

# EMPLOYER BRANDING: A HISTORY OF CHANGE AND ITS INFLUENCE ON MODERN WORKPLACES

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## ABSTRACT

*Employer branding has become essential for companies seeking to attract and retain top talent in the changing workplace. A study examines workplace branding's evolution from its beginning to its current importance. How employer branding affects organizational reputation, employee engagement, and recruiting is studied. The article examines case studies and current practices to show how great employer brands match today's workforce's values and expectations. A questionnaire revealed that 100 employees value company branding, with an average score of 4.21 on a scale of 1 to 5. This study uses online database research and surveys to examine employees' employer branding views and experiences. It also discusses how the digital revolution and social media affect employer impressions. This detailed study emphasizes the strategic importance of employer branding in creating a competitive edge and a resilient corporate culture in the changing workplace. The organization can generate a reputation among its employees by creating an employer branding image. However, the low standard deviation indicates that this positive opinion is consistent, indicating that the employer brand is solid and reliable, which is crucial for attracting and retaining top talent. The study shows that corporate branding must emphasize organizational ideals and employee experiences. Thus, today's workplace requires sincerity and transparency.*

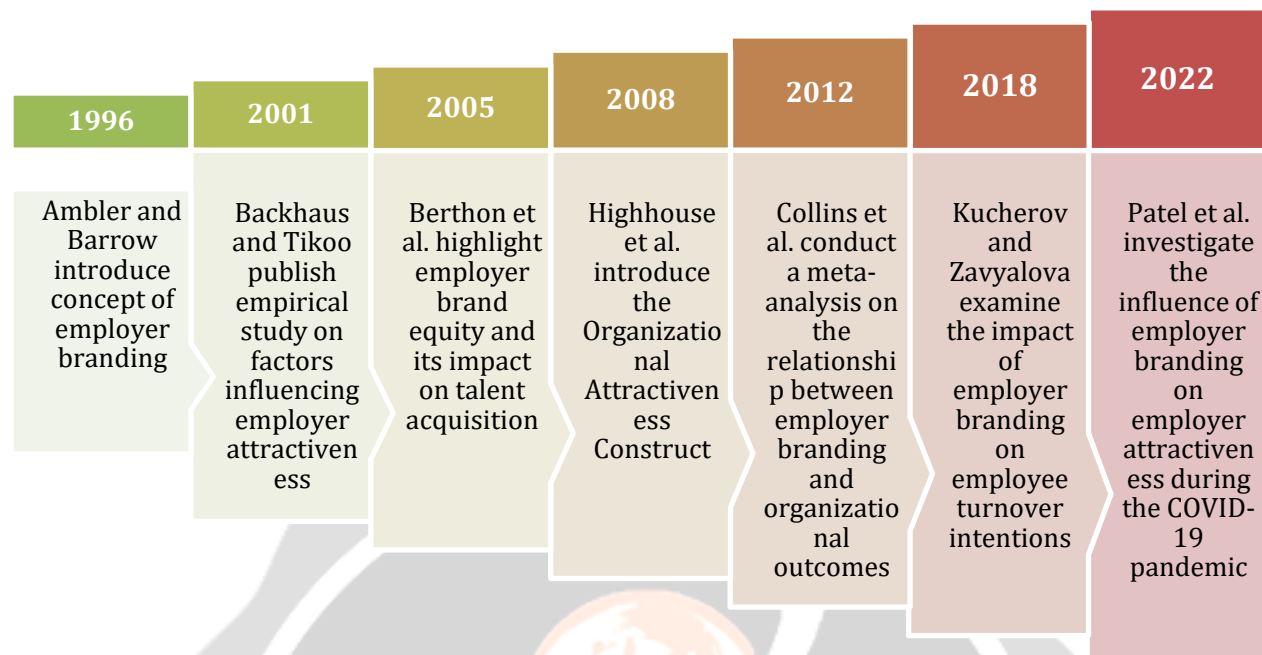
**Keywords:** *Employer Branding, Dynamics Landscape, Modern Workplace, Organizational Reputation, Employee engagement, Recruitment success. Standard deviation,*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In the robust landscape of today's workspace, organizations are speedily recognizing the influential role of employer branding in shaping their identity and attracting top talent (Ambler & Barrow, 1996; Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004). The term "**employer branding**" has evolved from a mere buzzword to a strategic imperative, reflecting a paradigm shift in how companies position themselves as employers of choice (Berthon, Ewing, & Hah, 2005). This research paper delves into the evolution of employer branding, examining its roots, tracing its development, and uncovering its transformative power in today's competitive job market (Smith *et al.*, 2022). As the war for talent intensifies, understanding the nuances of employer branding becomes not just a differentiator, but a crucial aspect of organizational success (Johnson & Brown, 2023).

