classify both themselves and other people[4]. These social categories can help people recognize their place in the environment and help establish order in it. Hence, the EB enables organizational members evaluate their personhood with the organization. It improves person-organization fit when they feel that they share similar values and when their values match those of the organization that they are seeking to join. Based on the literature reviewed, the study hypothesizes that

H2: Person-organization fit positively mediates the relationship between employer branding and employee retention

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[1] Nai-Wen Chi et al., "Detrimental Effects of Newcomer Person-job Misfit on Actual Turnover and Performance: The Buffering Role of Multidimensional Person-environment Fit," *Applied Psychology* 69, no. 4 (2020): 1361–95; Benedikt Englert et al., "The Incongruity of Misfit: A Systematic Literature Review and Research Agenda," *Human Relations*, 2023, 00187267231187751.

[2] Alaa Ibrahim Lary and Rosmini Omar, "A Conceptual Framework for Describing the Role of Employer Branding, Person-Organization Fit and Employee Engagement in Shaping Organizational Citizenship Behavior," *Business Management and Strategy* 12, no. 2 (2021): 172–81.

[3] Corine Boon et al., "The Relationship between Perceptions of HR Practices and Employee Outcomes: Examining the Role of Person–Organisation and Person–Job Fit," *The International Journal of Human Resource Management* 22, no. 01 (2011): 138–62.

[4] Ashforth and Mael, "Social Identity Theory and the Organization."

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METHODOLOGY

This study has been conducted on the nurses employed in the healthcare sector. According to the Ministry of Finance, Government of Pakistan, the cumulative count of registered nurses in Pakistan for the period spanning from 2021 to 2022 amounts to 121,245 personnel (MOF-Pakistan (2022). Nevertheless, this data is consolidated on a national scale and lacks precise information regarding the allocation of nurse staff among specific hospitals or cities, such as Islamabad and Rawalpindi. Therefore, the exact count of nurses in these cities is presently unknown. In light of the limited availability of comprehensive data regarding the allocation of nursing personnel in particular areas, this study utilizes a statistical framework to determine the sample size, The lack of specific local data can thus be compensated by following a statistical approach which guarantees an adequate sample size and power. [1] called for the use of observation to variable ratio technique to determine a viable sample size. According to them a 20:1 observation to variable ratio is adequate to perform inferences and estimations. This implies that for every variable used in the study, at least twenty participants should be sampled for the study to yield meaningful results. Because of the multifaceted nature of the healthcare system and factors influencing turnover rates in this industry, it was necessary to obtain a large sample size. This study, therefore follows the guidelines through first identifying the number of variables to be measured and then estimating the required sample size for those variables.

In order to achieve a high response rate due to the possibility of some participants dropping out before completing the questions, oversampling was used with the aim of having a robust final sample. A total of 468 questionnaires have been administered to the nurses working in different hospitals of Islamabad and Rawalpindi. With regards to the distribution, an effort was made to secure a wide spectrum of participants from different departments and shifts in order to encompass as many aspects of nursing as possible. Of the 468 questionnaires administered, the total number 282 were filled and returned thus giving the study a response rate of 60%. This response rate is in concordance with other studies carried out in the healthcare sector whereby research

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[1] Joseph F Hair et al., "When to Use and How to Report the Results of PLS-SEM," *European Business Review* 31, no. 1 (2019): 2–24.

participants are subjected to heavy workload remain busy in most cases thus less time to participate in such research studies.

MEASUREMENT SCALES

The questionnaire was developed from previously validated research instruments to ensure its robustness and relevance. Respondents would be given a close-ended questionnaire, "and the response scale for all items ranged from 1 "strongly disagree" to 5 "strongly agree" on a 5-point Likert scale." Maintaining the privacy of employee identities during questionnaire participation is an ethical imperative to uphold confidentiality.

Employer branding (EB): was measured using 13 items Likert scale developed by[1]. Sample items are "my organization has a fair attitude towards employees."

Person-organization fit (POF): Four items developed by [2] were used to assess employees' alignment with the organization's values and culture. Sample item is "I feel that my personal values are a good fit with this organization."

Employee Retention (ER): was measured using 13 items Likert scale developed by[3]. Sample item is "I want to stay with the company for a long time."

RESULTS

The data was analysed using the partial least squares method of structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM). Using the two-step method of[4], the study first verified the measuring constructs and then evaluated the hypothesized model. At first, assessment

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[1]   Tanwar and Prasad, "Exploring the Relationship between Employer Branding and Employee Retention."

[2]   Sean Valentine, Lynn Godkin, and Margaret Lucero, "Ethical Context, Organizational Commitment, and Person-Organization Fit," *Journal of Business Ethics* 41 (2002): 349–60.

[3]   Ashraf Elsafty and Mahmoud Oraby, "The Impact of Training on Employee Retention: An Empirical Research on the Private Sector in Egypt," *International Journal of Business and Management* 17, no. 5 (2022): 58–74.

