



Employer Branding Vs Employee Reality: A Study on its Impact on Talent Attraction and Retention

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Industry Profile

The present study is focused on the IT / Software & Technology industry, one of the fastest-growing sectors in today's economy. This industry includes software development, IT services, cloud computing, artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, data analytics, and digital solutions.

The industry is highly dependent on skilled employees, as their knowledge and performance directly contribute to organizational success. Due to high competition for talent, companies give importance to attracting qualified candidates and retaining experienced employees.

Employer branding plays an important role in this sector, as job seekers often compare companies based on salary, career growth, work culture, flexibility, learning opportunities, and company reputation. Many organizations use websites, social media, job portals, and referral programs to build a positive employer image.

At the same time, employees expect supportive management, recognition, fair compensation, and work-life balance. If the actual experience does not match

the promises made during recruitment, it may lead to dissatisfaction and turnover.

1.2 Background of the Study

In the current competitive business environment, organizations are giving more importance to attracting qualified employees and retaining them for long-term success. Employees are considered valuable assets because their skills, knowledge, and performance contribute directly to organizational growth. As a result, companies are increasingly focusing on creating a positive image as an employer. This concept is known as employer branding.

Employer branding refers to how an organization is perceived by current employees, job seekers, and potential candidates. It includes factors such as company reputation, work culture, career growth opportunities, compensation and benefits, work-life balance, recognition, and management support. Many organizations promote their employer brand through websites, social media, job portals, and employee referrals.

However, the image projected by an organization before hiring may not always match the actual experience of employees after joining. Employees may experience differences in work culture, growth opportunities, compensation, or recognition compared to what they expected. This gap between branding promises and workplace reality can affect employee satisfaction, trust, and retention.



This study focuses on Employer Branding vs Employee Reality: A Study on Its Impact on Talent Attraction and Retention. The study examines whether the employer branding efforts of organizations are aligned with the actual experiences of employees working in the IT / Software & Technology sector.

1.3 Problem Statement

Many organizations invest time and resources in building a strong employer brand to attract talented employees. They promote positive workplace culture, career development, employee benefits, and growth opportunities through different channels. While these branding efforts may attract candidates, employees may not always experience the same reality after joining the organization.

When there is a mismatch between employer branding and actual employee experience, it can lead to lower job satisfaction, reduced motivation, negative perception, and employee turnover intentions. Therefore, it is important to study whether organizations are delivering the promises made during recruitment and how this gap affects employee attraction and retention.

1.4 Research Objectives

The main objective of this study is to examine employee perceptions of employer branding before joining the organization and to compare those expectations with their actual experience after joining. The study aims to identify whether there is a gap between branding promises and workplace reality and to analyse how such a mismatch affects employee satisfaction and retention. It also seeks to identify the major factors influencing job satisfaction, such as compensation, recognition, career growth opportunities, and work-life balance. In addition, the study examines employees' willingness to recommend their company to others and provides suggestions to improve the alignment between employer branding and actual employee experience.

1.5 Research Scope

The present study is limited to employees working in the IT / Software & Technology sector. Primary data was collected through a structured questionnaire from respondents belonging to different age groups, genders, experience levels, and job roles. The study covers variables such as branding before joining, online presence, expectation match, job satisfaction, work culture, compensation, career growth, recognition, mismatch experience, and intention to leave.

The scope of the study is to understand the relationship between employer branding and employee experience and its impact on talent attraction and retention.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study is important because employer branding has become a key strategy for attracting talented employees. However, long-term success depends on whether employees experience the same values and benefits after joining.

The study helps organizations understand the importance of aligning branding promises with actual workplace practices. It also helps identify the major factors influencing employee satisfaction and retention, such as compensation, recognition, work-life balance, and career growth. The findings of the study can support organizations in improving employee trust, satisfaction, and retention.

1.7 Definitions of the Study Variables and Important Terminologies

Employer Branding - Employer branding refers to the image and reputation of an organization as a place to work in the minds of employees and job seekers. It reflects how attractive the company appears based on factors such as work culture, salary, career growth, leadership, and employee benefits. A strong employer brand helps attract and retain talented employees.

Actual Employee Experience - Actual employee experience refers to the real experiences and perceptions of employees after joining the organization. It includes work culture, job satisfaction, career opportunities, compensation, recognition, and work-life balance. It shows whether the promises made during recruitment are fulfilled in reality.



Talent Attraction - Talent attraction is the ability of an organization to attract qualified and skilled candidates for job roles. It depends on factors such as company reputation, branding, salary, and growth opportunities.

Talent Retention - Talent retention refers to the ability of an organization to keep valuable employees for a longer period by maintaining their satisfaction and commitment. It helps reduce employee turnover and recruitment costs.

Job Satisfaction - Job satisfaction is the level of satisfaction employees feel regarding their job roles, responsibilities, salary, and work environment. Higher job satisfaction often leads to better performance and loyalty.

Work-Life Balance - Work-life balance refers to the extent to which employees can manage their professional responsibilities along with their personal life. A healthy balance reduces stress and improves well-being.

Recognition - Recognition refers to the appreciation and acknowledgment given to employees for their work and contributions. It helps employees feel valued and motivated.

