



National
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Ireland

**“A STUDY ON RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMPLOYER BRANDING
AND EMPLOYEE RETENTION RATES IN THE INFORMATION
TECHNOLOGY SECTOR IN INDIA”**

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ABSTRACT

The study intends to examine the impact of employer branding on employee retention in the information technology sector in India. Employer branding is used as an approach by organizations to attract and retain talent within the employment market to be successful among competitors. The subject of employer branding has developed very famous in the Human Resource area over the last few years.

This study conducts secondary research referring to previous studies on the areas of employer branding and employee retention and primary study using a quantitative method through the use of the survey method using an online questionnaire to gather data. The sample size for this primary study was 100 employees in the information technology sector in India. Secondary data was sourced from relevant journals, articles, books, websites, and newsletters.

“Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS)” software was used in the analysis of statistical data. Responses gathered from the respondents were analysed using SPSS software for each question mentioned in the questionnaire. Each table and chart were interpreted to give details about the view of the participants through the survey questions answered.

After carrying out the study, the researcher was able to find that employer branding does have a strong relationship with employee retention in attracting and retaining employees within the information technology sector in India. It helps organizations in differentiating from their competitors to attract the talented workforce they require to succeed as a business. Findings showed that employer branding influenced employee’s decision in accepting the job position they are currently employed in and the factors of employer branding such as work-life balance, growth and development opportunities, compensation and benefits, corporate social responsibility, company values, and mission play an important role in their decision to stay with or leave an organization and in their decision to seek new job opportunities.

The study was concluded by providing recommendations and areas for future research to motivate further exploration of the same or related topic.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction to the topic

This study gives an understanding of how employer brand is related to employee retention in the information technology (IT) sector in India. Indian IT industry employs around 4.41 million Indians (NASSCOM, 2019) has increased the number of job hoppers. This expected job-changing habit of IT professionals has raised an alarm among top IT companies as it directly affects the image of an organization (Nizami and Prasad, 2017). This situation has made it necessary for employers to come up with a strategy to differentiate themselves as desirable employer among their competitors. One such approach which has gained attention between organizations and researchers is employer branding (Bharadwaj et al., 2021).

Human resource management (HRM) and human capital are considered critical factors for organizations. The triumph of any corporation depends on the attraction, selection, and retention of unique individuals from the market. Because of this organizations started implementing branding concept in HRM which is known as employer branding (Thalgaspitiya, 2020). Employer branding as a human resource (HR) tool is considered to be an interesting topic by many researchers, who continuously researched the power of employer branding and proved that it continuously affects employees' interest levels (Matongolo et al., 2018).

It is stated that employer branding apart from helping to recruit in-demand employees, promotes retention of employees for a longer time (Rana and Sharma, 2019). The accomplishment of any company rest on the retention of the best employees. It is a method in which the employees are prompted to remain for a long period with the organization (Das and Baruah, 2013). Employee turnover results in increased costs of recruiting new candidates, and time spent on the recruitment and training of those candidates which makes it difficult for the companies to maintain positive culture and morale. Hence it has become very important for organizations to retain employees to achieve their goals (Cloutier et al., 2015).

The quality workforce defines the success and survival of any organization. Employer branding is an image used by organizations to define their reputation. It shows the value of the company, their skills, abilities, and experience. It acts as a value proposition inside and outside of the organization

and helps in promoting and attracting prospective employees and influences the ones within the organization about its values, mission, and vision (Chiu et al., 2020).

1.2 Background to study

In the past branding was only used to promote the products and services of any organization. Now the limitation and restrictions of the brand are not only for the products, but the branding strategy is being used by human resource management and the organizations to attract and retain the top individuals. Organizations across the globe now have clearly understood the importance of employer branding which an attractive way is to be differentiated from the competitors and to have a clear employer brand (Singh, 2021).

It has been difficult for the organizations to come out as an “employer of choice” in the employment market. How much ever expressive the organization is and the better brand the organization has, it appears to be a more attractive place for the employees to work. Hence there is a strong need for employers to concentrate on spending more time forming a solid employer brand to come out as the employer of choice among the competitors (Figurska and Matuska, 2013). The reason for researching this topic is that many studies have been directed on this topic in many countries and even in India, but there are not many studies conducted particularly on the information technology sector. Hence, it is important to conduct this study to understand the relationship between employer branding and employee retention. It is therefore important to carry out the study on this topic while leaving it open for future studies which may be focused on other industries or a particular area within India.

1.3 Gaps in Literature

While the study has been carried out on employer branding and employee retention, there is limited research specifically on the information technology sector in India. When comes to employer branding it is comprised of multiple factors such as work-life balance, employee value proposition, growth and development, culture and values, and corporate social responsibility. Hence this study focuses on these dimensions to understand which of these factors has more effect on employee retention in the IT sector. As there is not much research specifically in the IT sector, it represents an opportunity to carry out the research in the Indian context and to understand if there is a strong connection exists between employer branding and employee retention in this sector.

1.4 Research Question and Objectives

Research question

How does employer brand affect employee retention rates in the Information Technology sector in India?

Research objectives

The goal of this research is to understand the relationship between employer branding and employee retention and how it is affecting the employee's choice in selecting or leaving the company in the Indian Information Technology sector.

1. To identify employees in the information technology sector in India's perception and understanding of employer brand.
2. To understand the correlation between employer branding and employee retention in the information technology sector in India.
3. To analyse the impact of employer branding on employee retention in the Information Technology sector in India.
4. To evaluate how employees view their employer's brand and how it affects both employment and retention.

1.5 Rationale for the Research

The rationale for the research on the connection between employer branding and employee retention in the IT sector in India is important as employee retention has become very important for organizations to be successful in the competitive market. The IT industry is considered the main growth contributor to the Indian economy and is growing quickly and faces huge challenges in attracting and retaining talent (Dasan, 2022).

Employer branding is defined as a set of features that is intangible that make organizations exclusive and promises a specific set of service experience and attract those individuals who will put in an effort and perform well within the organization (CIPD, 2022).

Employee retention is crucial for organizations to survive due to employee turnover has become a common issue for every organization. Organizations invest heavily in recruiting and developing

their employees, hence it has become a possible loss to the firms, and it has become very important for the organizations in retaining the employees (Swaroop and Sudhir, 2019). Hence it is important to identify the relationship between employer branding and employee retention which helps organizations in the IT sector to know the aspects influencing employee retention and the strategies to improve employer branding.

1.6 Chapters Overview

Chapter 1: Introduction

This section gives an outline of the study topic. The explanation for choosing and accomplish the study for exploration was also discussed in this section.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This section covers the standpoint of many other researchers concerning employer branding and employee retention and the connection linking employer branding and employee retention particularly in the information technology sector and how it is being useful to human resource management to appeal and retain the top talents.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

This part of the study gives information on the ideas applied in the present study, the research question, and the objectives of the study. It gives an outline of the process used in choosing and analysing the data gathered.

Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Findings

In this part of the research the gathered information has been discussed and analysed for each question answered through the survey and a detailed examination of the objectives of the research has also been included. It analyses the data along with tables and charts to give a clear understanding of the question discussed in the survey.

Chapter 5: Discussions and Conclusion

This section provides an information about the outcome from the data analysis and interpretation with the conclusion at the end.

Chapter 6: Conclusion, Recommendations, and Personal Learning Statement

The final chapter discusses the conclusion that was obtained through the study will be discussed along with proposals for further study will be included. Recommendations to the current issues will be discussed along with the timeline and cost associated with it.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This segment specifies a review of the literature relating to the relationship between employer branding and employee retention and its effects in the Information Technology sector. There are several topics relevant to employer branding and employee retention that were relevant to the research question posed. The topics covered include defining employer branding and its role in HR strategy in relations of employee attraction and retention. The importance of employer branding in the current recruitment market and its role in supporting organizational success is explored including its impact on employee retention as part of HR strategy. Employer branding and employee retention in the IT sector context is explored and the benefits of investing in employer branding and employee retention for companies in this area.

2.2 Defining Employer Branding

Employer brand is described as “the combined package of functional, psychological, and economic benefits” offered by any employed organization (Ambler & Barrow, 1996. Pg. 187). Employer branding acts as a tool for the acquisition and retention of potential and existing employees in the competitive market. It is important in today’s market to retain and attract the top talents to be successful among the competitors (Tripathi et al., 2020).

Employer branding earlier was used for marketing and branding purposes, which only focused on product and service branding. The employer branding concept was first introduced during the 1990s as a way of attracting and retaining top talents within the competitive market (Ambler and Barrow, 1996). Employer branding serves as a tool for organizations to be recognized in the marketplace and to be unique among their competitors. It helps employees in making the decision to distinguish between employer and applying for the position. Employer branding gives employees an insight into how their workplace looks and for the employers it serves as an image that increases the reputation as the greatest place to work in the competitive market (Gupta, Mittal, and Mittal, 2019).

It is clear from the studies that potential employees would accept the job at a lower salary from the organization if there were a good image or reputation of the company (Cable and Turban, 2003). The employer brand usually reflects the perception of the employees within the company and the potential ones (App, Merk, and Buttgen, 2012).

Employer brand acts as a psychological aspect of the organization. It helps in convincing the demands and requirements of the employees by gaining emotional attachments. Employer branding and consumer branding are closely related to each other, but in employer, branding customers are replaced by employees. Several studies show that employees are attached to organizations in several ways. They stay faithful to company even through fewer ideal working situation, these employees are considered “brand-loyal employees” (Hughes, 2018). Analysis from a study shows employer brand helps in creating two wealth. Brand loyalty and brand association are the two assets of an employer brand where one outlines the charm of the organization and the other is shaped through culture and identity. Much research has been conducted and many scholars have shared their views on employer branding in somewhat different ways, but it is evident from most of the studies that if the brand is created in a strong way it will benefit the organization in attracting and retaining the existing and potential employees (Mihalcea, 2017).

2.2.1 Employer Branding as Part of HR Strategy

In today’s competitive world companies are facing continuous competition to attract and retain top talents. It is very significant to state that employee is a very significant part of any organization, hence attracting, maintaining, and retaining employees is a very important task for any organization (Hochgatterer and Ehrenstorfer, 2021). Companies understood the importance of human capital as an important part of the organization to stay competitive. The firms need to come up with strategies to charm and retain talents to overcome the challenges of doing business. One of the strategies can be building a strong employer brand so that people can connect their values to it. Hence the companies are concentrated on building strong brand management, which is applied in human resource management to charm potential employees and retain existing employees (Gilani and Cunningham, 2017).

Talent management in recent times emerged as a critical factor for organizational performance and organizations are continuously applying talent management practices in their day-to-day management activities. The increased accessibility of employment openings and lack of potential

employees in the market has led to the emergence of employer branding as a tool not only to connect to potential employees but also to communicate with internal employees about the employer’s value proposition. Employer branding strategy helps in creating an employee value proposition which gives employees an understanding of what is expected from them along with what employees want (Alves, 2021).

Employer branding uses both human resources and marketing as a strategic framework and helps in attracting the right person to the organization. To make people management efficient, employer branding uses tools like target audience identification, segmentation, and promotion. Human resource practices could bring change to human capital by investing in training activities, career development, and remuneration activities thereby creating a stable and positive image of the organization among the internal and external employees. By doing this employer branding could be a challenging human resource strategy and gives the company an advantage to draw potential employees and retain the top talents (Kucherov and Zavyalova, 2012).

All the roles of human resource management from the organization requirements to employee output involves employee branding. A framework has been created to identify the organizational needs in attracting, acquiring, and retaining employees. Attracting and keeping potential talents is very important in modern day business, it helps in increasing the happiness of the employees, and company productivity, and helps in reducing recruitment costs. Employer branding acts as the key component in talent acquisition, it helps the organization in finding the right candidate for the correct job at the correct time (Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004).

Figure-1: Employer branding framework. Source: Backhaus and Tikoo (2004), pg. no, 505.



2.2.2 Importance of Employer Branding in the Current Recruitment Market

Potential and efficient employees are the basic needs of any organization. Hence the staffing of the right and efficient candidate becomes an essential part of the company. In the current competitive world, it demands more strategic ways to recruit, maintain and retain talent. Every organization has accepted that it is important to attract, retain, and recruit talent as they face a shortage of potential employees in the market. In the current market, employer brand and employee retention play an important role in the recruitment strategy for attracting the best talents. A strong brand image helps in recruiting potential employees at low cost, lower pay scale, hiring the best talent, amplify employee relations within the organization. Employer branding is treated as a tool in recruitment to increase employer attractiveness and corporate reputation which focuses on attracting potential talents to be part of the organization. Employer branding is focused on a long-term recruitment strategy and not a short-term strategy. The perception of job seekers is closely connected to the establishment's reputation which is the reflection of the brand (Micik and Micudova, 2018).

Many researchers in their study have mentioned that the brand image and the reputation of any organization play a critical part in the recruitment process. They also confirmed that the previous HR policies and practices had a definite structure of employer branding as an umbrella program (Kumari, Dutta, and Bhagat, 2020). During the Covid-19 pandemic, there was a noteworthy loss of employment and labour income, meanwhile, the most recent study shows that among 42000 employers from around 43 countries, 24 countries concentrated on strengthening hiring objectives during the second quarter of 2021 (Manpower Group, 2021). This trend seems to be positive involving new employer branding and recruiting programs thus increasing the position of Human resource management. The companies which have an employer branding attitude, and the ones that implemented the employer branding strategies can attain encouraging recruitment outcomes in terms of staffing performance and satisfaction (Kucherov and Tsybova, 2022).

The data has proved that the impact of a strong employer brand see a 43% decrease in cost per hire, and organization tend to grow 20% faster in terms of the rate of hire and gets more applicants per job post on social media (LinkedIn, 2015). Different reports across different sites have provided the numbers on how employer brand affects recruitment and retention of employees, a report from CareerBuilder shows that 90% of job seekers only apply for the job if the employer is actively maintained. Similarly, a report from Glassdoor shows that 51% of people apply through

an online job site, and the CareerArc report shows that 79% of the employees believe the future in-demand HR skill will be social media marketing (Milligan, 2019).

The reputation of the organization comes in the first place when hiring potential employees, employer brand influences people whether or not to apply for the position but makes the employees accept the position at a lower cost and gives the power to the employer to retain them. Employer brand helps in influencing the existing employees to give good referrals to the company, and positive word of mouth about the organization thus boosting recruitment, employee engagement, and retention (O'Donoghue, 2021).