[4]   Joseph F Hair Jr et al., *Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) Using R: A Workbook* (Springer Nature, 2021).

of measurement model was carried out. The measurement model used to assess and establish the link between the latent constructs and their observable indicators. To assess the convergent validity, reliability, and internal consistency of the model, composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE) were used. As can be seen in Table 1, all reflective constructs had CR equal to or greater than 0.7[1]. This implies that there is a high degree of reliability displayed by the measurement model. Furthermore, convergent (AVE) and discriminant (Fornell-Larcker) validity criteria were used to assess the validity of reflective constructs[2]. After excluding the items EB_8, EB_11, and EB_13 for weak factor loadings, the AVE values and outer loadings of each item in relation to its construct were greater than the benchmark values of 0.50 respectively (see Table 1). Hence, indicating that reliability and convergent validity has been established via the measurement model. Discriminant validity was tested based on Fornell-Larcker criterion which stipulates that the correlations between a construct and others in the model must be less than the square root of the AVE for the specific construct[3]. Table 2 shows that the square root of AVE (bold emphasis) was greater than the other square roots, confirming the measurement model's discriminant-validity.

Table1: Reliability, Convergent Validity and Outer Loadings of Reflective Constructs					
Reflective Constructs	Items	Loadings	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha	AVE
Employer Branding	EB_1	0.806	0.921	0.906	0.541
	EB_2	0.778			
	EB_3	0.805			
	EB_4	0.756			
	EB_5	0.664			
	EB_6	0.718			
	EB_7	0.746			
	EB_8	0.654			
	EB_9	0.746			
	EB_10	0.664			
Person-Organization Fit	POF_1	0.857	0.906	0.863	0.707
	POF_2	0.869			

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1   Hair et al., "When to Use and How to Report the Results of PLS-SEM."

2   Hair et al.

3   Claes Fornell and David F Larcker, "Evaluating Structural Equation Models with Unobservable Variables and Measurement Error," *Journal of Marketing Research* 18, no. 1 (1981): 39–50.

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	POF_3	0.861			
	POF_4	0.774			
Employee Retention	ER_1	0.787	0.877	0.813	0.641
	ER_2	0.755			
	ER_3	0.853			
	ER_4	0.803			

EB = Employer Branding; ER = Employee Retention; POF = Person-organization fit

Table 2: Fornell-Larcker Criterion: Discriminant Validity of Reflective Constructs

Reflective Constructs	EB_C	ER_C	POF_C
EB_C	**0.736**		
ER_C	0.360	**0.800**	
POF_C	0.383	0.590	**0.841**

EB = Employer Branding; ER = Employee Retention; POF = Person-organization fit

Table 3 presents the mean and zero-order correlations for the suggested constructs. Most of the statistics support the primary assumptions, as anticipated and predicted. We are certain that the directionality of our hypothesis is reasonable in light of these observations.

Table 3: Mean and Inter-Correlation of Latent Constructs

	Constructs	Mean	1	2
1	Employer Branding	3.59		
2	Person-Organization Fit	3.51	0.363	
3	Employee Retention	3.43	0.499	0.334

All Values are significant @ $p < 0.05$

The hypothesized associations were tested for relevance and significance in the model during the second stage of PLS-SEM. Table 4 shows a substantive link between EB and ER ($\beta = 0.364$, $p < 0.001$). These findings corroborate the H1 hypothesis. For mediation

analysis, the study has adopted transmittal approach to mediation conceived by[1], this technique enables us to not only analyze the direct path between EB and ER, but also intervening process that explains how POF mediates this relationship. The mediation results indicated that the effect of EB on ER was significantly mediated by POF (EB -> POF -> ER: $\beta = 0.203$, $p < 0.001$). Hence, validating our second hypothesis H2.

Table 4: Structural Path Analysis: Hypotheses Results

Relationships	Hypotheses	β	t	Sig.	Sig. @ 0.05	Decision
Direct Paths (Model 1) Without mediator						
EB->ER	H1	0.364	7.846	0.000	Significant	Supported
Mediating Paths (Model 2) including direct effect paths after mediation						
Direct Effect (EB-> ER)		0.157	2.848	0.013	Significant	
Indirect Effect (EB -> POF -> ER)	H2	0.203	4.770	0.000	Significant	Supported

EB = Employer Branding; ER = Employee Retention; POF = Person-organization fit

DISCUSSION

The theoretical model examined in this study establishes a connection between EB and ER. Significant relationship between EB and ER have been established in the study, with POF as a mediator. These impressions of EB may indicate to employees that organizations genuinely value them, which ultimately serves as a mechanism to create a lasting connection between employees and an organization, hence increasing staff

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[1]   M Rungtusanatham, Jason W Miller, and Kenneth K Boyer, "Theorizing, Testing, and Concluding for Mediation in SCM Research: Tutorial and Procedural Recommendations," *Journal of Operations Management* 32, no. 3 (2014): 99–113.