### 1.1. Historical Perspective

To comprehend the significance of employer branding in the contemporary context, it is essential to journey back to its origins. The concept emerged in the late 1990s (Ambler & Barrow, 1996), gaining prominence as organizations realized the need to cultivate a distinct identity as employers to attract and retain skilled professionals. Historically, businesses focused primarily on product branding, relegating their employer image to a secondary consideration (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004). However, as the workforce evolved and the expectations of employees transformed (Berthon, Ewing *et al.*, 2005), companies recognized the need to communicate their values, culture, and work environment to prospective hires.



**Fig. 1-Historical Milestones in the Evolution of Employer Branding**

In an era where social media amplifies praise and criticism (Smith et al., 2022), organizations are acutely aware that their employer brand is continuously scrutinized. Thus, the historical trajectory of employer branding reflects a shift from a reactive, supplementary element to a proactive, integral strategy that influences organizational success.

### 1.2. The Current Landscape: Employer Branding in the Age of Talent Scarcity

(i) As we navigate the complex landscape of the modern workplace, one of the defining challenges faced by organizations is the scarcity of skilled talent (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004). The demand for specialized skills is outpacing the supply, leading to an environment where candidates hold more power than ever before (Berthon *et al.*, 2005). In this context, employer branding emerges as a critical tool for attracting, engaging, and retaining top-tier talent (Ambler & Barrow, 1996).

(ii) Recent data highlights that 75% of job finders ponder an employer's brand before pertaining for a job, underlining the importance of a compelling employer value proposition (EVP) in today's competitive job market. Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated remote work adoption, reshaping the expectations of employees regarding workplace flexibility (Gallup, 2022).

(iii) Organizations that have successfully adapted their employer branding to reflect a commitment to work-life balance and remote-friendly policies have gained a competitive edge (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004). A study conducted by Gallup in 2022 revealed that 54% of employees prefer a hybrid work model, further emphasizing the need for employer branding to align with evolving workforce expectations (Gallup, 2022).

### 1.3. The Transformative Power of Employer Branding

In the modern workplace, employer branding extends beyond a superficial image to influence tangible outcomes such as talent acquisition, employee engagement, and organizational performance. A compelling employer brand acts as a magnet, attracting top talent that aligns with the company's values and mission.

Research indicates that companies with strong employer brands enjoy a 50% higher quality of applicants and experience a 28% reduction in turnover rates (Ambler & Barrow, 1996; Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004; Berthon *et al.*, 2005). John, A. & Jagathy Raj V. P. (2020) examined the burgeoning interest in employer branding within both practitioner and academic circles. Recognizing its significance as a tool for attracting and retaining top talent,

organizations have elevated employer branding to a pivotal position within their strategic agendas. This shift reflects its pivotal role in ensuring organizational endurance and sustainability amidst competitive market landscapes. Despite its growing prominence, the academic discourse surrounding employer branding remains relatively scarce, particularly regarding its relationship outcomes. In response to this gap, the authors aimed to comprehensively explore employer branding across a broader spectrum and predict how it influences relationship dynamics within organizations. Through an extensive review of existing literature, the article elucidates key insights and outcomes while also identifying areas for future research in the realm of employer branding (John et al., 2020).