2.3 Defining Employee Retention

Employee retention may be considered the core of organizational success. It can be defined as the organization's capability to hold on to the employees for the utmost extent of time or until the objective of the organization is achieved (Singh and Dixit, 2011). It is evident from the studies that organizations that tend to retain the best employees gain the advantage of customer satisfaction, effective succession planning, increased sales, satisfied colleague, and increased production. Organizations hiring innovative employees is important but more important is retaining the existing employees. There are organizations that remain at the top due to the value they show to their personnel and know how to preserve the employees loyal to the company. In today's world, it is difficult to keep employees loyal, they will be having a lot of opportunities and once they feel dissatisfied they will switch over or quit the job. Hence it is crucial for companies to retain their employees (Khalid and Nawab, 2018).

Employee retention is considered a critical issue for any organization, a high turnover rate may be very harmful to the organization's success, and it would result in less productivity, increased recruitment cost, and less confidence in the employees. There are many factors that result in the turnover rate of the employees like job dissatisfaction, poor working conditions, less salary and benefits, and lack of growth opportunities. Hence it is important for organizations to come up with the best retention strategies to retain innovative and talented employees. All employees seek job satisfaction from the job they are doing, it serves as a key element for the retention of employees. It is the duty of the employer to know how to attract talent, it is getting more difficult day by day to retain the talent due to them being tapped out more and more. Motivation might be a game changer in retaining employees, it is important to motivate employees by appreciating the work

they do on a daily basis. Employees not only seek compensation for their work but would be happy with good growth opportunities, a good boss, and a challenging work environment. Hence it is very essential for establishments to retain employees and employee retention would remain the main objective of the organizations to remain at the top within the competitive market (Sandhya and Kumar, 2011).

2.3.1 Employee Retention as Part of HR Strategy

Retention of creative employees within the organization has become a major worry for the HR department throughout the globe. Employee retention has become significant for the organization because it involves great losses and takes a lot of time if the worker leaves the company and hires a new employee. It is the duty of employers to make sure they retain the workers who give their best for the good of the organization. Several studies have shown that organizations faced challenges and difficulties when productive employees left which affected efficiency and productivity, hence the retention of employees has become more crucial for the organization. Human resource strategy if used in the proper way can help in reducing employee turnover and providing positive human resources methods such as job security, job benefits, better pay, and work-life balance. Retention is considered a significant concern and if it is handled effectively, it will add great value to the organization and increases efficiency and productivity (Goswami and Sultana, 2020).

Any organization planning to retain employees will have the proper HR strategies and practices in place to foster an atmosphere that helps the existing personnel to remain with the organization. A few of the HR strategies used by the organizations would be career development opportunities which act as an important variable in retaining employees as the employees will prefer a job where they can improve their skills. Career development helps in achieving a balance between the organization's requirements and individual needs. The next one would be rewarded where providing a good remuneration package acts as another important factor in retaining employees. It gives the employees status of power and fulfils their financial and material needs. Hence providing a competitive salary is one of the HR strategies used by organizations in retaining employees. The work environment is another HR strategy used by the organization which influences the employee's decision to stay. Hence it is important for organizations to work on these HR strategies to retain productive employees (Patel and Patel, 2014).

Human resource practices help the organization in retaining employees. HR procedures such as training and development, information sharing, and participating in the decision-making process help the organization retain employees. HR practices and employee engagement together help in organizational success and gives a competitive advantage. It is the duty of the employers to design the HR practices and makes sure these practices are followed. It will be the duty of top management in fulfilling HR practices which gives an advantage to the organization in retaining the top talent. Hiring innovative candidates and giving them an opportunity to grow within the organization through regular training and development and making sure to gather the feedbacks whenever necessary to understand the concerns the employees have, so that it will help the organization in making necessary changes required and to motivate the employees to work and to gain their trust. It will make employees to be loyal and stay which in turn helps the organization in retaining employees through better HR strategies (Kadiresan, Kamil, Musah, and Mazlan, 2016).

2.4 Relationship between Employer Branding and Employee Retention

Employer branding serves as a factor in retaining employees. There are a few antecedent variables of employer branding which make employees stay with the organization. These are the variables that have the capacity to influence the behaviour of the employees. There are quite a few antecedents but in my study, I am considering a few like training and development, work-life balance, corporate social responsibility, and work environment. Training and development help employees upgrade their work skills and give an opportunity for personal development within the organization. Kucherov and Zavyalova (2012) in their research confirmed that companies that have strong employers brand tend to invest more in training and development. Work-life balance on the other hand helps the organization in retaining employees. Most companies started incorporating this strategy during the post-pandemic which helps employees in balancing work and non-work aspects. Corporate social responsibility shows that the organization is doing good to society and has concerns regarding the employees. Every employee will have an expectation towards their organization be recognized and when companies involve themselves in CSR activities, it helps them in enhancing their brand image along with the reputation of the company which in turn helps in employee retention. The work environment can change the perception of the employees towards the organization, hence the organizations like Microsoft, Reuters, and Vodafone are putting much effort into shaping their work environment. These antecedents help in outcomes like job

satisfaction, productivity, psychological contract, and organizational engagement (Tanwar and Prasad, 2016).

The other antecedents of employer brand could be compensation, job security, career path, brand and reputation, culture, and authority. Each of these has a positive and substantial impact on employee retention. Compensation is considered the main factor in attracting top talents, hence providing competitive salaries to the employees along with the bonus and giving hikes whenever necessary will help the organization in retaining employees. Job security also plays an important role as it gives employees a feeling of security in their job and makes them dedicate their work life to the organization. Career path on the other hand is a path to the professional development of the employees. When the employees are doing good and giving their best, it is the duty of the employer to give necessary promotions to those employees, which gives employees a clear career path. Brand and reputation together have an effect on the employees. When the reputation of the organization is good, it helps in boosting employees' productivity and morale, thus helping in employee retention. Culture defines the values and beliefs of how the organization operates its business. Culture helps employees to coordinate with other employees and gives them the feel of a friendly working environment. These antecedents of employer branding are directly affecting the employee's decision to stay with the company and therefore from the previous research, it is confirmed that there is a strong productive connection linking employer branding and employee retention (Khoshnevis and Gholipour, 2017).

2.4.1 Employer Branding and Employee Retention in the IT Sector Context

IT industries in India are booming and are considered the sunshine industry. Indian IT sector is facing high attrition rates which may be due to low job satisfaction, no proper communication, increased competition, less pay, and the demography of the population. Hence it has become difficult for the IT industries to retain productive talents. Employer branding on the other part is considered to be the game changer of IT industries in retaining employees. Thus, the IT companies in India are trying to promote their brand through different modes by offering good salary structure along with benefits, work-life balance, good work environment, providing training and development opportunities, and promoting the ones who is deserved thereby trying to capture the market through good word-of-mouth and brand advocacy, which has helped IT companies in retaining their employees (Dasan, 2022).

The employees within the Indian IT firms consist of more young people who would take risks and challenges to change jobs for better opportunities. As there are many IT companies available, there have been more job opportunities and the companies are paying good salaries to attract new talents. Due to this, there is a high attrition rate which resulted in high employee turnover rates. This resulted in discouragement and low productivity among the existing employees. To overcome these problems, organizations should come up with strategies and innovative recruitment to retain the talented workforce which helps the organization to be recognized as a brand (Srivastava et al., 2020).

Companies are trying to become an “employer of choice”, which implies individuals prefer that particular company to work. Employees are looking for what an organization can offer as a wonderful place to work. The important factor in employee retention is to make employees feel they are valued by the organization by offering competitive pay and benefits, learning opportunities, development opportunities, work-life balance, and job security (Sokro, 2012).

IT organizations are now focusing on forming employee value propositions, which help existing and potential employees to make a difference between the competitors on why to work with them, what they are offering, and how it makes a difference. Organizations are investing in employer branding to make sure they retain productive employees as the employees are considered as the internal customers of the organization (Priya and UmaRaman, 2021).

2.4.2 Benefits of Investing in Employer Branding and Employee Retention for Companies in the IT Sector

The best way for any organization to strengthen its employee engagement strategies is through upgrading employer branding. IT organizations especially are becoming more transparent as a workplace to make sure their values, missions, and cultures are aligned with that of their employees. It makes employees more excited, makes them feel they are valued at their work and the organization is not hiding anything from them. The benefits investing in employer branding would help IT companies in many ways. The companies that have achieved common wins through investing in employer branding are lesser cost-per-hire, which shows that businesses with poor brands spend 10% more than the companies with stronger employer brands, and employer brand helps quality hires (LinkedIn, 2015). In the same research, it has been proved that organizations with employer brands are likely to have greater access to talent which means more employees

consider joining the business. It helps in a shorter time to fill a position than the ones without a brand. It is proved from the research that 46% of the HR and leaders say that the companies with stronger employer brands have stronger employee engagement and higher productivity (Randstad, 2020).

Organizations with employer brands can compete in the employment market and can get member devotion through constructive recruitment, employee engagement, and following proper retention application. The research from resourcing and talent planning survey (2021) has proved that of the employer who invested in improving retention, 19% of those employers achieved this through promoting their brand. IT firms are now considering inclusion and diversity as a part of their strategy to promote employer brands by attracting employees from different groups. It differentiates them from competitors in the labour market. The employer brand helps an organization in getting the best talent and establish credibility (CIPD, 2020).

Employee retention on the other hand helps in achieving success and promotes the health of an organization. Employee turnover results in multiple losses to the organization, replacing an existing employee would cost 16%- 213% yet again advertising the open position, selection, interview, and onboarding creates high costs for the organization (Paulsen, 2021).

Research by Micheal (2016) has proved that the new hire will take as much as 2 years to reach the productivity as that of the employee who left. When the employee is laid off it would make the business lose an asset as they walk out with years of experience, creativity, and knowledge they gained, which could be an advantage to the competitors. Hence Investing in employee retention would give a lot of benefits to the organization (Jagun, 2015).

2.5 Conclusion

From the literature review, there are many pieces of evidence that show there is a strong connection linking employer branding and employee retention and both of these areas are considered important strategies in this modern world which can help organizations to gain a competitive advantage over competitors. It is clear from the study that if organizations invest more in strengthening their employer brand, it helps the organization in employee retention which could save money in terms of hiring, training, investing time, and recruitment cost. Companies which give good benefits and act according to the values would be key in attracting new talent pool along with the existing ones.

It's important for organizations to invest in formulating new strategies and to work on employer brand on a regular basis and should use different tactics to promote their brand, employee value proposition, benefits they are providing, and how they are involving themselves in corporate social responsibility. These factors play an important role among the employees in decision-making if they want to remain or quit the company. Hence it is important for any organization to invest more in both employer branding and employee retention to be successful among its competitors.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter of the research gives an in-depth outline of the methodology used to respond to the research problem. The study begins through the research paradigm followed by research methods and the data collection such as primary and secondary data. It will then consider the sampling strategy and data analysis method used to perform the study. The end of the study chapter will conclude with reliability, ethical consideration, and limitations for this research.

3.2 Research Paradigm

It is considered as a theoretical structure that directs how the study must be performed. There are two chief paradigms, positivism and interpretivism (Collis and Hussey, 2014). Positivism and interpretivism are both areas within epistemology.

Positivism relates to natural science and requires working with noticeable social reality to put together law-like generalizations. Positivism implies to the significance of what is given. Positivist researcher uses existing theory to develop a hypothesis (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill, 2019). Positivism is supported by the belief that reality is independent, and the goal is the discovery of theories, which are derived from empirical research. Knowledge can be derived from 'positive information' because knowledge can be scientifically verified, and it can be proved through mathematical and logical explanations. Theories provide the basis of explanation under positivism, predict the occurrence, and help in controlling them (Collis and Hussey, 2014). Positivism does not take into consideration of people's social context and sometimes ignores relevant findings which are undertaken through research design. Positivism is related to a quantitative method and is based on the statistical analysis of quantitative research data (Rehman and Alharthi, 2016).

Interpretivism is developed due to the insufficiency of positivism to encounter the require of social scientists, and social reality is not objective but extremely subjective as it is fashioned by our understandings. Positivism concentrates on estimating social phenomena while interpretivism centres on analysing the complication of social phenomena with a sight to obtain interpretive understanding (Gemma, 2018). The main purpose of interpretivism research is to generate new,

richer grasp and explanations of social worlds and contexts. The challenge for interpretivism researchers is to get into the social world of partakers and to recognize the society from the participant's opinion. Interpretivism is extremely suitable for the instance of business and management study (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill, 2019). Interpretivism is associated with qualitative research as the researcher seeks to explain what is portrayed to them and extended to the point of what is being displayed. Interpretivism requires more raw data to be taken under the micro approach (Park, Konge, and Artino, 2020).

After taking into consideration the two research philosophies this study is adopting positivist epistemological philosophical research. Positivism is the most appropriate choice due to the nature of this research in aiming to understand the relationship linking employer branding and employee retention in the Information Technology sector which can be obtained through quantitative research analysis through structured questionnaires and surveys which is based on hard facts and figures.

3.3 Research Strategy

It is an overall strategy for leading the research findings. Research strategy helps the investigator in proposing, carrying out, and keeping track of the research. Research strategy is helpful on a high level but the addition of research methods to it gives more detailed research work. Research methods give researchers an idea of how to gather and examine the data. For example, it may be through questionnaires, interviews, or statistical methods. Thus, the research strategy gives good guidance to the researcher while the research method is used as a tool or technique to perform the task (Tajvidi and Karami, 2015). There are different research plan, and the observer must choose which is more appropriate for the study. It should be suitable for its purpose of helping the observer find an answer to the research question. The research plan should be feasible, the researcher should be able to have entry to data sources like documents and individuals which might be hard to get as the individuals might be busy and the documents are kept confidential. Hence it is essential to choose a research approach carefully as the choice of various resources depends on it. A few research strategies are more time-consuming, for example, action research will be unsuitable for the small-scale research project (Johannesson and Perjons, 2014).

There are many research strategies available but for this study survey is being considered as the research strategy. The survey is the best method to gather large responses in a short time. As the

study is being conducted in the Indian IT sector, survey methods seem to be a valid research strategy as there is less time and the researcher is in Ireland.