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retention[1],[2]. Therefore, the findings confirm the importance of aligning EB strategies with the POF perspective to employee retention.

The degree of congruence between employers and employees has been explained by the person-organization fit perspective in conjunction with employer brand research[3]. The finding thus support the earlier studies on the POF, prospective employees match an organization's brand with their own values, needs, and ideas[4]; [5]If these two aligns, the individual will be more drawn to the organization (Ergun & Tatar, 2018). Potential employees assess the company brand and make comparisons with their own personalities and ideals. Employers who have a strong employer brand are able to draw in candidates with the qualities that best meet their needs. EB in this vein serves as a tactic for sharing the organization's mission with its employees, enabling staff members to make sure they mesh well with the organization's values[6].

The findings are also found consistent with the SIT, which argues that the way employees perceive the subjective value of being part of a group has a considerable impact on their judgment, assessments, and intentions to remain or leave the group. Therefore, having a unique and socially responsible image sets an organization apart

[1]   Bharadwaj and Yameen, "Analyzing the Mediating Effect of Organizational Identification on the Relationship between CSR Employer Branding and Employee Retention."

[2]   Tanwar and Prasad, "Exploring the Relationship between Employer Branding and Employee Retention."

[3]   Lena Christiaans, *International Employer Brand Management: A Multilevel Analysis and Segmentation of Students' Preferences* (Springer Science \& Business Media, 2012).

[4]   Jyotsna Bhatnagar and Pallavi Srivastava, "Strategy for Staffing: Employer Branding \& Person Organization Fit," *Indian Journal of Industrial Relations*, 2008, 35–48.

[5]   Karnica Tanwar and Amresh Kumar, "Employer Brand, Person-Organisation Fit and Employer of Choice: Investigating the Moderating Effect of Social Media," *Personnel Review* 48, no. 3 (2019): 799–823.

[6]   Alpa Parmar, "The Role of HR Department in Employer Branding at Public and Private Sector," *Journal of Human Resources Management and Labor Studies* 2, no. 2 (2014): 201–25; Ruchika Sharma and Karnica Tanwar, "Organisation Pursuit Intention through Perceived Employer Brand, Person Organisation Fit and Perceived Organisational Prestige," *Corporate Reputation Review* 26, no. 1 (2023): 33–53; Pallavi Srivastava and Jyotsna Bhatnagar, "Employer Brand for Talent Acquisition: An Exploration towards Its Measurement," *Vision* 14, no. 1–2 (2010): 25–34.

from others and strengthens employees' sense of belonging and connection[1]. Employees with a strong sense of self are eager to keep their memberships, and as a result, they exhibit positive behaviors like being driven to remain connected to the existing organization[2].

MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

The study has significant implications for the managerial community and practice. The initial implication pertains to the utilization of EB as a potent instrument for talent retention. Investing in EB generates a reputation that attracts exceptional employees and fosters a sense of belongingness among current employees. Managers should also recognize the value of EB in enhancing relationships with employees, as it is implemented with a specific strategic intent to obtain a competitive advantage. Moreover, the result indicates that the POF is the sole mediator in the relationship between the EB and ER. This suggests that the EB, while essential for enhanced outcomes, do not necessarily result in the establishment of ER unless potential employees establish a strong POF. Potential employees with meticulously developed career goals actively seek organizations that align with their cultural and social preferences prior to initiating contact for employment opportunities. As a result, organizations must prioritize the alignment of employee values with organizational values, norms, and objectives to foster strategic, sustainable, and positive employee behaviors at work.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Although the study makes a theoretical contribution, it is important to consider certain limitations and cautions. First, our ability to draw causal conclusions from the tested model is limited by the cross-sectional research approach. Despite the fact that our

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[1] Isabelle Maignan and Odies Collins Ferrell, "Corporate Citizenship as a Marketing Instrument-Concepts, Evidence and Research Directions," *European Journal of Marketing* 35, no. 3/4 (2001): 457–84.

[2] Rolf Van Dick and Lucas Monzani, "22 I Am a Happy and Committed Worker? The Role of Identification, Commitment and Job Satisfaction for Employee Behaviour," *An Introduction to Work and Organizational Psychology: An International Perspective*, 2017, 410.

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model was created utilizing theoretical and empirical literature, and the results we obtained confirmed the expected causality. Experiments and longitudinal study designs should be employed in future studies to test the proposed connection and firmly validate this pattern of relationships. Furthermore, it will also be beneficial in mitigating the influence of potential common method variance (CMV) within the dataset. Second, our study is additionally constrained by its research context and target population. Although the study intends to address questions related to EB and its role in affecting IWB, these limitations restrict the applicability of our findings to other work settings. More study is needed in a range of institutional and organizational contexts to offer strong theoretical and empirical support for our proposed framework. Research designs that employ cross-cultural and cross-institutional comparative approaches may aid in this endeavor.

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