Mismatch - Mismatch refers to the gap between employer branding promises and the actual experience of employees after joining the organization. It may negatively affect satisfaction, trust, and retention.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Discussion on the Issue / Variables / Concepts

Employer branding has become an important concept in modern organizations, especially in industries where competition for skilled employees is high. It refers to the image and reputation of an organization as an employer in the minds of job seekers and current employees. A strong employer brand helps organizations attract qualified candidates and create a positive perception in the job market. Factors such as company reputation, work culture, career growth opportunities, compensation, work-life balance, and leadership image play a major role in building employer branding.

However, attracting employees through branding alone is not enough. The actual employee experience after joining the organization is equally important. Employee experience includes job satisfaction, recognition, compensation, career growth, work environment, and management support. If employees feel that the real workplace experience matches the promises made during recruitment, they are more likely to remain satisfied and committed.

A major issue arises when there is a mismatch between employer branding and actual employee experience. When companies promote themselves positively but fail to provide the same experience internally, employees may feel disappointed. This gap can reduce trust, lower job satisfaction, create negative word-of-mouth, and increase employee turnover intention. Therefore, alignment between branding promises and workplace reality is important for long-term organizational success.

Talent attraction and talent retention are two key outcomes connected to employer branding. Strong branding attracts employees initially, but retention depends more on actual experience. Employees usually stay in organizations where they receive fair compensation, feel valued, experience growth opportunities, and maintain a healthy work-life balance.

2.2 Discussion on the Study Context / Business Situation

The present study is conducted in the IT / Software & Technology sector, where employer branding has become highly relevant. This industry is one of the fastest-growing sectors and depends heavily on skilled employees. Organizations in this sector compete to attract talented professionals in areas such as software development, digital services, artificial intelligence, data analytics, and technology consulting.

In the digital era, companies use multiple platforms such as LinkedIn, career websites, job portals, employee testimonials, and social media to build their employer image. Job seekers often compare organizations based on salary, flexibility, growth opportunities, learning environment, and company reputation before applying for jobs.

At the same time, employee expectations in this sector are high. They expect supportive leadership, fair compensation, work-life balance, recognition, and career development. If these expectations are not fulfilled after joining, dissatisfaction may arise. Common challenges in the industry include mismatch between hiring promises and actual work culture, high attrition due to unmet expectations, negative employee reviews, reduced trust in leadership, and



damage to employer image over time.

Therefore, the IT / Software & Technology sector provides a suitable context to study the relationship between employer branding and actual employee experience.

2.3 Discussion on the Prior and Updated Studies Relevant to the Topic

Several previous studies have explained the importance of employer branding in attracting and retaining employees.

Backhaus and Tikoo (2004) stated that employer branding helps organizations build a unique employer identity, which improves attraction and strengthens employee commitment. Their study highlighted that branding can create competitive advantage in the labour market.

Berthon, Ewing, and Hah (2005) found that employer attractiveness is influenced by economic value, development value, social value, and interest value. This means candidates prefer organizations that offer not only salary benefits but also learning opportunities, good relationships, and meaningful work.

Cable and Turban (2003) explained that employer reputation plays an important role in attracting applicants. However, they also emphasized that long-term employee outcomes depend on the actual organizational experience after joining.

Tanwar and Prasad (2016) concluded that employer branding supports both attraction and retention only when supported by authentic HR practices and employee satisfaction. If branding is not genuine, it may fail to create long-term benefits.

The present study differs from earlier studies by focusing specifically on the gap between external employer branding and internal employee reality, along with its impact on satisfaction, trust, attraction, and retention in the Indian corporate workforce context.

2.4 Conceptual Framework of the Research

This framework is based on the idea that organizations can attract employees through a strong employer brand, but long-term success depends on whether the actual employee experience matches the promises made during recruitment. While branding creates expectations before joining, real workplace conditions determine employee satisfaction, trust, and retention.

Key Variables in the Framework

1. Independent Variable (IV):

Employer Branding

Employer branding refers to the image and reputation created by an organization as a desirable place to work. It influences how potential candidates view the company before joining.

Here, employer branding is influenced by:

- Company reputation
- Online presence and digital image
- Career growth opportunities promoted
- Work culture image
- Compensation and benefit promises

It acts as the main factor that attracts talent and creates expectations among job seekers.

2. Dependent Variables (DV):

Employee Outcomes

These are the results influenced by employer branding and actual workplace experience.

Talent Attraction

Talent attraction refers to the ability of the organization to attract qualified and skilled candidates.



Here,

- Positive branding increases applicant interest
- Better reputation attracts more talent
- Strong online presence creates first impressions

Employee Retention

Employee retention refers to the ability of the organization to retain employees for a longer period.

Here,

- Satisfied employees are more likely to stay
- Positive work experience reduces turnover intention
- Trust in the organization improves loyalty

3. Mediating Factors:

These are the internal workplace factors that determine whether branding promises match reality.

Actual Employee Experience

Actual employee experience includes the real experiences of employees after joining the organization.