3.3.1 Survey

The word survey refers to overseeing something (Johannesson and Perjons, 2014). The survey as a research plan intends to outline some world, whether it is physical or social. A survey helps in covering a large area of activity and it is frequently used to gather primary data regarding huge groups of people which aims on collecting data about their beliefs, activities, and attitudes. Surveys can be conducted for non-academic purposes as well through polls and market surveys (Ponto, 2015). The scope of the survey strategy is wide and is not limited. This research can be carried out through personal interviews, mailed questionnaires, and personal discussions. In modern times, the internet is being widely used to collect data by sending surveys or questionnaires through social media platforms. The information collected through the survey will be accurate within the range of sampling errors. The advantage of a survey is that a huge quantity of data can be gathered from a large group of people. The disadvantage of this research strategy is that the researcher might receive negative responses from the respondents and might experience difficulty during the collection of data. The most common problems involves receiving incomplete surveys, blank questionnaires, the reluctance of the respondents to provide feedback because of their busy schedules, and a lack of understanding of the research survey (Kapur, 2018).

As this study is being conducted in Indian IT sectors, it is not possible to take interviews or observations, and experiments. Hence the survey method is being considered as the most suitable method currently. The survey in this study includes 19 questions out of which 13 are closed-ended questions that are linked to the objectives of the research whereas the other 6 are loose-ended questions. The survey form is formed as for each objective of the research, and it was sent to the respondents online.

3.4 Research Methods

The research method consists of quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-method approaches. The quantitative method demands the collection of data, analysing, interpretation of the information, and lastly writing the results achieved through the study. Both survey and experimental research consist of special methods in selecting a sample and population which gives an idea of the strategy of inquiry, collecting and analysing the data, making an interpretation, presenting the study, and writing research in a survey or experimental study (Crewell, 2013).

Qualitative research on the other hand is an inductive approach that emphasizes more on words rather than numbers. According to Bryman and Bell (2015), the research mainly takes into consideration social reality. Qualitative research helps to study the participants which shows that there is a strong connection linking the participants and the researcher. The research here mainly focuses on interviews and focus groups which is more of an interactive and naturalistic approach (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill, 2019).

Mixed methods research design shows that it is a mixture of both qualitative and quantitative research through a single study. Here the qualitative data is collected from open-ended sources whereas quantitative data is obtained from close-ended references like tests, questionnaires, or psychological instruments. Though there are advantages to using mixed methods, it has some disadvantages like shortage of time, power, and resources acts as the major challenge in not undertaking mixed methods as the research design (Hafsa, 2019).

For this study quantitative research method was used due to the study being conducted in the Indian IT sector qualitative method which involves interviews and the mixed method which involves both qualitative and quantitative methods would be a long process and would not help me as this project is being submitted in Ireland. Hence quantitative method would be the most suitable method currently.

3.4.1 Quantitative Methods

This study will be undertaken using the quantitative research method. The data which are in numerical forms are considered to be quantitative. Variables are identified through measurement in quantitative methods which include rational, ordinal, interval, and nominal. The data generated through quantitative research requires organizing and summarizing. Description tools are used to summarize the quantitative data collected which includes frequency, mean, median, mode,

percentage, standard deviation, and range. The use of frequency distribution has more advantages over others as it is easy to elucidate and the audience can easily understand as it is graphically represented and in different formats to help in analysis which includes tables, charts, graphs, etc. The data here is primarily collected through survey questions and by using the probability sampling technique it is easy to calculate the sampling errors (Kapur, 2018).

As there is less time and the study is being conducted in the Indian IT sector, the quantitative method seems a better approach to sending surveys to the participants and can be done in lesser time compared to qualitative and mixed methods.

3.5 Data Collection Method

The data gathering task will start once the research problem is defined by the researcher and the research design has been developed. Generally, the data collection method is categorized into two different types based on where and how the data was collected. The two main categories are the primary data collection method and the secondary data collection method.

3.5.1 Primary Data

Primary research is the one which is conducted by the researcher through interviews, surveys, and focus groups. Data that is not yet issued and the one which is immediate information that is not changed by the researcher is studied as primary data (Taherdoost, 2021). Using primary data one can achieve quality data which helps in improving results. The researcher needs to make sure that the standard was met while collecting the data, should eliminate pointless data, and should not use false or cooked-up ones. Primary data can be achieved through different sources such as interviews, surveys, experiments, and questionnaires (Driscoll, 2011).

The observer in this research is intended to collect the facts through survey methods using questionnaires. It is difficult to conduct interviews and experiments as this study is being conducted in the Indian IT sector and it is more convenient to gather data through the survey method.

3.5.2 Secondary Data

The data which is gathered from published sources is already collected by someone for other purposes which can be used in the research. In every research conducted, the literature review section will be conducted through secondary data sources. Hence it is considered an important part of the research which helps in gathering information from the previous research conducted. It helps in designing the research study and gives a criterion to differentiate primary results. The secondary data includes books, published printed sources, journals, magazines, e-journals, etc (Kapur, 2018). The researcher will be using books, published printed sources, journals, magazines, e-journals, and multiple online sources for this research.

3.6 Sampling Strategy

The researcher should select or consider a strategy in selecting the sample for the study (Kapur, 2018). There are various sampling strategies, but the researcher much selects the one which is best for the study. Different sampling methods are used by the researchers in gathering the data, but it is very important to use the sampling method by the researcher which is required for conducting the research. Sampling strategies can be differentiated into probability sampling and non-probability sampling methods (Turner, 2020).

This study will be undertaken using the probability sampling technique which is also known as the random sampling technique. The probability of being included in the sample is non-zero for every member of the population. This strategy helps in reducing systematic errors (Datta, 2018).

The survey link was sent to the participants working in different companies across the IT sector. Participants included in this study are from the different departments currently employed in the IT sector and not a particular company or particular department is being selected.

3.7 Data Analysis Method

The data analysis method is a tool or approach used in doing research. They help in collecting information, sorting, and analysing so that the researcher can conclude. The researcher must make use of the right methods for the type of research they are conducting, which can satisfy that the conclusions have some validity (Kapur, 2018). There are different analysis methods, but for this study descriptive analysis method is applied.

3.7.1 Descriptive Analysis

The descriptive analysis involves classifying datasets that help in observing emergent patterns if they are obvious patterns. Data aggregation is how descriptive analysis is performed. This involves gathering data first and then sorting data, which helps in managing. Descriptive analysis also involves conducting statistical analysis of data to direct the measure of dispersion, frequency, and central tendencies which provides a mathematical description for the data gathered (Kapur, 2018). Descriptive analysis is carried out using pivot tables in the study and through the use of visualizations such as bar graphs and pie charts to give a clear understanding of the data gathered.

3.8 Reliability and validity

Validity and reliability are the different properties of measuring instruments even though they both are closely related. A measuring instrument could be reliable without being valid, but if it is valid, it is sure to be reliable. Still, reliability is not alone sufficient to make sure validity. Reliability is nothing but the repeatability of the findings. If the data is reliable it would give the same results if the study were to be conducted for the second time. Validity applies to the believability and credibility of the investigation. It is the collection of data that is appropriate for the deliberate use of measuring instruments. A study that is conducted without using either validity or reliability will not give beneficial results. Hence, the estimating tool used for the research ought to have both validity and reliability (Surucu and Maslakci, 2020).

Reliability and validity in this study are conducted using a questionnaire and are based on the findings of previous studies and established theories. The study is undertaken using a random sampling method and no particular company or department is chosen and the participants are from multiple companies across the IT sector and different departments.

3.9 Ethical considerations

The term ‘ethics’ means moral values and principles which are designated as a basis for a code of conduct (Collis and Hussey, 2014).

The researcher intends to follow the guideline provided by the university at all times of the study procedure. The primary study requires data collection which was conducted through a survey and will be secured only through the open participation of the respondents. The data collected is secured in a password-protected system to stop data theft and unauthorized entry to data. The

consent for the data collection is obtained from the target group before collecting the data. No participants can be identifiable except the researcher and the data gathered will be only used for the academic reason and will not be used or shared with others for any external purposes. Secondary research standards like parenthetical reference, elimination of data, which is not published, and the dodging of plagiarism are also encountered (Bryman, 2016).

3.10 Limitations

The researcher at the beginning of the research mentioned the sample size as 100 respondents, however only 92 respondents have responded to the survey sent, and due to the time restrictions only 92 response was taken for further research. Hence it is only limited to the views of a few people working in the IT sector and not all the employees currently working throughout India.

The data is particularly gathered from the employees working in the IT sectors in India, as the data gathered only gives the perceptions of the employees working only in one particular sector and not the employees from different sectors which could be a limitation to the research. One of the questions asked through the survey was not clear to the respondents as the researcher failed to address the scale of the question and this could be considered as a limitation.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This section gives a complete presentation of the data and findings which are obtained through the survey. Data analysis starts once the area of study begins and the observer should choose on what details to collect, outside of whom to collect, or what to collect relying on a primary study topic (Charney, 2015). Data analysis is a technique through which the data can be categorized and understood with the use of graphs and tables (Brandt, 2014). This study, to analyse the relationship linking employer branding and employee retention in the Information Technology sector in India, the primary information for the research proposal was gathered from 92 participants using a survey form. The information is collected and examined as per the set objectives. The information was gathered from the employees that are currently working in the Information Technology sector. Descriptive analysis is used to collect the data through a survey questionnaire that was sent to the participants and the findings are analysed through SPSS software and frequency tables are used for each of the questions in the questionnaire. Bar graphs and pie charts are also used to present the data after being analysed.

Question number 11(chart 11) is not being explained but the graph has been presented due to the question asked to the respondents was not clear as the question was a Likert scale, and the survey respondents were asked only to mark the answers from 1 to 5 without mentioning 1 is lowest and the 5 is highest. Hence the question is not being explained.

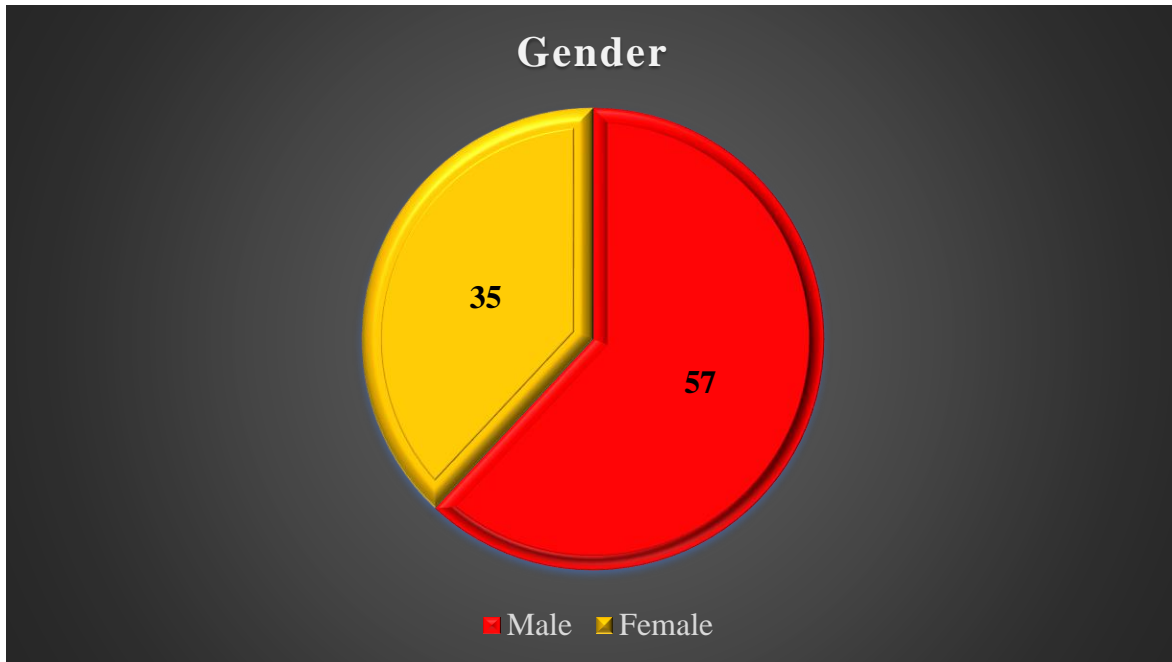
4.2 Analysis and Findings from the Survey

In this chapter, each question from the questionnaire has been analysed. The initial section of the investigation includes a demographic study that gathers particulars on inhabitants' attributes that are built on demographic particulars (Encyclopedia, 2022). In this study it has some demographic consideration questions such as gender, age, employment level, size of the company, and years of experience has been gathered and examined separately. The next segment of the study has a determined examination of questions as placed correspondingly to the objective. The data has been analysed using SPSS software.

DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

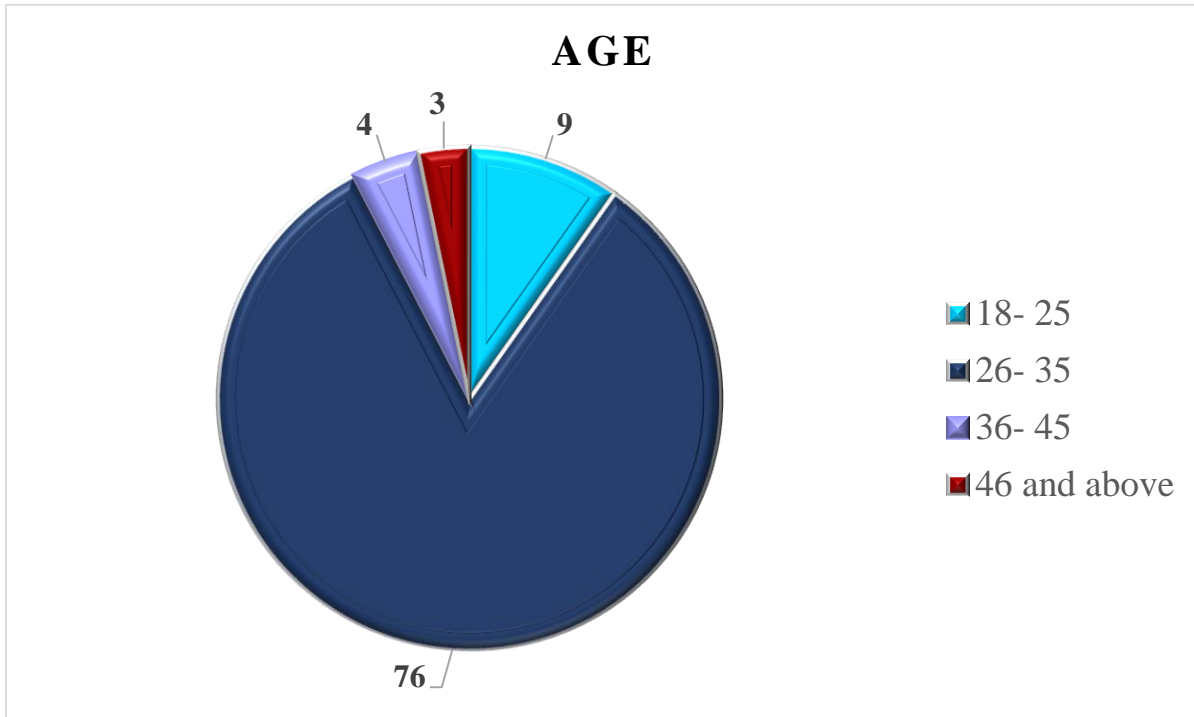
Chart 1

Male: Female Respondent Breakdown



In this research, the primary data is procured from the respondents in India. The above chart 1 shows that 62% of the response were obtained from male respondents and 38% of the response was from female respondents. The male responses are slightly higher than the female responses, however, the number of women employees working in the Information Technology sector in India has increased rapidly over the past 10 years and 30% of the employees consist of women employees. The participation of women in the Information Technology sector is highest among non-agricultural sectors in India (Mishra, Ostrovska, and Mishra, 2022).