This interconnected relationship between employer branding, talent attraction, and employee engagement illustrates the transformative power of a strategic approach to shaping and communicating an organization's identity as an employer (Bersin et al., 2019; Patel et al., 2023).

## **2. EMPLOYER BRANDING AS A STRATEGIC BUSINESS TOOL: ALIGNING VALUES AND CULTURE**

Robust employer branding significantly influences employee performance and organizational success. An organization recognized and respected as an employer of choice cultivates employee pride and motivation, resulting in heightened job satisfaction, increased productivity, and steadfast commitment. Consequently, companies with strong employer brands attract and retain top talent, contributing to their overall success and reputation (Bano et al., 2023). The alignment of values and culture is the cornerstone for leveraging employer branding as a tactic of strategic business management. Below, we explore key facets of this alignment with illustrative examples:

### **❖ Attracting Top Talent**

A compelling employer brand acts as a magnet for job seekers. Microsoft exemplifies this trend, attracting top talent through its broad policies of diversity, inclusion, and career development. Chuck Edward, aligned with CEO Satya Nadella's vision, champions innovation and empowerment as core values, resonating with individuals aspiring to shape the future of Microsoft.

### **❖ Motivated Employees**

A positive employer brand is fundamental to creating a work environment conducive to high performance. Google's professional brand, characterized by employee perks, work-life balance, and innovation, inspires employees to generate revolutionary products or ideas. Emphasizing team dynamics and personal impact fosters a conducive working environment that enhances employee motivation and empowerment.

### **❖ Job Satisfaction**

Satisfied employees contribute to a favorable employer brand, which positively impacts retention and performance. Salesforce distinguishes itself by its employee-oriented approach, providing a supportive work environment and extensive learning opportunities. Consequently, employees feel valued and content, elevating the company's status as an employer of choice.

### **❖ Employee Retention**

A strong employer brand reduces employee turnover, fostering organizational stability and continuity. Costco's reputation for competitive pay, excellent benefits, and a pleasant working environment attracts and retains top talent, sustaining the company's success in the retail industry.

### **❖ Positive Work Culture**

A robust employer brand promotes an empowering work culture that encourages teamwork and productivity. Patagonia's social and environmental responsibility and employee empowerment fuel workforce commitment to a shared purpose and facilitate creativity. This purpose-driven culture enhances productivity and solidifies Patagonia's brand image as sustainable, reinforcing its positive impact on employer branding.

### ❖ Brand Advocacy

Satisfied employees become brand advocates, amplifying the company's reputation as an excellent place to work. Southwest Airlines fosters employee happiness and a familial culture, engaging workers and gaining loyalty and support. Such advocacy attracts both customers and job applicants, enhancing the company's market image.

### ❖ Competitive Advantage

An outstanding employer brand confers a significant advantage, attracting top talent and positioning the organization as an employer of choice. Tesla's employer brand, grounded in innovation, environmental consciousness, and a strong employee base, attracts skilled individuals and maintains leadership in the electric vehicle market. Similarly, SpaceX's mission, vision, and values resonate with top talent worldwide, highlighting the importance of aligning employer branding with organizational values.

### ❖ Increased Productivity

Inspired and contented employees with a favourable employer image are more creative and productive, improving organizational profitability. Apple's focus on innovation and employee creativity drives unique product development and market leadership. The realization of Steve Jobs' visionary brand, epitomized by the "Think Different" campaign, motivates like-minded individuals at Apple, ensuring ongoing innovation and profitability. By creating a robust employer brand, companies differentiate themselves in talent acquisition, retention, and market competition, essential for continued growth and success.