It is shaped by:

1. Job Satisfaction
 - Satisfaction with job role and responsibilities
2. Recognition
 - Feeling valued and appreciated by the organization
3. Work-Life Balance
 - Ability to balance professional and personal life
4. Career Growth Delivery
 - Whether promised growth opportunities are provided
5. Compensation Satisfaction
 - Satisfaction with salary and benefits
6. Expectation Match
 - Whether actual experience matches pre-joining expectations

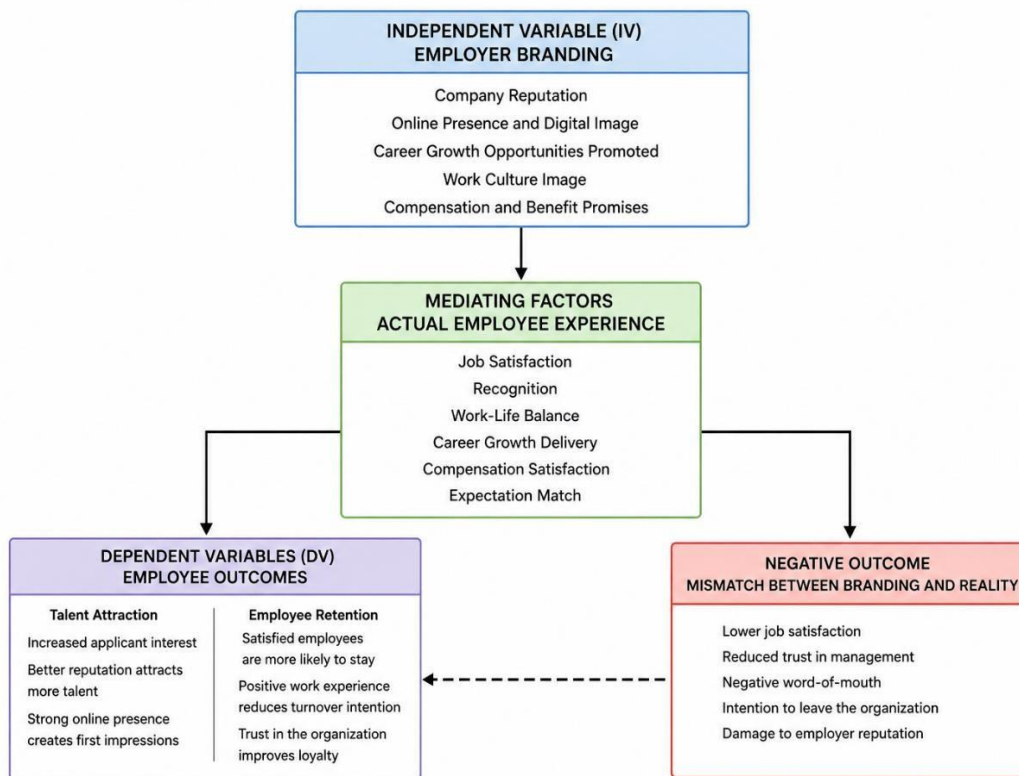
4. Negative Outcome:

Mismatch Between Branding and Reality

When the promises made through employer branding do not match the actual employee experience, negative outcomes may occur.

Here,

- Lower job satisfaction
- Reduced trust in management
- Negative word-of-mouth
- Intention to leave the organization
- Damage to employer reputation



CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Discussion on Relevant Framework / Model / Concepts

The conceptual framework of the present study is developed to understand the relationship between Employer Branding and Actual Employee Experience, and how this relationship influences talent attraction and employee retention within organizations. Employer branding refers to the image, identity, and reputation projected by an organization as a desirable place to work. It creates expectations among job seekers before joining the company. Actual employee experience refers to the real workplace conditions and perceptions of employees after joining the organization.

In this framework, employer branding is considered the independent variable because it influences the decision of potential candidates to apply for and join the organization. It includes factors such as company reputation, online presence, salary and benefits, growth opportunities, leadership image, and work culture promoted by the company. These elements create a positive impression and help attract talent.

Actual employee experience is considered the mediating variable because it determines whether the promises made through branding are actually fulfilled. It includes job satisfaction, work culture, recognition, compensation satisfaction, career growth opportunities, management support, and work-life balance. When employees experience alignment between promises and reality, satisfaction and trust increase. If there is a mismatch, dissatisfaction and turnover intention may arise.

The dependent variables in this study are talent attraction and employee retention. Therefore, the framework explains that employer branding may attract employees initially, but long-term retention depends on the actual experience delivered by the organization.

3.2 Choice of Method is Appropriate to Address Research Objectives

The present study adopts a descriptive research design supported by a quantitative research approach. This method is appropriate because the main objective of the study is to understand employee opinions, perceptions, and experiences regarding employer branding and workplace reality.

Descriptive research helps in systematically presenting facts and identifying patterns in the collected data. It is useful for



analysing how employees perceive employer branding before joining and whether their actual experience matches those expectations after joining the organization.

The quantitative method is suitable because the study uses structured responses collected from a questionnaire, which can be coded into numerical values and analysed statistically. It allows the researcher to measure satisfaction levels, mismatch perception, retention intention, and relationships between multiple variables.

The study does not involve any experimental manipulation or control of variables. Instead, it focuses on real employee experiences and opinions collected through survey responses.

Hence, descriptive research is the most suitable method for addressing the research objectives.

3.3 Choice of Instrument is Appropriate

The primary instrument used for data collection in this study is a structured questionnaire. This instrument was selected because it is simple, economical, reliable, and suitable for collecting data from a larger number of respondents within a short period.