Chart 2



The Information was gathered through four separate age categories which can be noticed in chart above. Category 1 belonged to the 18- 25 age, group 2 consists of survey respondents from the 26- 35 age group, group 3 with the 36- 45 age group and group 4 data were from the participants 46 and above age. The majority of the data was collected from group 2 which is the 26- 35 age group which constituted 83% of the survey respondents. 10% of the data was collected from the survey respondents belonging to the 18- 25 age group, 4% of the survey respondents belonged to the 36- 45 age group and the rest 3% of the survey respondents were 46 and above of age group.

Chart 3

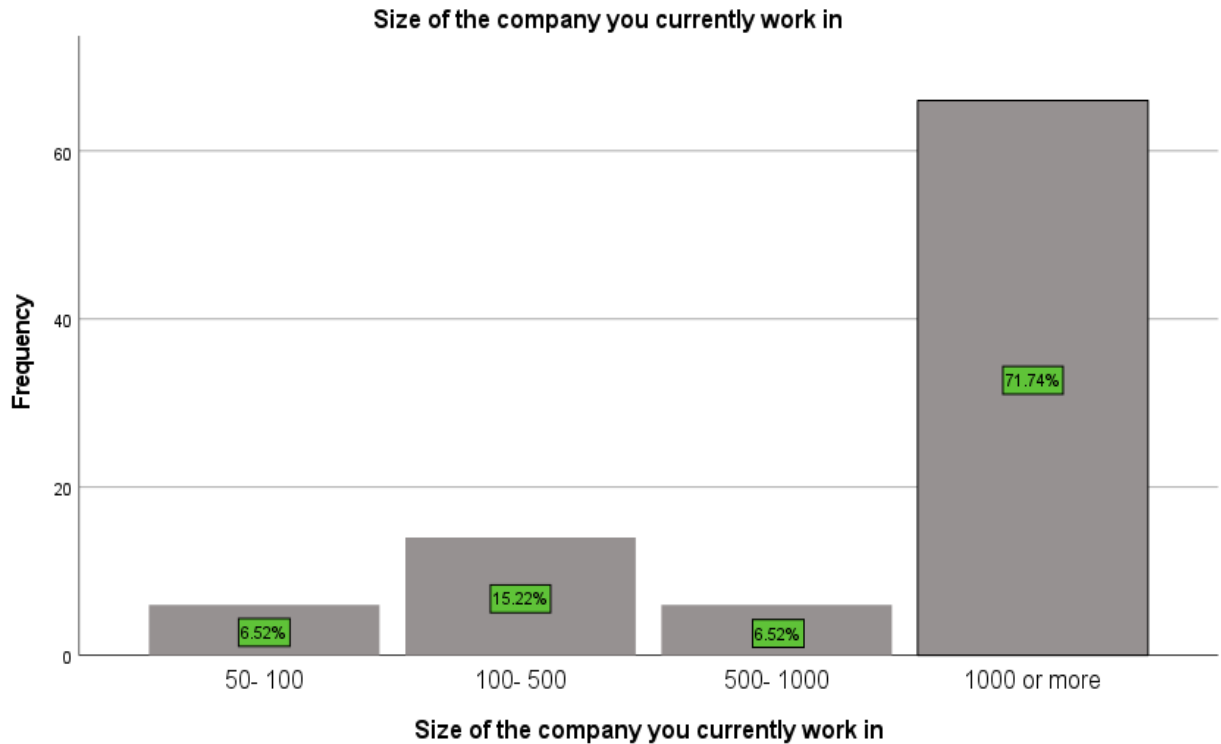
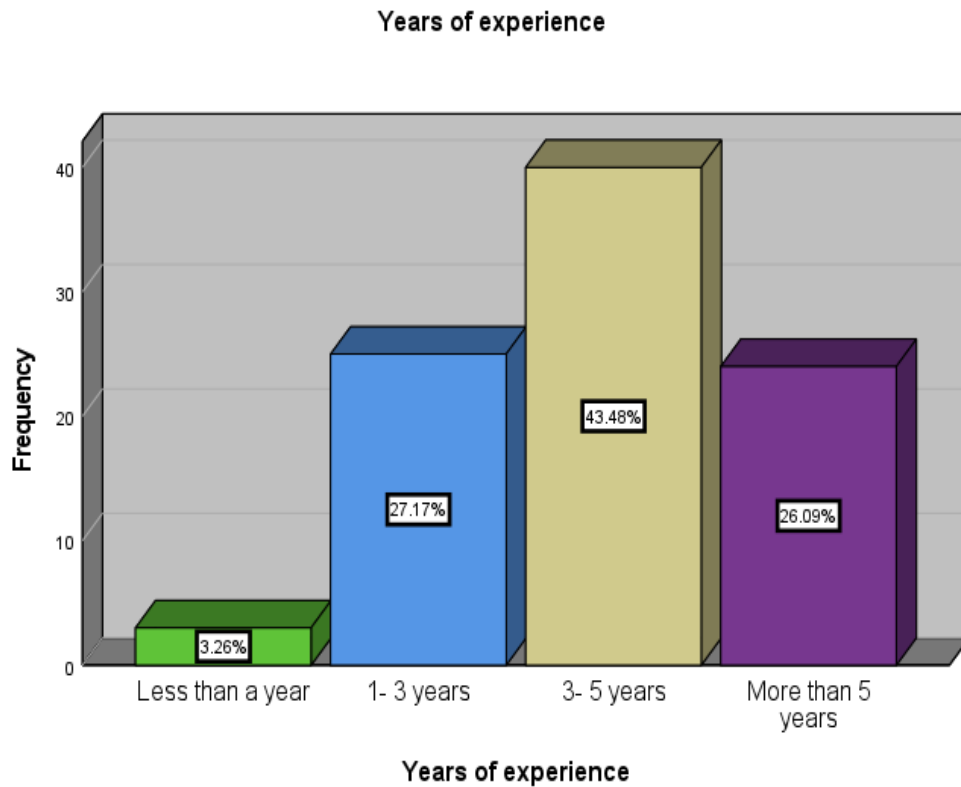


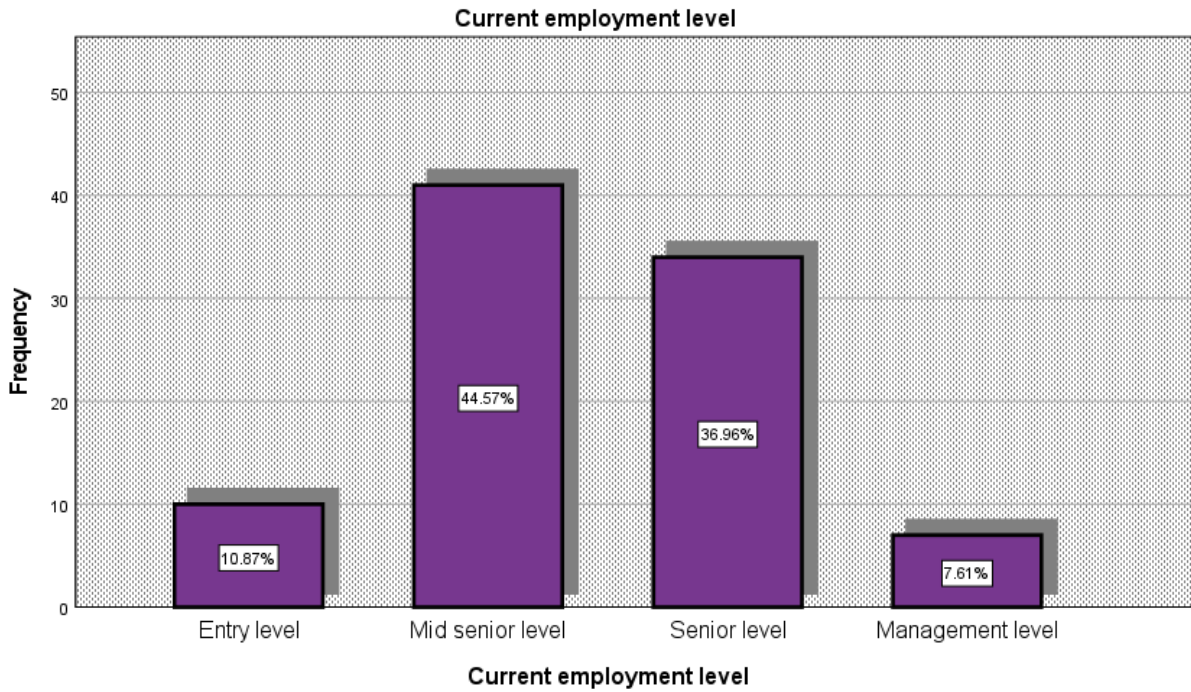
Chart 3 shows the size of the company respondents currently working in. Each company operates in different sizes. More than 71% of respondents were from companies with 1000 or more employees, and 15% of the participants have the size of 100- 500 employees working in the company. 6% of the respondents belonged to a company that has 500- 1000 employees, and the other 6% of the respondents belonged to a company that has 50- 100 employees. Hence from the gathered data, it is clear that most of the survey respondents belong to a company that as 1000 or more employees.

Chart 4



The data for the study was gathered from the employees currently working in the Information Technology sector in India. The participants with different years of experience responded to the survey. 43% of the respondents have 3- 5 years of experience working in the IT sector. 27% of them were with 1- 3 years of experience, 26% of the survey participants had more than 5 years of experience and the rest 3% of the respondents have less than a year of experience working in the IT sector.

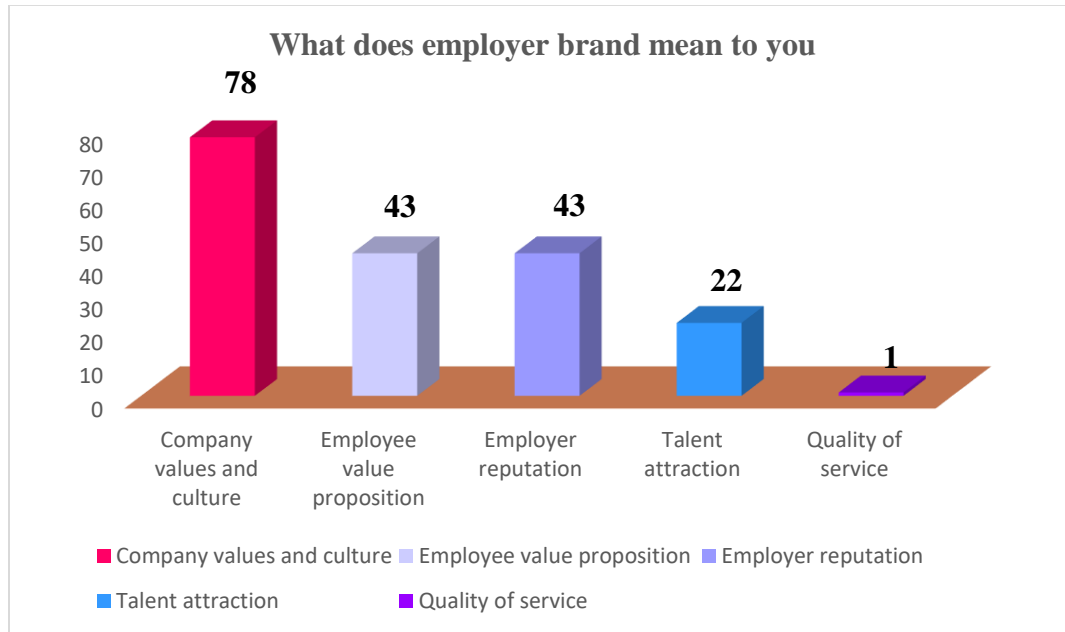
Chart 5



The data was collected from the employees who belonged to different employment levels in their respective organizations. 44% of the survey respondents are currently working at the mid-senior level, 36% of the participants are working at the senior level, 10% of the survey respondents are working in entry-level roles while the rest 7% of the employees are in management level roles.

