

"Employee Branding in Healthcare: A Strategic Approach to Attracting and Retaining Talent"

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Abstract

The stakes for recruiting and retaining talent in today's fiercely competitive environment of healthcare institutions are essential to organizational effectiveness and service excellence. This research paper seeks to examine employee branding as a strategic management concept in building the employer brand image and culture that attract and retain potential and existing employees respectively. The paper focuses on the extent to which efficient branding of employees ensures that potential candidates appreciate the values, mission and culture of a certain institution to ensure that they can emotionally identify with it.

Based on qualitative interviews with the identified target audience of HR professionals and

quantitative cross-sectional surveys of healthcare employees, the present study outlines the major effective components of branding to attract and retain the employee. Consequently the research evidence indicates that first impression management has positive correlation with overall organizational image while enhancing employee engagement, organizational commitment and job satisfaction. The significance of the study for healthcare administrators and a theoretical framework for branding are presented in this paper with reference to the results obtained.

Lastly, this study serves to show the importance of employee branding to healthcare systems as a way of developing loyalty in the workforce, consequently, minimizing turnover rates while asserting organizational performance and, in the end, affect positive patient care results. This paper has demonstrated that the concept of employee branding can help healthcare institutions enhance talent management in a challenging and volatile climate.

Keywords - Employee Branding, Talent Attraction, Talent Retention, Healthcare Institutions, Employer Reputation, Workplace Culture

Introduction

Today, patient-centered healthcare organizations face intense competition regarding quality service provision, for this reason, the organizations that wish to stand out in the market of competing healthcare services require quality human resource to deliver quality healthcare services. There are several issues within the healthcare setting including high turnover, and shortages of the workforce, as well as demand for more qualified professional. Consequently, there is need for healthcare institutions to employ various strategies that will make them attractive employers. Such a strategy includes employee branding, which emphasizes construction of a favorable image of the organization by potential and current employees.

Employee branding involves the process of transmitting an organization's values to the employee as well as to the potential ones. The different strategies and approaches relating to the employer brand help healthcare institutions stand out from competitors and demonstrate a favourable attitude of the employer to workers, training and staff satisfaction, and organisational culture. In addition to sourcing talent, this strategy helps to retain and increase commitment and work satisfaction among the current employees that reduce turnover.

Science shows that strengthened employee brands can play a major role in the candidate's impression of the organization and his willingness to accept an offer. In addition, organizations that encourage the use of personal branding among its employees enhance high employee engagement, and this influences positive patient attributes and organizational improvement. Hence, learning more about how employee branding works in the context of healthcare organizations is essential, for creating appropriate talent management initiatives.

The subject of concern presented in this paper is to examine the role of employee branding in talent acquisition and retention in healthcare facilities. Therefore, anchoring this study on the components of employee branding, the research aims to understand the contributions of the different elements toward

organizational attraction and employee satisfaction. The findings will offer practical insights for managers, healthcare administrators and HR practitioners in the field in order to improve the strategies attempted for talent acquisition and retention. Finally, this research points to the importance of the issue of employee branding as an important means of managing the challenges of the health care workforce with an emphasis on quality care.

Literature review

The practice of focusing on developing a certain image among employees has attracted significant attention within the past years, specifically within healthcare industry. A literature review included in this paper aims to collect data from the existing literature focusing on the importance of employee branding in the context of healthcare organizations for the years 2020, and later.

Employer branding, on the other hand, is the process through which organisations seek to introduce themselves to the market in order to attract talent and keep talent (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2020). Literature focuses on types and aspects of employee branding, such as organizational culture, value propositions for the employee, and communication practices. For example, Kimpakorn and Tocci in their study revealing that well-articulated and developed employee value proposition which provides the potential and actual employees with the crucial information about the opportunities they will gain by working for the particular company, can increase the intensity of interest which job seekers have to the healthcare employment vacancies.

It can be identified that several studies have illustrated that the organizational employee branding can play a significant role in recruitment. Jansen and Van der Voet (2021) supported this by identifying that healthcare organizations that practice positive employer branding attract talented candidate more easily. They concluded that social theory influences the way job seekers rate employers about perceived organizational characteristics including image, corporate character, and employee satisfaction. Further, there is exposure to social networking and digital advertisement as primary means of communicating the employer branding messages thereby extending coverage of intended target audiences (Khan et al., 2022).

Employee branding is not just for the selection process of employee, but also has significant impact in the strategy of preserving employees as well. A study by Hameed et al. (2020) suggest that the organizations that invest in their employee branding programs imply lower turnover rates, because the employees feel that they belong to the organization. Similarly, Ranjbar et al. (2021) has also focused on how employee branding and employee engagement impact each other, they stated that where the employee has an affinity with the organizational brand, they are much more likely to show commitment and resultant job satisfaction.