The questionnaire was created using Google Forms and included both demographic and opinion-based questions. It covered variables such as gender, age group, work experience, job role, employer branding before joining, importance of branding in job decision, company online presence, expectation match, job satisfaction, work culture, career growth, compensation satisfaction, recognition, mismatch experience, recommendation intention, and leaving intention.

The structured format ensured that every respondent answered the same set of questions in the same sequence. This reduced variation in interpretation and improved consistency of responses. It also made coding and statistical analysis easier.

Thus, the questionnaire was an appropriate instrument for collecting accurate and relevant data for the present study.

3.4 Data Collection Procedure

The data used in this study is primary data, collected directly from respondents through the structured questionnaire. Primary data was preferred because the study focuses on employee perceptions and experiences, which are best understood through direct responses.

The questionnaire link was distributed online through digital platforms to employees working mainly in the IT / Software & Technology sector. Respondents were given the flexibility to complete the survey at their convenience.

After the responses were collected, the data was carefully reviewed for completeness, accuracy, and consistency. Incomplete or duplicate responses were excluded from the final dataset.

A total of 157 valid responses were retained for final analysis. The collected responses were then transferred to Microsoft Excel and IBM SPSS software for coding, classification, tabulation, and statistical analysis.

The online mode of data collection was time-saving, cost-effective, and convenient for both the researcher and respondents.

3.5 Sampling Design

The present study used convenience sampling, which is a non-probability sampling method. Under this method, respondents were selected based on their accessibility, availability, and willingness to participate in the survey.

Convenience sampling was chosen because it was practical and suitable within the available time and resources. It enabled the researcher to collect responses quickly from employees working in relevant sectors.

The final sample consisted of 157 respondents belonging mainly to the IT / Software & Technology industry. The respondents represented different job roles such as Management / Leadership, HR & Talent, IT / Software, Marketing & Sales, Finance & Business, Design & Creative, and Others.

The sample also included respondents from different age groups, genders, and levels of work experience, which provided a broader understanding of employee perceptions.



Although convenience sampling has limitations in terms of generalizing results to the entire population, it was relevant and effective for the present study.

3.6 Reliability Issue is Addressed and Proposed Data Analysis Plan

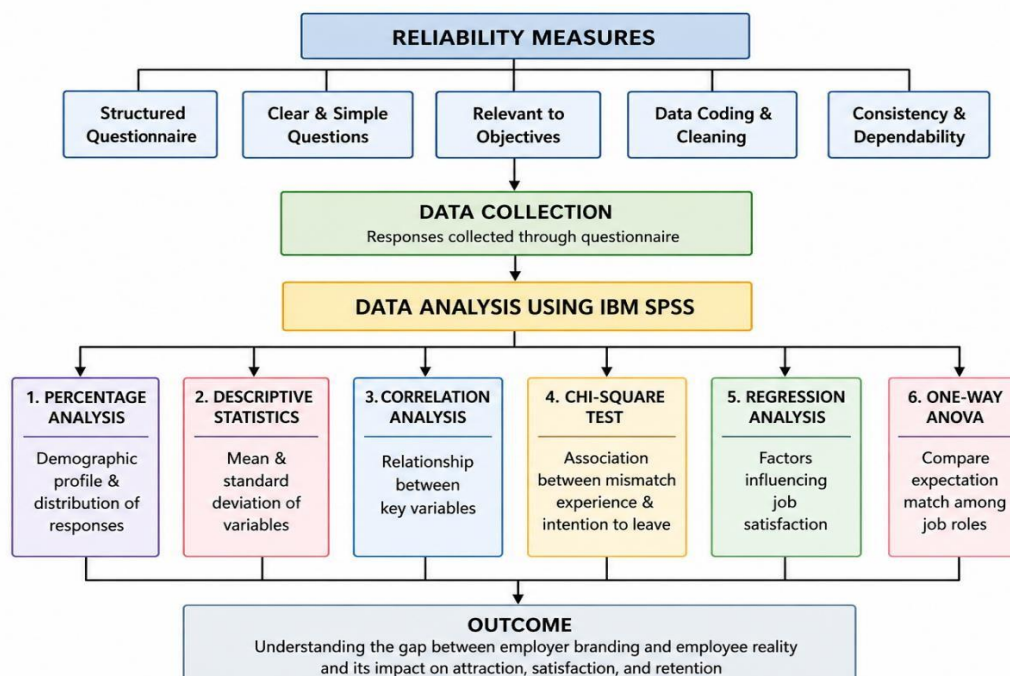
Reliability refers to the consistency and dependability of the research instrument. In this study, reliability was maintained through the use of a structured questionnaire where all respondents were asked the same questions in the same order.

The questionnaire used clear language, simple wording, and fixed response options such as multiple-choice categories and rating scales. This helped respondents understand the questions properly and provide accurate responses. Since the questions were directly related to the objectives of the study, the data collected was relevant and dependable.

All responses were properly coded before analysis, and data cleaning was carried out to remove incomplete or inconsistent entries. This further improved the quality of the dataset.

After data collection, the responses were analysed using IBM SPSS software. The following statistical tools were applied:

- **Percentage Analysis** – to study demographic profile and distribution of responses.
- **Descriptive Statistics** – to calculate mean and standard deviation of important variables.
- **Correlation Analysis** – to identify relationships between branding perception, satisfaction, recognition, and recommendation variables.
- **Chi-Square Test** – to test association between mismatch experience and intention to leave the organization.
- **Regression Analysis** – to identify the major factors influencing job satisfaction.
- **One-Way ANOVA** – to compare expectation match among different job roles.