SPECIFIC ANALYSIS

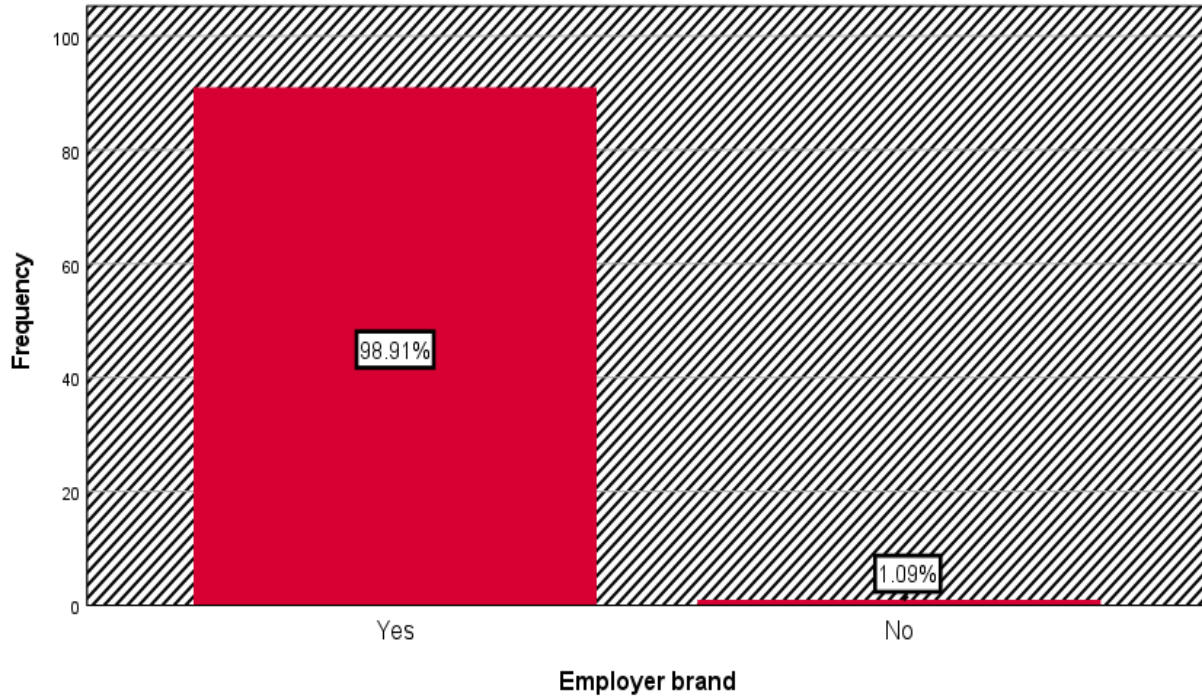
Chart 6



Employer brand has a different value for each individual. Every single individual will have a different opinion which differs from one person to another. 84% of the survey respondents mentioned that employer brand according to them is company values and culture. 46% of the survey respondents mentioned employee value proposition and 46% of the survey respondents mentioned employer reputation as employer brand according to them. According to 23% of the survey respondent, employer brand means talent attraction and only 1% of the survey respondents thinks it is quality of service. Organizational culture forms the main factor in shaping the brand of the company along with the image of an employer. Culture plays a major role in influencing the employer brand which is strong and deeply rooted. Values act as a key element within the culture. These values help in creating a favourable employer image (Szymanska, Zarzadzania, Szkola, and Wroclawiu, 2014).

Chart 7

Thinking about your current employer, does the company you currently work for have a clear employer brand? e.g., does your company have a social media presence, a company tagline/ hashtag, clear careers website etc.



Every organization currently has its own employer brand to differentiate itself from the competitors. Employer brand gives an advantage for the employers to be recognized by the employees. In this study, 99% of the survey respondents agreed that the current organization they are working for has a clear employer brand and the rest 1% of the survey participants mentioned their organization doesn't have a clear employer brand. Employer branding aims to create and communicate an advantageous employer brand in order to attract and retain employees (Auer, Edlinger, and Molk, 2021).

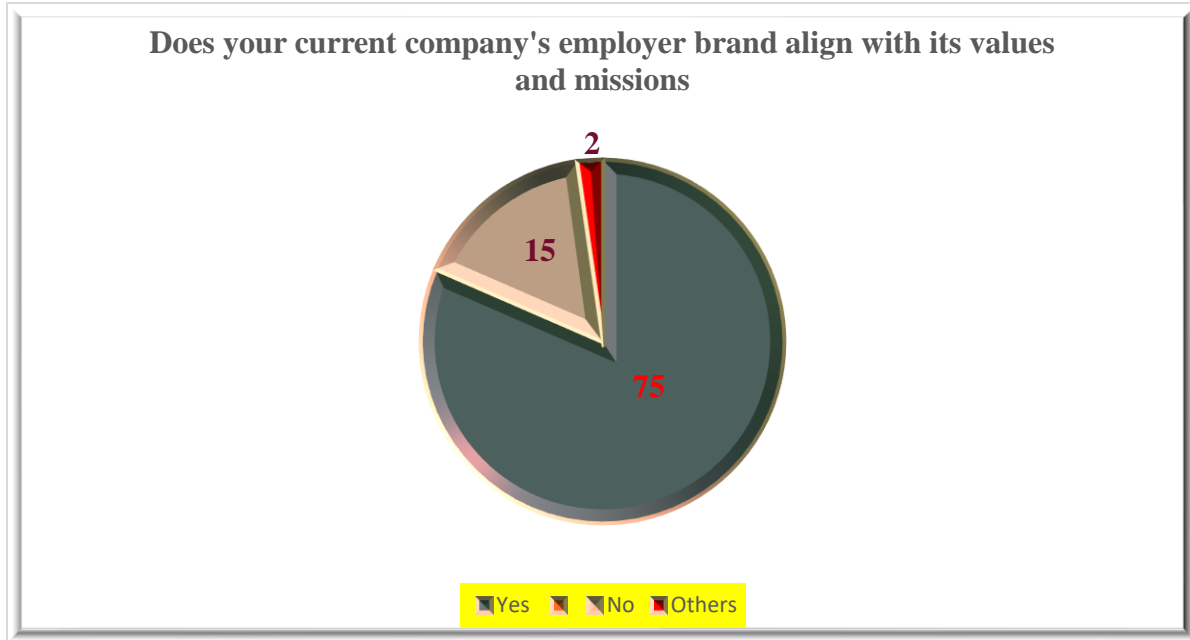
Chart 8

If Yes, does the external employer brand reflect your internal employees experience?



The organization's success depends on the internal employee's experience. The good or bad things inside the organizations can only go outside through the employees. Hence it is important for organizations to promote good culture and good employee value proposition, which in turn the internal employees promote the company to others which is through word-of-mouth (Sokro, 2012). 71% of the survey participants mentioned that the external employer brand reflects the internal employees' experience and 28% of them mentioned that the external employer brand does not reflect the internal employees' experience. Most of the survey respondents are of the view that the employer brand reflects the experience of the internal employees as they are the ones who bring success and promote the company to the outside world.

Chart 9



Organizations are focused on employee value propositions in order to attract top talent. This proposition is related to the organization's values and culture. The above chart 9 shows that 82% of the survey participants agree that their current company's employer brand aligns with its values and mission while 16% of the survey participants believe that it does not align with values and mission and the rest 2% have mentioned others where one survey respondent mentioned employer brand promotes a culture of diversity, inclusion, and respect and provides employees with growth opportunities and the other survey respondent has mentioned the company is focused on improving and helping other business to customer and business to business revenue growth through their SAAS CRM platform.

Chart 10



In this modern era, people change their jobs once they feel they don't have career advancement, low pay, and other reasons and look for a new job (Parker and Horowitz, 2022). 83% of the survey respondents mentioned that they will look for growth opportunities as the main thing when looking for a new job followed by 76% of the survey respondents who mentioned they look for work-life balance as the main factor. 66% of the survey participants responded that they would look for compensation and benefits as the main factor, 41% mentioned they will look for the reputation of the company and one respondent mentioned leaving outcomes as their main factor to look for a new job. These are considered as the main factors of employer branding by other researchers which are influencing the employees in making different decisions.

Chart 11

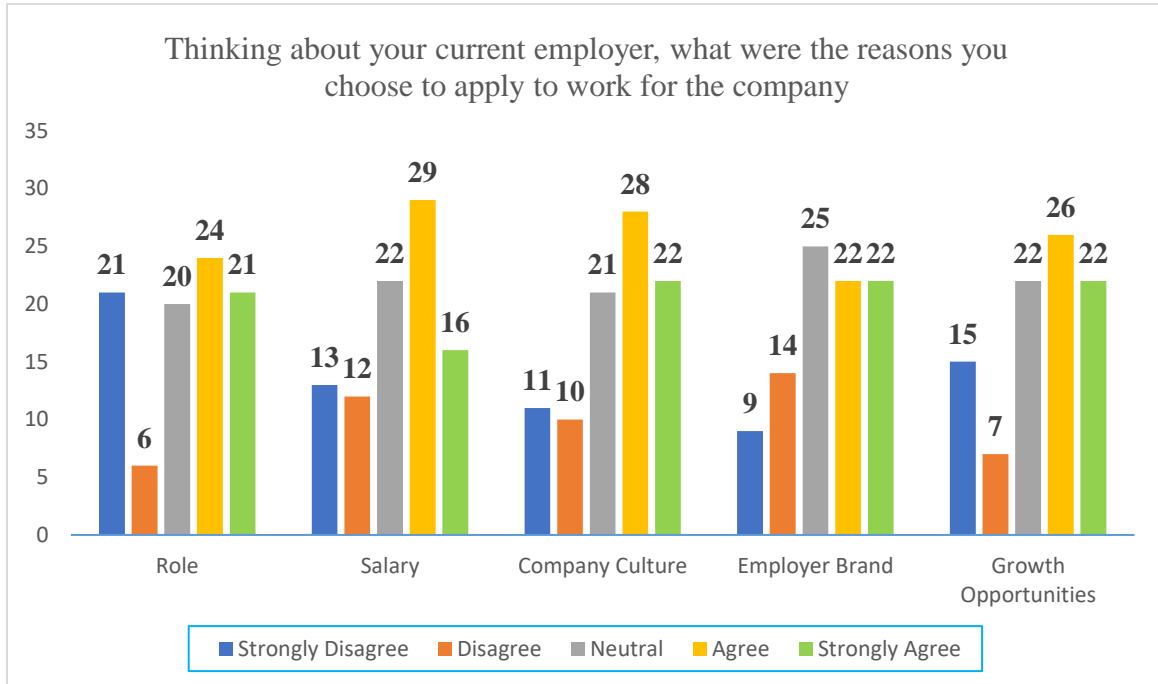
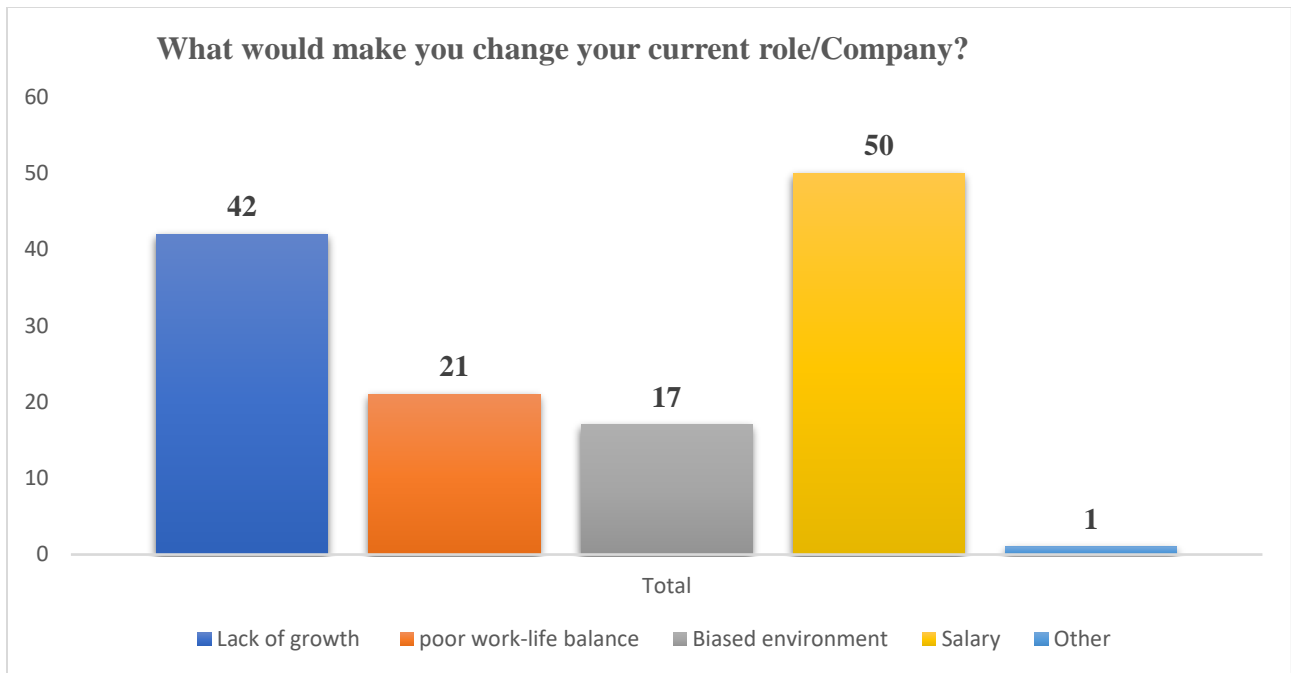
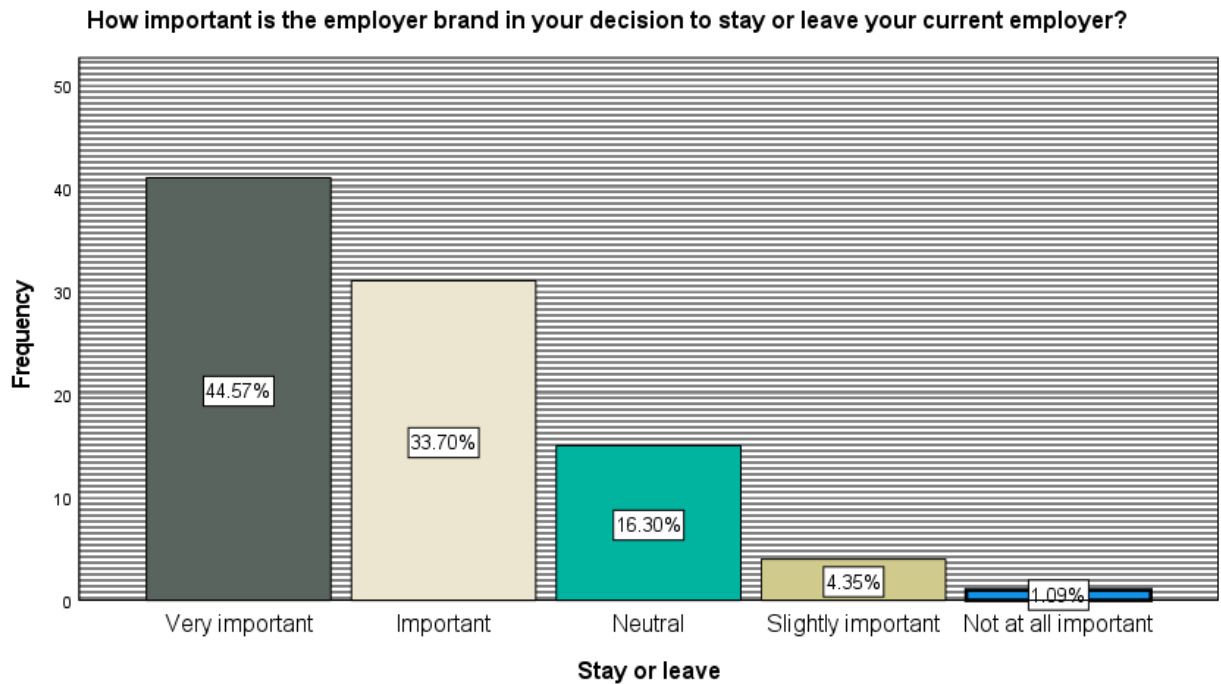