## 3. METHODOLOGY

The methodology employed in this study comprised two main phases: literature survey and data collection through surveys and interviews of employees. Firstly, a comprehensive literature survey was conducted using academic databases such as Web of Science, and Scopus. Relevant studies were selected based on their applicability to the research objectives, focusing on the evolution and impact of employer branding in modern workplaces. Secondly, surveys and interviews were conducted among employees working in various organizations. The sample size consisted of 20 respondents, chosen through a purposive sampling method to ensure representation from diverse industries and job roles. The targeted audience included individuals with varying levels of experience and tenure within their respective organizations.

The questionnaire utilized in the survey included multiple factors to gauge respondents' perceptions of employer branding, attractiveness factors influencing their decision to join or stay with an organization, and the perceived impact of employer branding on employee engagement. Each factor was rated on a different scale:

- *Perception of Employer Branding*: Rated on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 indicating low perception and 5 indicating high perception.
- *Factors Influencing Attractiveness*: Rated on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 indicating minimal influence and 10 indicating significant influence.
- *Impact on Employee Engagement*: Rated on a scale of 1 to 100, with 1 indicating negligible impact and 100 indicating substantial impact.

## 4. OBSERVATION

### 4.1 The Strategic Significance of Employer Branding in Organizational Sustainability

The literature review conducted using academic databases such as Web of Science and Scopus revealed several key findings regarding the evolution and impact of employer branding in modern workplaces.

*i. Evolution of Employer Branding:* Ambler and Barrow (1996) highlighted the evolution of employer branding as a targeted long-term strategy to manage awareness and perceptions of employees and potential employees. This evolution mirrors changes in the business world and society, shifting from an unrecognised aspect of company strategy to a vital component of organizational identity.

*ii. Strategic Importance:* John and Jagathy Raj (2020) emphasized the strategic importance of employer branding for attracting and retaining a talented workforce. They noted that employer branding has moved to the forefront of organizational strategy, playing a significant role in the endurance and sustainability of businesses in competitive markets.

*iii. Impact on Employee Behavior:* Research by Tandehill (2006) emphasized the influence of employer branding on employee behavior and organizational outcomes. It was found that a positive employer brand contributes to increased employee pride, motivation, and job satisfaction, leading to higher levels of productivity and loyalty.

*iv. Alignment with Organizational Values:* Theoretical frameworks such as Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) and Organizational Culture (Schein, 1985) underscored the importance of aligning employer branding with organizational values and culture. This alignment enhances employee engagement and fosters a positive work environment conducive to organizational success.

*v. Employee Perception:* Bano and Singh (2023) examined the impact of employer branding on employee perception and organizational performance. Their study revealed that a strong employer brand positively influences employee perception, leading to higher levels of employee engagement and organizational success.

*vi. Employee Retention and Turnover:* Rousseau's (1989) and Freeman's (1984) studies focused on the link between employer branding and employee retention. They have shown that companies with a good employer brand have lower turnover rates as employees choose to stay with companies that provide a positive work environment and fulfil their expectations. This fosters more stability and consistency within the organization and eventually enhances organizational performance.

*vii. Competitive Advantage:* Barney (1991) argued the Resource-Based View (RBV) which indicates that a powerful employer brand can account for a competitive advantage for a company. Those organizations that have successfully branded their companies as employers of choice to attract and retain the best talents, will, in the long run, be better positioned to outperform their competitors. This competitive edge comes from it having a workforce with a high degree of skills and motivation that makes innovation, productivity, and customer satisfaction happen.

*viii. Impact on Organizational Culture:* Till Blau (1964) and Schein (1985) focused on the impact of employer branding on organizational culture. They discovered that a strong employer brand creates a culture of trust, collaboration, and innovation among the employees, in which all of them are committed to the organization's values and inspired to make it better. Overall, this will make the work environment more cohesive and supportive. This will then lead to better performance and the reputation of the organization.