These tools helped in understanding the gap between employer branding and employee reality, and its impact on employee attraction, satisfaction, and retention.



CHAPTER 4 DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Frequency Analysis

Frequencies Statistics

	Gender	What is your age group?	How long have you been working in your current organization?	What is your current job role/position?	Which industry does your organization belong to?	Have you experienced a mismatch between employer branding and actual experience?	Have you considered leaving due to unmet expectations?
Valid	157	157	157	157	157	157	157
Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Frequency Table Gender

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	77	49.0	49.0	49.0
Female	80	51.0	51.0	100.0
Total	157	100.0	100.0	

Age Group

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
18–25	84	53.5	53.5	53.5
26–35	48	30.6	30.6	84.1
36–45	17	10.8	10.8	94.9
Above 45	8	5.1	5.1	100.0
Total	157	100.0	100.0	

Work Experience in Current Organization :

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Less than 1 year	68	43.3	43.3	43.3
1–3 years	39	24.8	24.8	68.2
1–3 years	25	15.9	15.9	84.1
More than 5 years	25	15.9	15.9	100.0
Total	157	100.0	100.0	



Current Job Role / Position :

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Management / Leadership	25	15.9	15.9	15.9
HR & Talent	17	10.8	10.8	26.8
Design & Creative	13	8.3	8.3	35.0
IT / Software	42	26.8	26.8	61.8
Marketing & Sales	24	15.3	15.3	77.1
Finance & Business	15	9.6	9.6	86.6
Others	21	13.4	13.4	100.0
Total	157	100.0	100.0	

Industry of Organization :

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
IT / Software & Technology	157	100.0	100.0	100.0

Mismatch Between Employer Branding and Actual Experience :

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	88	56.1	56.1	56.1
No	69	43.9	43.9	100.0
Total	157	100.0	100.0	

Consideration of Leaving Due to Unmet Expectations :

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	76	48.4	48.4	48.4
No	81	51.6	51.6	100.0
Total	157	100.0	100.0	

The frequency analysis based on 157 respondents shows a balanced gender distribution, with 51.0% female and 49.0% male respondents. Most participants belonged to the 18–25 age group (53.5%), followed by 26–35 years (30.6%), indicating that the study mainly represents younger employees.

In terms of work experience, 43.3% of respondents had less than 1 year of experience, while the remaining respondents were spread across higher experience levels. This suggests that a large portion of the sample consists of early-career employees.

Regarding job roles, the highest share of respondents were from IT / Software (26.8%), followed by Management / Leadership (15.9%) and Marketing & Sales (15.3%). All respondents belonged to the IT / Software & Technology industry, making the study focused on this sector.

Importantly, 56.1% of respondents reported experiencing a mismatch between employer branding and actual experience, while 43.9% did not. Additionally, 48.4% of employees stated that they had considered leaving due to unmet expectations, while 51.6% had not.



Overall, the findings indicate that a notable proportion of employees perceive a gap between branding promises and workplace reality, which may influence retention decisions.

4.2 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
How would you rate your company's employer branding before joining?	157	1	4	2.87	.830
How important was employer branding in your job decision?	157	1	4	2.80	.930
Did the company's online presence create a positive impression?	157	1	5	3.75	.967
Valid N (listwise)	157				

The descriptive statistics based on 157 respondents show that the company had a generally positive employer brand image before employees joined. The mean score for employer branding before joining (2.87) indicates a moderate to good perception of the company.

Employer branding also had a moderate influence on job decisions, with a mean score of 2.80. Among all factors, the company's online presence received the highest mean score (3.75), showing that websites and social media created a strong positive impression. Overall, the results suggest that digital branding played a key role in attracting employees, while the overall employer brand image was fairly positive

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
To what extent does your current experience match initial expectations?	157	1	5	3.30	1.253
How satisfied are you with your current job?	157	1	5	3.60	1.131
How would you rate the actual work culture?	157	1	4	2.85	.883
Does your organization provide the career growth promised?	157	1	5	3.63	1.040
How satisfied are you with your compensation and benefits?	157	1	5	3.45	1.184
How would you rate your work-life balance?	157	1	4	2.80	.804
Do you feel valued and recognized in your organization?	157	1	5	3.67	1.040
Valid N (listwise)	157				



The descriptive statistics based on 157 respondents show that employees had a generally positive experience in their organizations. The mean score for expectation match (3.30) indicates that actual experiences were moderately aligned with what employees expected before joining. Job satisfaction (3.60) and career growth opportunities (3.63) show that most respondents were fairly satisfied with their roles and development opportunities.

Employees also felt valued and recognized, which received the highest mean score (3.67). Compensation and benefits scored 3.45, showing moderate satisfaction. However, work culture (2.85) and work-life balance (2.80) received comparatively lower scores, suggesting

these are areas that need improvement. Overall, the results indicate a positive employee experience, with some gaps in workplace culture and balance.