Chart 12



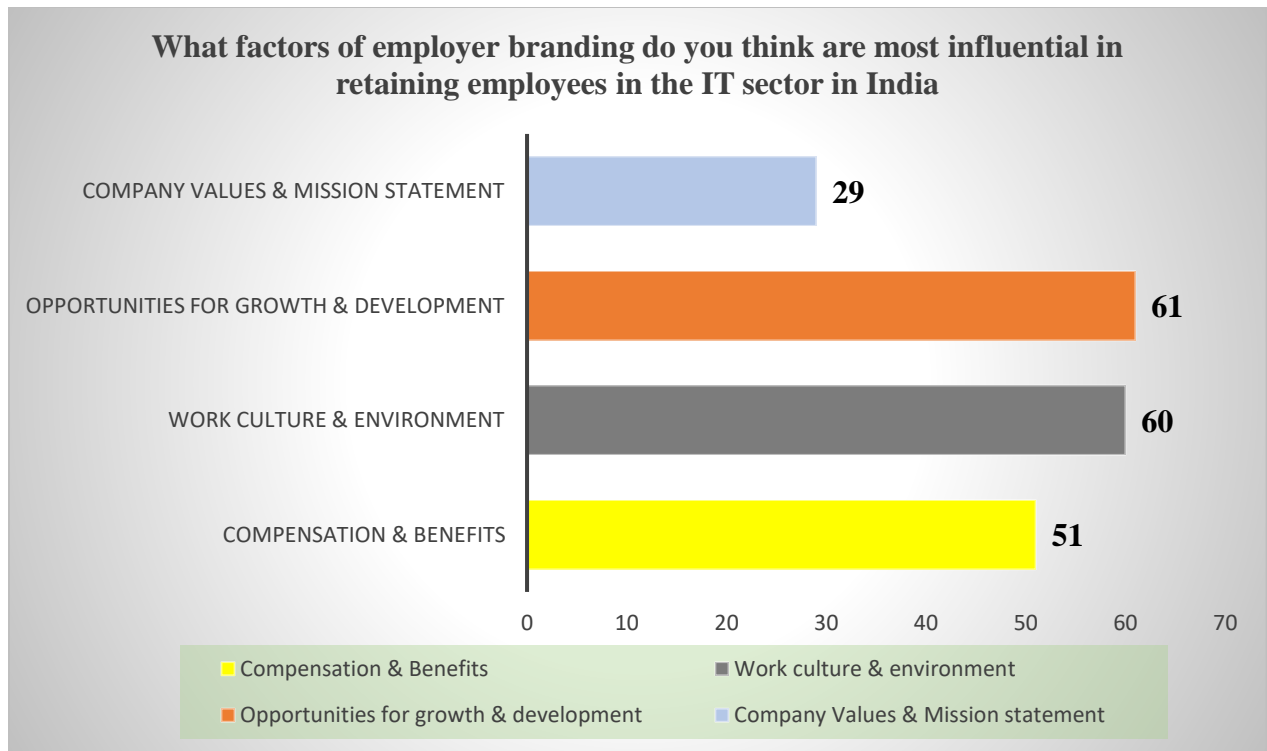
People leave their position once they feel they are not valued or when they do not have growth opportunities, poor work-life balance, low pay, or any other related issues. From chart 12 54% of the survey respondents will change their role if they get a high salary, 45% of the survey respondents would make a change due to lack of growth, 22% of the survey participants mentioned poor work-life balance as the reason and 18% of them mentioned biased environment as a reason to change the role. Only 1 of the survey respondents mentioned that they would make a change if they had an on-site position to work. A recent survey has mentioned employees tend to leave organizations due to low pay, work-life balance, and lack of growth opportunities as the main reasons and organizations should consider looking into those factors to retain their best talents (Parker and Horowitz, 2022).

Chart 13



Employer branding has helped organizations to overcome the war for talent along with attracting and retaining top talents which influences employee's decision to stay with the organization (Ergun and Tatar, 2018). From chart 13 it is clear that for 44% of the survey respondents, employer branding is very important in their decision-making to stay or leave, 33% of the survey respondents mentioned it is an important factor, 16% of them were neutral, 4% of the survey respondents mentioned it is slightly important and 1% mentioned it is not at all important in decision making to stay or leave their current employer.

Chart 14



From the chart 14, 66% of the survey respondents say opportunities for growth and development as a factor of employer branding is the most influential to retain employees. 65% of the survey respondents mentioned work culture and environment as the second highest factor, 55% of them mentioned compensation and benefits as the main factor and 31% of the survey respondents mentioned company values and mission statement as the main factor in retaining employees in the IT sector in India. Organizations are continuously promoting themselves as brands not only to sell their products and services but also to attract and retain the unique individuals currently working in the organization (Dasan, 2022).

Chart 15

Have you ever recommended your current employer to someone else?

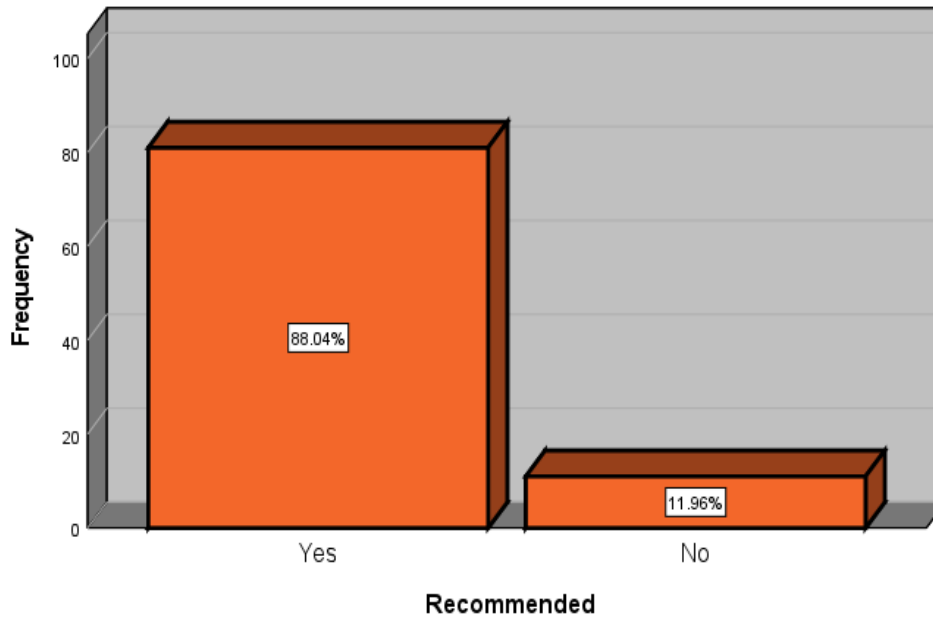


Chart 15 shows if the survey respondents have recommended their current employer to others. 88% of the survey respondents mentioned that they have recommended and almost 12% of the survey respondents have not recommended their current employer to anyone. Research conducted in the Netherlands shows that 86% of new employees will recommend their employer to their friends, after 5 years enthusiasm will decrease however still 70% of the employees are still proud of their company and loves to recommend their employer to others (Mancini, 2017).

Chart 16

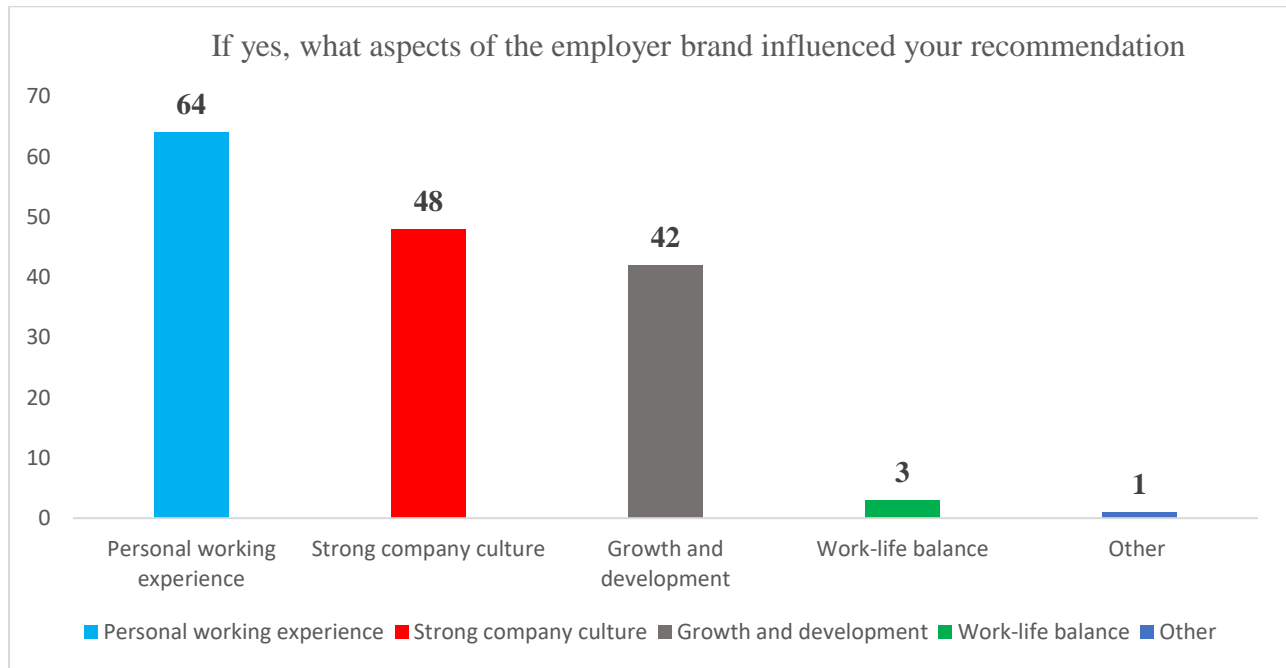
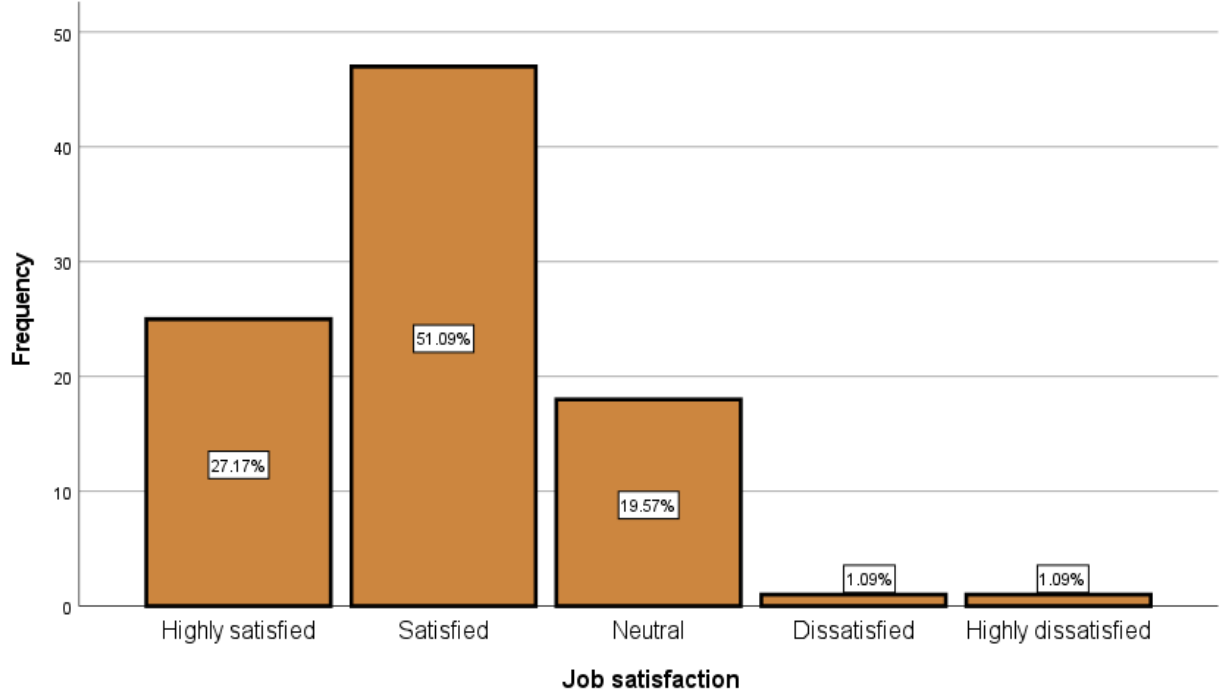


Chart 16 shows the aspects of employer brand that influenced participants' decision to recommend their employer to others. 69% of the survey respondents have recommended their employer from personal working experience, 52% have recommended because of the strong company culture, 45% of the survey respondents recommended as there are opportunities for growth and development, 3% of the survey respondents have mentioned work-life balance as the factor influenced to recommend and 1 of the survey respondents has mentioned they did not recommend the employer to anyone. Saini and Jawahar (2019) in their research said that employees recommend their organization as an employer of choice will be based on their personal working experience within the organization and these experiences includes compensation and benefits, work-life balance, career opportunities, and the organization's values and culture.