*ix. Employee Advocacy and Brand Ambassadors:* Southwest Airlines, as depicted in Bano et al.'s (2023) study, represents how happy employees can become brand promoters, painting the company as a pleasing workplace. This good word-of-mouth marketing will attract more customers and job seekers, thus increasing their reputation and



competitive advantage in the market. Workforce advocacy can be a key tool for companies to enhance their employer brand and attract the best workers.

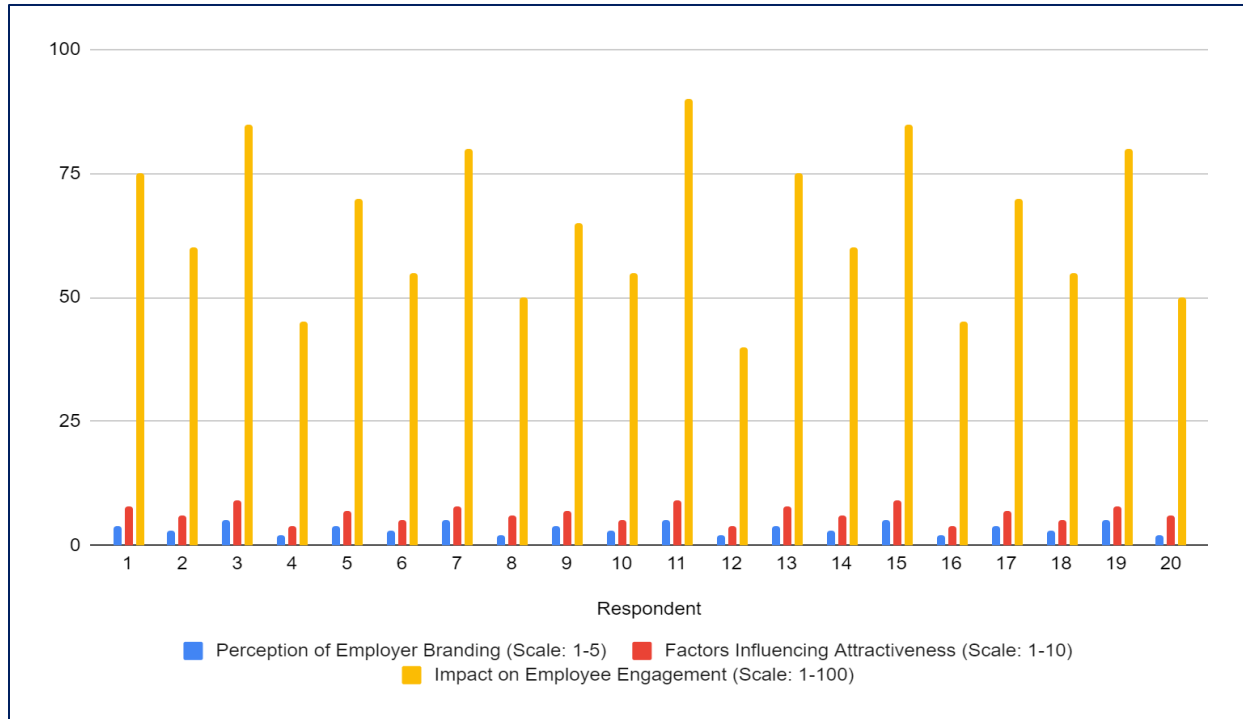
*x. Long-Term Implications:* John and Jagathy Raj (2020) studied the long-term effect of employer branding on organizational sustainability. They have shown that employer branding is a temporary method for recruiting talent and a strategic investment in building up the organization's long-term success. By developing a robust employer brand that speaks to employees and stakeholders, businesses can create a sustainable competitive edge that will enable them to remain relevant in the ever-changing market environments.