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
How significant is this gap?	157	1	5	2.86	1.095
How has this gap affected your job satisfaction?	157	1	4	2.56	.865
Do you think companies exaggerate their employer branding?	157	1	5	3.46	1.095
Would you recommend your company to others?	157	1	5	3.54	1.077
Has your perception of the company changed after joining?	157	1	3	2.24	.699
Valid N (listwise)	157				

The descriptive statistics based on 157 respondents show that employees perceived a moderate gap between employer branding and actual workplace reality (Mean = 2.86). This gap had a moderate effect on job satisfaction (Mean = 2.56). Respondents also felt that companies somewhat exaggerate their employer branding (Mean = 3.46). Despite this, employees were fairly willing to recommend their company to others (Mean = 3.54).

Overall, while some mismatch exists, employees still hold a reasonably positive view of their organization.

4.3 CORRELATION ANALYSIS

Correlations

	How would you rate your company's employer branding	Did the company's online presence create a positive	To what extent does your current experience match initial	How satisfied are you with your current	How satisfied are you with your compensation and	How would you rate your work-life balan	Do you feel valued and recognized in your organiz	Would you recommend your company
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		before joining?	impressio n?	expectat ions?	int job?	benefi ts?	ce ?	ati on?	to others?
How would you rate your company's employer branding before joining?	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	1 .047 157	.159* .047 157	.037 .646 157	.259** .001 157	.234** .003 157	.260** .001 157	.270** .001 157	.163* .042 157
Did the company's online presence create a positive impression?	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.159* .047 157	1 .047 157	.259** .001 157	.170* .034 157	.234** .003 157	.133 .097 157	.164* .040 157	.150 .060 157
To what extent does your current experience match initial expectations?	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.037 .646 157	.259** .001 157	1 .024 157	.180* .024 157	.203* .011 157	.167* .036 157	.200* .012 157	.232** .003 157
How satisfied are you with your current job?	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.259** .001 157	.170* .034 157	.180* .024 157	1 .000 157	.804** .000 157	.680** .000 157	.736** .000 157	.708** .000 157
How satisfied are you with your compensation and benefits?	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.234** .003 157	.234** .003 157	.203* .011 157	.804** .000 157	1 .000 157	.665** .000 157	.683** .000 157	.686** .000 157
How would you rate your work-life balance?	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)	.260** .001	.133 .097	.167* .036	.680** .000	.665** .000	1 .000	.672** .000	.611** .000



N		157	157	157	157	157	157	157	157
Do you feel valued and recognized in your organization?	Pearson Correlation	.270**	.164*	.200*	.736**	.683**	.672**	1	.668**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.040	.012	.000	.000	.000		.000
N		157	157	157	157	157	157	157	157
Would you recommend your company to others?	Pearson Correlation	.163*	.150	.232**	.708**	.686**	.611**	.668**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.042	.060	.003	.000	.000	.000	.000	
N		157	157	157	157	157	157	157	157

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlation analysis shows several positive and significant relationships among the variables, indicating that stronger employer branding and better workplace experiences are associated with higher employee satisfaction and recommendation levels. Employer branding before joining has a positive relationship with job satisfaction ($r = .259$), compensation satisfaction ($r = .234$), work-life balance ($r = .260$), recognition ($r = .270$), and willingness to recommend the company ($r = .163$). This suggests that a positive brand image creates better employee perceptions.

Current experience matching expectations is positively related to job satisfaction ($r = .180$), compensation ($r = .203$), recognition ($r = .200$), and recommendation ($r = .232$), showing that when employee expectations are met, satisfaction levels improve.

The strongest relationships were found between job satisfaction and compensation satisfaction ($r = .804$), job satisfaction and recognition ($r = .736$), and job satisfaction and recommendation ($r = .708$). This means employees who are satisfied with pay, feel valued, and enjoy their work are more likely to recommend the company to others.

Overall, the results indicate that fulfilling employee expectations, providing recognition, good compensation, and maintaining work-life balance are key factors in improving satisfaction and strengthening the employer brand.

4.4 CHI-SQUARE TEST

Crosstabs

Case Processing Summary

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Have you experienced a mismatch between employer branding and actual experience? *	157	100.0%	0	0.0%	157	100.0%
Have you considered leaving due to unmet expectations?						

Have you experienced a mismatch between employer branding and actual experience? * Have you considered leaving due to unmet expectations



Crosstabulation

			Have you considered leaving due to unmet expectations?		
		Count	50	38	88
Have you experienced a mismatch between employer branding and actual experience?	1	% within Have you experienced a mismatch between employer branding and actual experience?	56.8%	43.2%	100.0%
		% within Have you considered leaving due to unmet expectations?	65.8%	46.9%	56.1%
	2	Count	26	43	69
		% within Have you experienced a mismatch between employer branding and actual experience?	37.7%	62.3%	100.0%
		% within Have you considered leaving due to unmet expectations?	34.2%	53.1%	43.9%
		Count	76	81	157
Total		% within Have you experienced a mismatch between employer branding and actual experience?	48.4%	51.6%	100.0%
		% within Have you considered leaving due to unmet expectations?	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	5.671 ^a	1	.017		
Continuity Correction ^b	4.931	1	.026		
Likelihood Ratio	5.714	1	.017		
Fisher's Exact Test				.024	.013
N of Valid Cases	157				

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 33.40.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

The chi-square test was conducted to examine the relationship between experiencing a mismatch between employer branding and actual experience, and considering leaving due to unmet expectations. The results show a significant association between the two variables ($\chi^2 = 5.671$, $p = 0.017$).