Chart 17

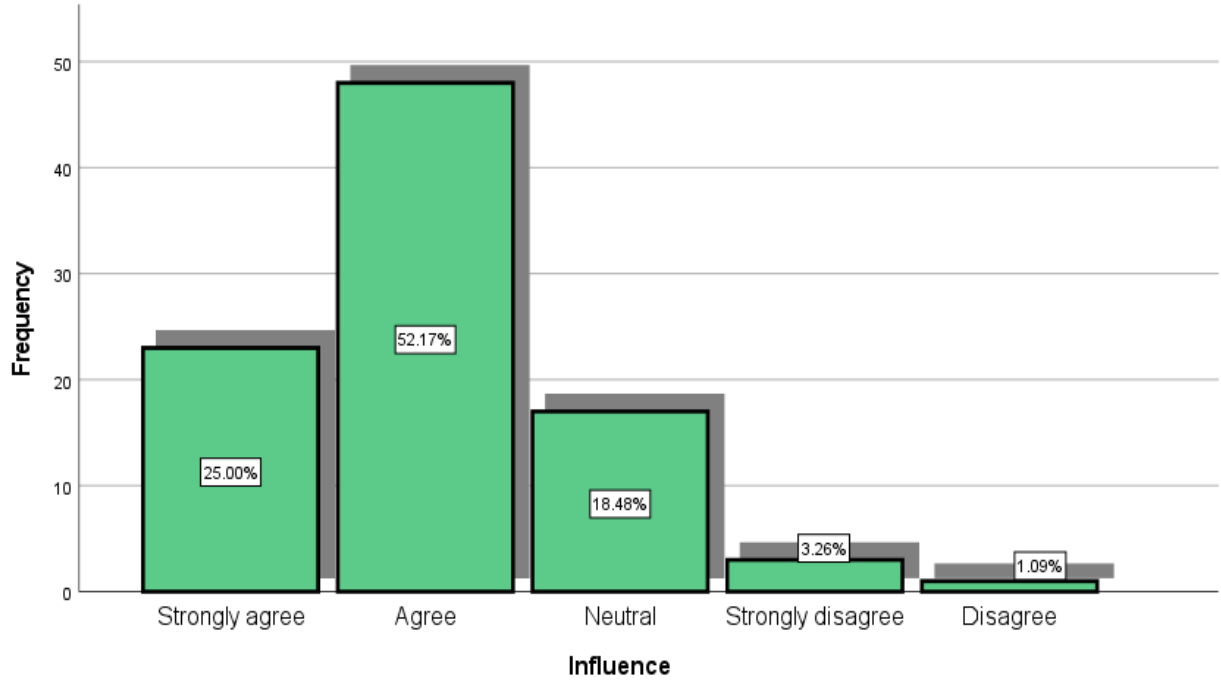
Thinking about your current employer, how does your company's employer brand affect your job satisfaction?



51% of the survey respondents say their employer brand has an effect on their job satisfaction and they are satisfied by it, 27% of the survey respondents are highly satisfied, 19% of them are neutral, 1% of the survey respondents mentioned that they are dissatisfied, and employer brand has no effect on their job satisfaction and the rest 1% of the survey respondents are highly dissatisfied. It is clear from the chart that the employer brand significantly affects the job satisfaction of internal employees. Hence it is important for organizations to promote culture, employee value proposition, work-life balance, growth, and development to increase job satisfaction among employees. Employer brand increases job satisfaction by bringing together a strong company culture (Tanwar and Prasad, 2016).

Chart 18

Thinking about your current employer, did the company's employer brand influence your decision to accept your current position?



52% of the survey participants agreed that the employer brand influenced their decision in accepting the current position, and 25% of them strongly agreed to it. 18% of the participants are neutral, 3% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the employer brand's influence in their decision to accept the current position and the rest 1% of the respondents disagree that the employer brand did not have any influence on them. Looking at the research study from other researchers, it is clear that employer brand has a notable influence on employees in deciding the organization. Employer brand acts as an image of the firm to be a "desirable place to work" among the current employees and prospective employees (Ong, 2011).

Chart 19

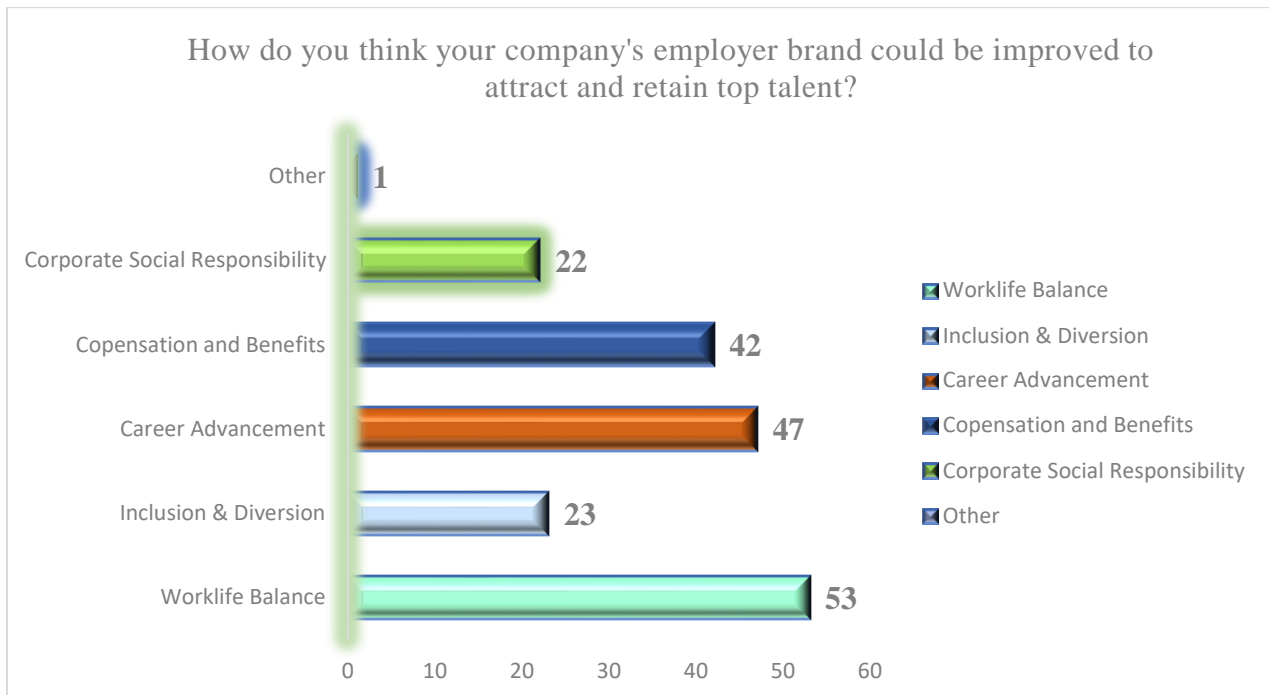


Chart 19 shows how a company’s employer brand could be improved to attract and retain talent. It has become very much important due to the war for talent. 57% of the respondents say employer brand could be improved by promoting work-life balance, 51% of the respondents believe that through career advancement opportunities it could be improved, 45% of the participants say compensation and benefits could act as a main factor in improving employer brand, 25% of the respondent’s mentioned inclusion and diversity and 23% of the respondents believes that corporate social responsibility would be a change factor for improving employer brand. An effective employer brand helps in competitive advantage, while organizations are strategically using employer brands to attract and retain talent. The continuing focus on competitive advantage has made the organization reassess its employer brands (Pawar, 2016).

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Discussion

The discovery of the survey results have been discussed in this chapter. The response was gathered mostly from the employees working in the IT sector. It was crucial to collect data as this study is mainly focused on the Information Technology sector in India. The findings from the analysis show that all the attributes of employer branding are important in employee retention and attraction. Every organization tries to increase the loyalty of its employees, it purely depends on a good corporate image or employer brand. This good image of the organization depends on values and culture which are strongly rooted (Bamidele, 2022). The discovery from the survey also show that according to 84% of respondents, employers brand them in company values and culture. Almost 99% of the respondents mentioned their current company has a clear employer brand. It is important for organizations to have a clear employer brand to distinguish themselves from their competitors. Employer branding is one of the values created by organizations. Companies are busy with the creation of good employer brands to attract new talents and retain valuable employees (Howaniec, 2018).

83% of the respondents agreed that the company they are currently working with has an employer brand that aligns with its values and mission statements. Employees leave jobs for many reasons and consider looking for a few important things in their next job. Growth or career development is one of such factor's employees are more interested in looking for. From the survey findings, it is evident that 84% of respondents have opted for growth development as one of the main things they consider while looking for a new job. If there are no growth opportunities, companies lose a talented workforce, hence considering career development programs helps organizations in decreased turnover rate (Shaito, 2019).

There are many factors that employees consider while leaving the job. A few of them are lack of growth opportunities, salary, work-life balance, etc. Based on the survey it is determined that the pay or salary acts as one of the main factors which employees consider before leaving their job. From the findings, it was found that 55% of the respondents would make a change for a better salary. A recent study has found that employees tend to leave organizations due to low pay, work-

life balance, and lack of growth opportunities as the main reasons and organizations should consider looking into those factors to retain their best talents (Parker and Horowitz, 2022).

Data findings show that 44% of the respondents have mentioned, they will consider employer branding as a very important factor to decide whether to stay or leave the organization. Employer branding has helped organizations to overcome the war for talent along with attracting and retaining top talents which influences employee's decision to stay with the organization (Ergun and Tatar, 2018)

It is evident from the survey that opportunities for growth and development are considered one of the most influential factors in retaining employees by 66% of the respondents. Organizations are not only selling their products and services but are contributing to the factors of employer branding to attract and retain valuable talents (Dasan, 2022).

88% of the respondents agreed that they have recommended their current employer to other people. If the organization takes care of their employees, the employees will promote their employer's brand to different people which is in the form of word-of-mouth. 69% of the respondents say it is their personal experience with the organization which made them recommend their company to someone else.

From the survey, it is found that 51% of the respondents are satisfied with the employer brand which has an effect on their job satisfaction. Through a strong company culture, employer branding helps in creating job satisfaction among employees (Tanwar and Prasad, 2016). 52% of the respondents agreed that employer brand helped them in their decision-making to join their current organizations. Employer brand as a face of an organization makes the workplace to be advantageous to the current and future employees (Ong, 2011).

Data finding shows that 57% of the respondents say by encouraging work-life balance and implementing them would help an employer's brand to be improved to attract and retain top talents. An effective employer brand gives a competitive advantage over the competitors. Hence it is important for organizations to focus on reviewing the employer brand (Pawar, 2016).

From the data gathered it is clearly understood that the employer brand is strongly connected to employee retention. The survey respondents mentioned that their decision depends on how the brand is, it gives them satisfaction and helps in deciding whether to stay or leave the organization and to choose their company of interest. The factors of employer branding such as work-life balance, employee value proposition, growth development, company culture, and compensation

and benefits play an important role in their decision. Hence it has become very important for organizations to promote these factors and to come up with strategies to communicate these factors to the employees effectively which in turn keeps the employees motivated and loyal to their employer.

According to the paper released by collaborative learning Australia, working conditions, work-life balance, corporate culture, compensation benefits, and career development are considered to be the major components of employer brand. Company culture helps organizations in creating an image for outside stakeholders. Employees working in India are more concentrated on the way they are managed at the workplace. Hence the working environment, culture, people orientation, etc, helps organizations in building a strong culture and the organizations which concentrate on employees by implementing work-life balance policies are able to attract more employees compared to the ones without these policies (Jain and Bhatt, 2015).

Implementing employer branding practices would help the company in securing a reputation as a first-choice employer, which gives the company an advantage to recruit and to retain the most valuable candidates. If the employee is satisfied they help in attracting potential candidates to the company and gives a better customer experience which gives the company the power to differentiate among the competitors. The employee is satisfied only when their need is fulfilled and this can be achieved by promoting work-life balance, where the employer cares about their employee's family and personal life, in turn, employees are well connected and have good affection for the company. It is important that the company should provide good compensation and benefits, career development opportunities, and promoting corporate social responsibility would help organizations in attracting prospective employees and retaining the best and most experienced employees (Botella- Carrubi et al., 2020).

Therefore, it is very important for organizations to work on comprehensive analysis and then come up with the strategies and implementing those strategies to develop their employer brand and the factors contributing to the employer brand. There is a strong need for organizations to promote the employer brand along with its factors which would help organizations in retaining and attracting top talents from competitive market. Employer brand acts as a reputation for the company which helps employees to choose the company and helps them to be loyal to the company they are working for. The literature review and the primary data collected prove that there is a well-built relationship between employer branding and employee retention.

5.2 Conclusion

According to the survey findings, employer branding is strongly connected to employee retention, if the organization focuses on employer branding, it gives an advantage over the competitors to retain their valuable workforce along with attracting top talents. Each and every factors of employer branding has its own importance and employer should focus on strategies to improve these factors which in turn forms a clear brand image among the current and prospective employees.

CHAPTER 6
CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND PERSONAL LEARNING STATEMENT

6.1 Conclusion

The study was conducted to investigate the research question “How does employer brand affect employee retention rates in the Information Technology sector in India”? To address this primary and secondary research was conducted. Findings out what earlier studies have quoted on the same topic and uncover if the primary research conducted in this study denies or compliment the secondary research. The primary research was conducted using the quantitative survey method for the study. The survey questions were then analysed through descriptive analysis using SPSS Software.

This study discussed the topic of employer branding and how it is impacting on employee retention within the organization. This study was analysed to obtain four research objectives through which the survey questions were developed. These can be found in Appendix 1, which helps in getting answers to the survey questions. After the survey questions were formed, it was sent to the participants through online applications and email which helped in understanding the relationship between employer branding and employee retention and how employer branding is helping organizations in retaining employees to be successful among the competitors.

The first objective was to identify the employee’s perception and understanding of the employer brand in the IT sector in India. According to the respondent to the online questionnaire employer brand means company values and culture and the majority of the participants mentioned that their current company has a clear employer brand, and they agree that the employer brand aligns with its values and mission. Organizations are investing in employer branding to be competitive in the market and to make sure they attract a large part of the people looking for the job.

The second objective was to understand the link between employer branding and employee retention. Organizations and many scholars believe that there is a well-built connection linking employer branding and employee retention. Employer branding helps organizations in motivating the employees within the organization and the prospective employees, hence the companies are trying hard to make their employer brand which gives them power over the competitors to retain their top talent and to be successful. The participants mentioned that they would look for growth

opportunities, work-life balance, compensation, and benefits as the main things when looking for a new job. These are the components of employer branding that are considered to be important factors in retaining and attracting talents. Participants mentioned they would leave the company if they were offered a good salary, which is also a major factor of employer branding in attracting and helping in retaining talents.

The third objective analyses the influence of employer branding on employee retention in the information technology sector in India. From the data gathered through the survey, it is clear from the participant's view that employer brand plays a major role in choosing and leaving the job. Participants responded employer branding plays an extremely important role in their decision to stay or leave

their current position. It is from the study that the participants mentioned work culture and environment, growth and development, and compensation and benefits are considered to be the most influential factors of employer branding in retaining employees in the information technology sector in India. Most all the participants agreed that they have recommended their current employer to others, and it was mainly based on their personal working experience with the organization and strong company culture and due to growth and development opportunities.

The fourth objective was to understand how the employees look at their company's employer brand and how it would affect employee retention. Job satisfaction is an important factor that helps the employee in deciding whether to stay or leave and his performance and output as well depend on the job satisfaction. Hence employer branding would help the organization in giving job satisfaction to its employees. Most of the participants are either satisfied or highly satisfied with their company's employer brand. The majority of the participants agree that employer branding influenced their decision is accepting their current position. Participants are of the view that the organization's employer brand could be improved by promoting the factors of employer brand such as inclusion and diversity, corporate social responsibility, compensation and benefits, work-life balance, and career advancement opportunities.