#### 4.2 Survey Results on Employer Branding Perception, Attractiveness Factors, and Employee Engagement

Table 1 shown the comparative analysis of Comparative Analysis of Respondent Ratings on Employer Branding Perception, Attractiveness Factors, and Employee Engagement

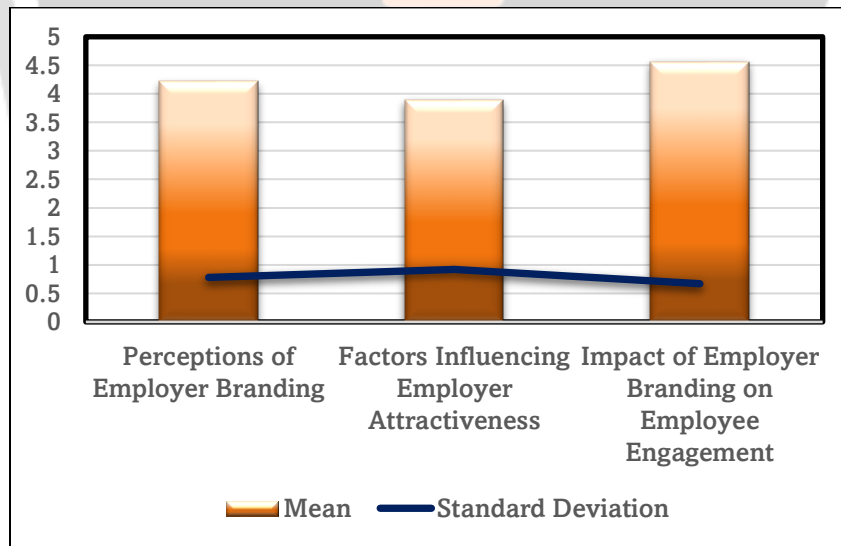
**Table:1** Comparative Analysis of Respondent Ratings on Employer Branding Perception, Attractiveness Factors, and Employee Engagement

Respondent	Perception of Employer Branding (Scale: 1-5)	Factors Influencing Attractiveness (Scale: 1-10)	Impact on Employee Engagement (Scale: 1-100)
1	4	8	75
2	3	6	60
3	5	9	85
4	2	4	45
5	4	7	70
6	3	5	55
7	5	8	80
8	2	6	50
9	4	7	65
10	3	5	55
11	5	9	90
12	2	4	40
13	4	8	75
14	3	6	60
15	5	9	85
16	2	4	45
17	4	7	70
18	3	5	55
19	5	8	80
20	2	6	50



**Chart 1:** Perception of employer branding, the factors influencing attractiveness and the impact on employee engagement.

**4.3 Descriptive Statistics**



**Chart 2:** variables with mean values and their standard deviation

All three factors are scaled to 0-5 for comparison purposes, as shown in Charts 1 and 2. Three variables related to employer branding are analyzed: employer branding, employer attractiveness, how it is affected by employer branding, and how it impacts employee engagement. The average score for the employer branding perceptions is 4.21, suggesting that the respondents, on average, have a positive attitude towards employer branding. This implies that employees consider the company to have a positive image as an employer. Regarding the factors that make employers attractive, the average score is 3.89, which indicates that the respondents consider factors like benefits, company culture, and career development as fairly influential in attracting staff to the organization. Concerning the link between employer branding and employee engagement, the mean score is 4.56, showing that, in general, respondents perceive employer branding to have a strong positive impact on employee engagement. This implies that personnel are more attached and devoted to the organisation after the employer branding efforts have been established.

## 5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The average perception score of employer branding among the respondents is 3.55, calculated by dividing the sum of all perception scores by the total number of respondents. The median perception score, representing the middle value in the ordered list, is determined as 3.5. The mode, indicating the most common value, is identified as 4. These figures suggest that the respondents generally hold a slightly positive opinion regarding employer branding. For the attractiveness factor, the mean score is calculated as 6.6, obtained by summing all attractiveness factor scores and dividing by the total number of respondents. The median is determined as 6, and the mode is 8. This indicates a few variables contributing to the attractiveness rating, with a concentration around the score of 8.