Among respondents who experienced a mismatch, 56.8% had considered leaving the organization, whereas only 37.7% of those who did not experience a mismatch had considered leaving. This indicates that employees who perceive a gap between employer branding and workplace reality are more likely to think about leaving the company.

Overall, the findings suggest that unmet expectations and branding mismatch can negatively affect employee retention.



4.5 REGRESSION ANALYSIS

Regression

Variables Entered/Removed

Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
1	How would you rate your company's employer branding before joining?, To what extent does your current experience match initial expectations?, How would you rate your work-life balance?, How satisfied are you with your compensation and benefits?, Do you feel valued and recognized in your organization? ^b		Enter

a. Dependent Variable: How satisfied are you with your current job?

b. All requested variables entered.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.850 ^a	.723	.714	.605

a. Predictors: (Constant), How would you rate your company's employer branding before joining?, To what extent does your current experience match initial expectations?, How would you rate your work-life balance?, How satisfied are you with your compensation and benefits?, Do you feel valued and recognized in your organization?

Anova

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	144.382	5	28.876	78.795	.000 ^b
Residual	55.338	151	.366		
Total	199.720	156			

a. Dependent Variable: How satisfied are you with your current job?



b. Predictors: (Constant), How would you rate your company's employer branding before joining?, To what extent does your current experience match initial expectations?, How would you rate your work-life balance?, How satisfied are you with your compensation and benefits?, Do you feel valued and recognized in your organization?

Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.130	.245		.531	.596
To what extent does your current experience match initial expectations?	-.005	.040	-.005	-.118	.906
How would you rate your work-life balance?	.203	.088	.144	2.292	.023
How satisfied are you with your compensation and benefits?	.485	.061	.508	7.973	.000
Do you feel valued and recognized in your organization?	.312	.070	.287	4.445	.000
How would you rate your company's employer branding before joining?	.035	.061	.026	.572	.568

a. Dependent Variable: How satisfied are you with your current job?

The regression analysis was conducted to identify the factors influencing employees' current job satisfaction. The overall model was statistically significant ($F = 78.795$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that the selected variables jointly predict job satisfaction. The model explains 72.3% of the variation in job satisfaction ($R^2 = 0.723$), which shows a strong explanatory power.

Among the predictors, compensation and benefits satisfaction had the strongest positive influence on job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.508$, $p < 0.001$), followed by feeling valued and recognized in the organization ($\beta = 0.287$, $p < 0.001$), and work-life balance ($\beta = 0.144$, $p = 0.023$). These factors significantly improve employee satisfaction.

However, employer branding before joining and current experience matching expectations were not statistically significant predictors, as their p-values were greater than 0.05.

Overall, the results suggest that while employer branding may help attract employees initially, long-term job satisfaction depends more on practical workplace factors such as fair compensation, recognition, and healthy work-life balance.

4.6 ONE-WAY ANOVA

Anova

Extent of Match Between Current Experience and Initial Expectations

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	13.643	6	2.274	1.475	.191
Within Groups	231.287	150	1.542		
Total	244.930	156			

Post Hoc Tests

Multiple Comparisons

Dependent Variable: To what extent does your current experience match initial expectations?



Tukey HSD

(I) What is your current job role/position?	(J) What is your current job role/position?	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	2	-.311	.390	.985	-1.48	.86
	3	.775	.425	.533	-.49	2.04
	4	-.221	.314	.992	-1.16	.72
	5	-.257	.355	.991	-1.32	.80
	6	-.373	.406	.969	-1.59	.84
	7	-.269	.368	.990	-1.37	.83
2	1	.311	.390	.985	-.86	1.48
	3	1.086	.458	.217	-.28	2.45
	4	.090	.357	1.000	-.98	1.16
	5	.054	.394	1.000	-1.12	1.23
	6	-.063	.440	1.000	-1.38	1.25
	7	.042	.405	1.000	-1.17	1.25
3	1	-.775	.425	.533	-2.04	.49
	2	-1.086	.458	.217	-2.45	.28
	4	-.996	.394	.157	-2.17	.18
	5	-1.032	.428	.200	-2.31	.25
	6	-1.149	.471	.189	-2.56	.26
	7	-1.044	.438	.213	-2.35	.27
4	1	.221	.314	.992	-.72	1.16
	2	-.090	.357	1.000	-1.16	.98
	3	.996	.394	.157	-.18	2.17
	5	-.036	.318	1.000	-.99	.91

	6	-.152	.374	1.000	-1.27	.96
	7	-.048	.332	1.000	-1.04	.94
5	1	.257	.355	.991	-.80	1.32
	2	-.054	.394	1.000	-1.23	1.12
	3	1.032	.428	.200	-.25	2.31
	4	.036	.318	1.000	-.91	.99
	6	-.117	.409	1.000	-1.34	1.10
	7	-.012	.371	1.000	-1.12	1.10
6	1	.373	.406	.969	-.84	1.59
	2	.063	.440	1.000	-1.25	1.38
	3	1.149	.471	.189	-.26	2.56
	4	.152	.374	1.000	-.96	1.27
	5	.117	.409	1.000	-1.10	1.34
	7	.105	.420	1.000	-1.15	1.36
7	1	.269	.368	.990	-.83	1.37
	2	-.042	.405	1.000	-1.25	1.17
	3	1.044	.438	.213	-.27	2.35
	4	.048	.332	1.000	-.94	1.04
	5	.012	.371	1.000	-1.10	1.12
	6	-.105	.420	1.000	-1.36	1.15

Homogeneous Subsets



Extent of Match Between Current Experience and Initial Expectations

Tukey HSD^{a,b}

What is your current job role/position?	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05
3	13	2.38
1	25	3.16
4	42	3.38
5	24	3.42
7	21	3.43
2	17	3.47
6	15	3.53
Sig.		.063

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

- Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 19.690.
- The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.