This research study concludes that employer branding does have a strong relationship with employee retention. This is found through the research study conducted using the research objectives which were asked through a survey breaking them into smaller parts. This research found that employer branding is a major tool in attracting and retaining talents and the employer branding factors would help organizations to be successful among the competitors which keeps

employees satisfied and to be loyal. This study proves that employer branding does have a positive effect on existing and prospective employees. Hence it is important for organizations to concentrate on building stronger employer brands along with factors of employer branding which is motivating the decisions of employees in choosing the employer and whether to stay or leave the organization. It will help organizations in achieving their goals and in attracting and retaining the best talents.

6.2 Recommendations, Timeline, and Costing

The study conducted helps in finding out the factors of employer branding which are the main reasons for the employees choosing or leaving the company. According to the survey participants, growth opportunities were the main factor of employer branding they will look for mainly and the second factor would be work-life balance. It is found from the study that employer branding acts as a very important factor when looking for a job position. Hence employee retention depends on the employer's branding and the factors surrounding it. There is a strong need for organizations to concentrate on forming a strong employer brand and to promote the elements of employer branding which helps in attracting and retaining employees within the IT sector.

Based on the findings and conclusions of the research, the researcher has developed the following recommendations along with the timeline and possible costs involved.

Recommendation 1: Promotion of employer branding externally

Employer branding could be promoted through job fairs, college visits, and giving students who are about to pass out from college an idea about the company and the benefits involved, organizing conferences and seminars and using social media to promote the brand, which can help in brand development and attracting top talents.

Timeline: It is an ongoing process, which should be done at least once a year during the mid-year would be suitable as the students will be nearing passing out from college.

Estimated cost: cost includes marketing and promotional materials which would cost around €500, traveling costs of around €200, and cost-time and support from the staff, booth, and table setup expenses of €500. Organizing seminars and conferences would cost around €3000- €5000

depending on the number of guest speakers and the attendees attending the program. Promotion through social media would cost less and needs support from the Human resource team.

Recommendation 2: Promote growth opportunities and work-life balance

Organizations should start giving equal opportunities to employees who are well-experienced. They should start with a comprehensive analysis finding out the strength and weaknesses related to growth opportunities and work-life balance. Organizations could provide training and development programs and encourage their employees to attend conferences and seminars which would help in their career development. It is the duty of the employer to communicate about the growth opportunities through email or through a poster within the organization. Training can be done online as well, and the managers should do one on one with the employees talking not only about the targets but about the issues and challenges facing as well as any personal problems they are going through. Organizations can promote work-life balance by giving flexible working time, caring for employees' families and their personal issues, and making sure to provide necessary leave when required without questioning. Promoting a good environment by having some fun activities, team lunches, dinners, and office parties once in a while, gives employees some motivation and a feeling of being with family.

Timeline: The analysis phase takes 3- 4 weeks. Training and development program should be conducted once in 3 or 4 months, online training once in 6 months, attending seminars and conferences whenever there is an invitation. Team lunch and dinner could be done once a month and office parties once in 6 months. One-on-one should be set up once a month.

Estimated Cost: The training and development program costs around €5000 for a large group of 20 people, online training is a cost associated with time and effort from the employees, attending seminars and conferences would cost around €200 per person. Organizing team lunches and dinners would depend on the size of the team and the people attending. Approximately it would be around €50- 60 per person. One-on-one involves the time and effort of the manager and employee attending.

6.3 Recommendations for further research

The study was conducted using quantitative research methods to gather the information and descriptive analysis was used to interpret the information gathered. For further research, a qualitative or mixed-method approach could be considered to include interviews or focus groups to give new insights into the topic.

This study was conducted within a limited time, hence conducting this study with a greater timeframe than this study allowed would help to gather more information and an even clearer understanding of the topic.

The participants selected for the study were limited to a sample size of 100 with 92 respondents hence conducting the study involving more participants in the primary research could help gather the views of more people and perspectives. This study was focused on the IT sector and no other sectors, hence there is potential to conduct the study on different sectors to understand the connection between employer branding and employee retention in other sectors.

6.4 Reflection on personal learning

During the initial days of the dissertation, I thought it would be quicker to complete the study than it was, and I underestimated the process. This study has assisted me progress both professionally and individually. It has assisted me in developing time management skills, especially during the last few days wherein I was supposed to complete 4 assignments along with the dissertation. It is understood that proper planning is the key to success, without a proper plan this study would not have been completed. Personally, the study has assisted me to gain self-confidence and gave me a positive compliant attitude. The main challenge was to manage assignments along with the dissertation, college, and part-time work as I did not have much time, and managing everything at the same time was difficult, but a planned timetable set helped me in carrying out the task as planned.

Initially, when I was deciding on which topic to choose, I spent some time deciding what to do, and then it appeared to me that I can do something which is relevant to my work experience and which I am interested in. I did face some challenges as I was doing my masters in Ireland and I was not having many connections, then I thought of doing research on the Indian information technology sector as there were many connections who are currently employed which helped me in gathering data. One of the problems during the study was a question was asked to the participants

and the question frame was not clearly conveyed hence it was not possible to gather proper answers for the question. I learned from the study that I should be clear to the people when framing questions and giving some information.

Completing this dissertation has given me the opportunity to self-directed learning, evaluating literature by applying inquiring skills. It has given me the confidence of analysing data and form explanations to research findings and has strengthened me to take on more complex studies.

Reflecting on the research, what I would do differently next time is that I would give myself a good amount of time to complete the study. I always felt like I was chasing the time to finish a particular chapter which I felt was not sufficient to gather the information properly and concentrate more on a particular chapter.

This study was the most challenging part of my master's program, however, it has been the most rewarding to carry out the research in a specific time and gave me the ability of time management and to manage my skills and a great sense of achievement.

ABBREVIATIONS

“IT : Information Technology”

“HRM : Human Resource Management”

“HR : Human Resource”

“SPSS : Statistical Package for Social Sciences”

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APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Gender:

- Male
- Female

2. Age:

- 18- 25 years
- 26- 35 years
- 36- 45 years
- 46 and above

3. Size of the company:

- 50- 100
- 100- 500
- 500- 1000
- 1000 or more

4. Years of experience:

- Less than a year
- 1- 3 years
- 3- 5 years
- More than 5 years

5. Current employment level:

- Entry level
- Mid senior level
- Senior level
- Management level

6. Job Title _____

7. What does employer brand mean to you?

- a) Company values and culture
- b) Employee value proposition
- c) Reputation
- d) Workplace
- e) Others _____

8. Thinking about your current employer, does the company you currently work for have a clear employer brand? e.g., does your company have a social media presence, do they have a company tagline/hashtag etc.

- a) Yes
- b) No

9. Does your current company's employer brand align with its values and missions?

- a) Strongly agree
- b) Agree
- c) Strongly disagree
- d) Disagree

10. When looking for a new job, what are the main things you consider/look for?

- a) Salary
- b) Growth Opportunities
- c) Compensation and benefits
- d) Good will/ Reputation
- e) Others _____

11. Thinking about your current employer, what were the reasons you chose to apply to work for the company?

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
Role					
Salary					
Company Culture					
Employer Brand					
Growth Opportunities					

12. What would make you change your current role/company?

- a) Lack of growth opportunities
- b) poor work-life balance
- c) Biased environment
- d) Salary

13. How important is the employer brand in your decision to stay or leave your current employer?

- a) Very important
- b) Important
- c) Neutral
- d) Slightly important
- e) Not at all important

14. What factors of employer branding do you think are most influential in retaining employees in the Information Technology sector in India?

- a) Compensation and benefits
- b) Work culture and environment
- c) Opportunities for growth and development
- d) Company values and mission statement

15. Have you ever recommended your current employer to someone else?

- a) Yes
- b) No

16. If yes, what aspects of the employer brand influenced your recommendation? Please specify one or more relevant options.

- a) Personal working experience
- b) Strong company culture
- c) Growth and development
- d) Others _____

17. Thinking about your current employer, how does your company's employer brand affect your job satisfaction?

- a) Highly satisfied
- b) Satisfied
- c) Neutral
- d) Dissatisfied
- e) Highly Dissatisfied

18. Thinking about your current employer, did the company's employer brand influence your decision to accept your current position?

- a) Strongly agree
- b) Agree
- c) Neutral
- d) Strongly disagree
- e) Disagree

19. How do you think your company's employer brand could be improved to attract and retain top talent?

- a) Work-life balance
- b) Inclusion and diversity
- c) Career advancement
- d) Compensation and benefits
- e) Corporate social responsibility

APPENDIX 2: TABLES

Table 1

Gender					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	57	62.0	62.0	62.0
	Female	35	38.0	38.0	100.0
	Total	92	100.0	100.0	

Table 2

Age					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18- 25	9	9.8	9.8	9.8
	26- 35	76	82.6	82.6	92.4
	36- 45	4	4.3	4.3	96.7
	46 and above	3	3.3	3.3	100.0
	Total	92	100.0	100.0	

Table 3

Size of the company you currently work in					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	50- 100	6	6.5	6.5	6.5
	100- 500	14	15.2	15.2	21.7
	500- 1000	6	6.5	6.5	28.3
	1000 or more	66	71.7	71.7	100.0
	Total	92	100.0	100.0	

Table 4

Years of experience					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Less than a year	3	3.3	3.3	3.3
	1- 3 years	25	27.2	27.2	30.4
	3- 5 years	40	43.5	43.5	73.9
	More than 5 years	24	26.1	26.1	100.0
	Total	92	100.0	100.0	

Table 5

Current employment level					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Entry level	10	10.9	10.9	10.9
	Mid senior level	41	44.6	44.6	55.4
	Senior level	34	37.0	37.0	92.4
	Management level	7	7.6	7.6	100.0
	Total	92	100.0	100.0	

Table 6

What does employer brand mean to you?					
		Responses		Percent of Cases	
		N	Percent		
Valid	Company values and culture	78	41.7%	84.8%	
	Employee value proposition	43	23.0%	46.7%	
	Employer reputation	43	23.0%	46.7%	
	Talent attraction	22	11.8%	23.9%	
	Quality of service	1	0.5%	1.1%	
Total		187	100.0%	203.3%	

Table 7

Thinking about your current employer, does the company you currently work for have a clear employer brand?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	91	98.9	98.9	98.9
	No	1	1.1	1.1	100.0
	Total	92	100.0	100.0	

Table 8

If yes, does the external employer brand reflect your internal employee's experience?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	66	71.7	71.7	71.7
	No	26	28.3	28.3	100.0
	Total	92	100.0	100.0	

Table 9

Does your current company's employer brand align with its values and missions?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	75	81.5	81.5	81.5
	No	15	16.3	16.3	97.8
	Others	2	2.2	2.2	100.0
	Total	92	100.0	100.0	

Table 10

Case Summary						
Cases						
Valid		Missing		Total		
N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent	
92	100.0%	0	0.0%	92	100.0%	

Table 11

When looking for a new job, what are the main things you consider or look for?				
		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
Valid	Work-life balance	70	28.3%	76.1%
	Growth opportunities	78	31.2%	83.7%
	Compensation and benefits	61	24.7%	66.3%
	Good will or Reputation	38	15.4%	41.3%
	Other	1	0.4%	1.1%
Total		248	100.0%	268.5%

Table 12

Case Summary						
		Role	Salary	Company culture	Employer brand	Growth opportunities
N	Valid	92	92	92	92	92
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0

Table 13

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
Role	21	6	20	24	21
Salary	13	12	22	29	16
Company Culture	11	10	21	28	22
Employer Brand	9	14	25	22	22
Growth Opportunities	15	7	22	26	22

Table 14

Case Summary						
	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
	92	100.0%	0	0.0%	92	100.0%

Table 15

What would make you change your current role/ Company?				
		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
Valid	Lack of growth	42	32.1%	45.7%
	poor work-life balance	21	16.0%	22.8%
	Biased environment	17	13.0%	18.5%
	Salary	50	38.2%	54.3%
	Other	1	0.8%	1.1%
Total		131	100.0%	142.4%

Table 16

How important is the employer brand in your decision to stay or leave your current employer?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Very important	41	44.6	44.6	44.6
	Important	31	33.7	33.7	78.3
	Neutral	15	16.3	16.3	94.6
	Slightly important	4	4.3	4.3	98.9
	Not at all important	1	1.1	1.1	100.0
	Total	92	100.0	100.0	

Table 17

What factors of employer branding do you think are most influential in retaining employees in the IT sector in India?				
		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
Valid	Compensation & Benefits	51	25.4%	55.4%
	Work culture & environment	60	29.9%	65.2%
	Opportunities for growth & development	61	30.3%	66.3%
	Company Values & Mission statement	29	14.4%	31.5%
Total		201	100.0%	218.5%

Table 18

Have you ever recommended your current employer to someone else?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	81	88.0	88.0	88.0
	No	11	12.0	12.0	100.0
	Total	92	100.0	100.0	

Table 19

If yes, what aspects of the employer brand influenced your recommendation?				
		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
Valid	Personal working experience	64	40.5%	69.6%
	Strong company culture	48	30.4%	52.2%
	Growth and development	42	26.6%	45.7%
	Work-life balance	3	1.9%	3.3%
	Other	1	0.6%	1.1%

Table 20

Thinking about your current employer, how does your company's employer brand affect your job satisfaction?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Highly satisfied	25	27.2	27.2	27.2
	Satisfied	47	51.1	51.1	78.3
	Neutral	18	19.6	19.6	97.8
	Dissatisfied	1	1.1	1.1	98.9
	Highly dissatisfied	1	1.1	1.1	100.0
	Total	92	100.0	100.0	

Table 21

Thinking about your current employer, did the company's employer brand influence your decision to accept your current position?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	23	25.0	25.0	25.0
	Agree	48	52.2	52.2	77.2
	Neutral	17	18.5	18.5	95.7
	Disagree	3	3.3	3.3	98.9
	Strongly disagree	1	1.1	1.1	100.0
	Total	92	100.0	100.0	

Table 22

How do you think your company's employer brand could be improved to attract and retain top talent?				
		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
Valid	Work life balance	53	28.2%	57.6%
	Inclusion and Diversion	23	12.2%	25.0%
	Career advancement	47	25.0%	51.1%
	Compensation and benefits	42	22.3%	45.7%
	Corporate social responsibility	22	11.7%	23.9%
	Other	1	0.5%	1.1%
Total		188	100.0%	204.3%