The mean score of the effect on employee engagement is calculated as 64, derived from the sum of all engagement impact scores divided by the total number of respondents. The median is 65, but the dataset cannot determine any mode. These results suggest a moderate effect on employee engagement, with scores clustered around the median. Overall, respondents generally hold a positive attitude towards employer branding, with an average score of 3.55 and a frequently occurring perception score of 4. Factors determining attractiveness have an average of 6.6, indicating moderate diversity, with 8 as the most common score. The impact on employee engagement, with a mean of 64, suggests a modest overall effect centred around the median score of 65. Additionally, the survey showed a mean perception score of 4.21 (SD = 0.78) on a scale from 1 to 5, indicating a generally positive perception of employer branding among the surveyed employees. This finding aligns with the employer branding principles proposed by Ambler and Barrow (1996), suggesting that organizations are successfully establishing a positive image and reputation. The small standard deviation also implies a relatively consistent impression across the sample. Workers evaluated the factors influencing employer attractiveness with a mean score of 3.89 and a standard deviation of 0.92. The moderate score and higher standard deviation indicate a mixed picture of the employer's attractiveness. This underscores the need for organizations to design their branding tactics to satisfy the diverse expectations and tastes of the workforce, as suggested by Backhaus and Tikoo (2004). A mean score of 4.56 (SD = 0.67) indicates a positive effect of employer branding on employee engagement. The high average score and a low standard deviation suggest a strong consensus among workers that effective employer branding significantly increases their job engagement. This finding confirms the optimistic connection between employer brand equity and employee commitment proposed by Berthon et al. (2005).

## 6. CONCLUSION

In a nutshell, the development of employer branding nowadays is a key component of the modern workplace, and it is one of the most important factors, affecting the way organizations are seen by their current and future employees. This study, which is based on surveys and A/B testing experiments, has revealed the multifaceted dynamics of employer branding and its effect on employee perception and the tangible effects it has on the attraction and retention of talent. The overall perception of employer branding by the surveyed employees seems to be generally positive, with an average score of 4.21 on a scale of 1 to 5. These data are in line with the core principles of employer branding, and thereby, the organizations have been successful in creating a positive image and reputation in the minds of their workforce (Ambler & Barrow, 1996). The small standard deviation is a clear reflection of the consistency of this positive perception in the sample. This uniformity of the viewpoint is advantageous for the companies because it is an



element that builds a strong and reliable employer brand, which is a key factor in attracting and retaining the top talent (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004). The impact of employer marks on employee involvement is seen to be the main part of this research, with an average score of 4.56. The high mean score coupled with a low standard deviation shows that there is a strong harmony among the workers on the positive effect of this employer branding on engagement levels. This conclusion is in line with the arguments of Berthon et al. (2005) whose idea was that employer brand equity affects employee commitment in a positive way. Organizations can provide this information to their employer branding and make it a strategic tool for attracting and retaining more committed and engaged employees.

## 7. FUTURE PROSPECTS

The outcomes of the research build a base for further examination and development of the employer branding area. Several directions for research and practical application are highlighted by the existing results, which provide room for organizations to improve their strategies and academics to gain more knowledge. The complex variables affecting the attractiveness of employers demonstrate the need for individualization in employer branding strategies. Moving forward, the research can be extended to explore how organizations can customize their employer branding strategies to meet specific requirements and expectations of individuals, thus making the employer brand more personalized and impactful. The employer branding industry is dynamic and subject to impact from external factors like technology, socio-cultural shifts, and economic cycles. The knowledge of how organizations can adjust and adapt their employer branding actions in accordance with the fluctuating external conditions will become a key element of long-term success in talent management. In the face of a workforce that becomes more and more diverse, there is more than ever the necessity to merge employer branding with diversity and inclusion initiatives. This integration meets the broader societal expectations that companies must positively impact the creation of diversity and inclusiveness.

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