Cod Value for job role

e

- Management / Leadership
- HR & Talent
- Design & Creative
- IT / Software
- Marketing & Sales
- Finance & Business
- Others

The one-way ANOVA was conducted to examine whether employees' current experience matching their initial expectations differs across job roles such as Management / Leadership, HR & Talent, Design & Creative, IT / Software, Marketing & Sales, Finance & Business, and Others. The results show that there is no statistically significant difference among job roles ($F = 1.475$, $p = 0.191$), as the significance value is greater than 0.05.

This indicates that employees across different job positions reported similar levels of expectation match, meaning job role does not have a major influence on whether their workplace experience aligns with what they expected before joining.

The mean scores show that Finance & Business (Mean = 3.53) had the highest expectation match, followed by HR & Talent (3.47) and Others (3.43), while Design & Creative (2.38) had the lowest mean score. However, these differences are not statistically significant.

The Tukey post hoc test also confirmed that there were no significant differences between any specific job role groups. Overall, the findings suggest that the gap between employer branding expectations and actual experience is experienced similarly across all job roles.



CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS & CONCLUSION

5.1 Discussion of Findings in Relation to Research Objectives

The main purpose of this study was to understand the gap between employer branding and actual employee experience, and how this gap affects talent attraction and employee retention. Based on the analysis, it is clear that employer branding plays an important role in creating first impressions and influencing job decisions. Many respondents viewed their company's branding positively before joining and considered it an important factor while choosing employment.

At the same time, the findings show that branding alone is not enough to retain employees. A significant number of respondents reported experiencing a mismatch between what was promised by the company and what they actually experienced after joining. This indicates that employer branding may help attract employees, but retention depends on whether those promises are fulfilled in reality.

The study also found that certain workplace factors have a stronger impact on employee satisfaction. Compensation and benefits, recognition, career growth opportunities, and work-life balance were major contributors to job satisfaction. Employees who felt valued and fairly treated were more satisfied and more willing to recommend their company to others.

Another important finding is that employees who experienced a mismatch between branding and reality were more likely to consider leaving the organization. This clearly shows that trust and consistency are essential for retaining employees.

Overall, the results suggest that while employer branding helps in attracting talent, long-term employee commitment depends more on the actual workplace experience.

5.2 Implementation Plan

Based on the findings, the following practical steps are suggested for organizations:

For Organizations

1. Companies should ensure that their employer branding honestly reflects the real work culture, growth opportunities, and benefits available to employees.
2. Organizations should focus on improving compensation, recognition programs, and employee well-being.
3. Career development opportunities such as training, mentoring, and promotions should be strengthened.

For HR Departments

1. HR teams should regularly collect employee feedback to understand satisfaction levels and identify gaps.
2. Exit interviews should be used to understand the reasons behind resignations and improve retention strategies.

For Management

1. Leaders should create a transparent and supportive work environment.
2. Communication with employees should be open, realistic, and consistent.

5.3 Implications to Management Practice

This study provides useful insights for management and HR professionals.

1. Employer branding should be genuine: Attractive branding may bring employees in, but only real experience will make them stay.
2. Internal practices matter more: Compensation, recognition, and career growth have a strong impact on satisfaction.
3. Retention requires trust: Employees are more loyal when promises made during recruitment are fulfilled.



4. Work-life balance is important: Employees increasingly value balance and flexibility in the workplace.
5. Long-term reputation depends on employees: Satisfied employees become ambassadors who recommend the organization to others.

Overall, management should treat employer branding as a long-term commitment rather than only a recruitment strategy.

5.4 Suggestions for Future Studies

- Future studies can include respondents from different industries and regions.
- Comparative studies can be done between IT and non-IT sectors.
- Long-term studies may help understand changing employee expectations over time.
- Future research can examine the effect of remote work and hybrid work models.
- Additional variables such as leadership style, employee engagement, and organizational culture may also be studied.

5.5 Conclusion

This study shows that employer branding is an important factor in attracting employees, especially through company reputation, career opportunities, and positive workplace image. However, attracting employees is only the first step. What matters most is the actual experience employees receive after joining the organization.

The findings suggest that employees are more satisfied and likely to stay when the company provides fair compensation, recognition, career growth, and a healthy work-life balance.

When there is a gap between branding promises and workplace reality, dissatisfaction increases and employees may think about leaving.

The study clearly highlights that employer branding alone cannot guarantee retention. Real employee experience plays a bigger role in building trust, satisfaction, and loyalty.

Overall, organizations should focus on creating an authentic employer brand supported by strong internal practices. In today's competitive environment, long-term success depends not just on attracting talent, but on keeping employees satisfied through honesty, consistency, and a positive work culture.

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