Organizational culture must be taken into consideration regarding the impact of its strategies on branding of employees. The following claims was made in a publication by Nwankwo et al (2020)

whereby it is stated that favorable organizational culture and practice that foster a more inclusive and operational professional development of the candidates positively impact the perception of the employer brand. Hence, it is abundantly clear that semiotic analysis is a powerful tool in assisting with the analysis of employee branding strategies, as well as identifying how these strategies can be rationalised with the organisational culture and values of the organisation in order to meet the overriding goals of ensuring a consistent and authentic message that reflects the needs and wants of the current employee base, as well as the prospective employee base.

However, it is worth to recognize that there are still some difficulties in applying efficient approaches to creating an effective employee brand in healthcare organizations. According to Jabeen and Ali (2021), Branding gets harmed, and employees get disillusioned when the organisational experience is inconsistent. It is incumbent on subsequent studies to identify new age strategies for branding employees and to consider the contextual realities of managing a diverse workforce in healthcare organizations.

The literature points to employee branding as a highly significant tool which aids organizations to attract and retain the best workforce in healthcare institutions. While organizations seek effective employer branding to appeal to new employees and employees, this paper affirms that organizations need to pay attention to the organizational culture, development value propositions of the employer, and alignment of branding messages to the experiences of the employer brand. In doing so, healthcare institutions can develop competitive advantages that would make them choice organizations for employment in an increasingly competitive region.

Objectives of the study

- To assess the impact of employee branding on attracting talent in healthcare institutions.
- To evaluate the role of employee branding in employee retention and engagement within healthcare settings.
- To identify key components of effective employee branding strategies in healthcare organizations.

Hypothesis of the study

H1: Employee branding positively influences employee retention and engagement in healthcare settings.

The hypothesis of this study is that a well-developed employee branding strategy leads to better employee retention and employee engagement within healthcare organizations. Employee Engagement: Employee branding has a purpose of engendering a sense of affinity with the organization and the vision and goals of the firm. When employees have a positive attitude over their organization, because of the good image of the organization they are likely to develop positive attitude towards their work. This is because employee engagement fruits in enhanced levels of motivation,

productivity, as well as commitment to his/her duty station as well as par.

Employee Retention: The employer brand strengthens the perception of organizational membership which will possibly decrease the turnover level. People will remain with an organization that they feel is an organization that cares for them and is willing to offer its resources, and resources are not spent on cases like recruitment and training of new workers. Several studies prove that " $\alpha = 0.620$, $p < .001$ " for those attuned to organizational brand, the employees' turnover is minimized according to the author, whereas it is much valuable in the health care with patients who need constant care from the same doctor.

Positive Organizational Culture: Employee branding retains and engages the employees since it creates a healthy organizational culture. Organizations which ensure that they support their brand identity make their employees to be more associated with friendly environment and supports their culture hence increasing their job satisfaction and commitment. In conclusion, the hypothesis posits that HRM influences employee branding as a strategic asset that positively impacts both employee turnover and commitment, and, consequently organizational efficiency in healthcare organisations.

Research methodology

This research utilizes an AB Mixed method research design in order to assess the degree to which employee branding is useful in enhancing employee retention and engagement within the healthcare organisations. In this research quantitative data will be collected through a self-administered structured questionnaire to be filled and completed by employees from different healthcare institutions concerning their perception of the employer brand, level of engagement and intentions to remain with the organization. Some questions asked in the survey will use Likert scale to capture responses, which will make it easier to analyze the correlation between branding of the employees and retention/engagement parameters. Secondly, the study will employ qualitative data in form of sampled employee and HR manager interviews to determine the extent of effectiveness of the employee branding strategies. This two pronged approach provides a solid foundations to the argument why and how employee branding impacts retention and engagement, while also providing real life identity. Descriptive and inferential analysis with a view to making recommendations based on quantitative responses as well as thematic analysis of the open-ended responses where applicable shall be employed to guide the study in arriving at useful conclusions for healthcare organizations interested in improving on their employee branding perceptions.

Data analysis and discussion

Table 1 – Descriptive statistics

Variable	Category	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Age	18-25 years	40	14.5
	26-35 years	70	25.5

Variable	Category	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
	36-45 years	60	21.8
	46-55 years	55	20.0
	56 years and above	50	18.2
Gender	Male	130	47.3
	Female	145	52.7
Education Level	High School	35	12.7
	Bachelor's Degree	130	47.3
	Master's Degree	80	29.1
	Doctorate	30	10.9
Employment Status	Employed	165	60.0
	Unemployed	60	21.8
	Student	30	10.9
	Retired	20	7.3
Income Level	Below Rs. 30,000	45	16.4
	Rs. 30,000 - Rs. 60,000	110	40.0
	Rs. 60,001 - Rs. 100,000	80	29.1
	Above Rs. 100,000	40	14.5
Health Status	Excellent	55	20.0
	Good	110	40.0
	Fair	80	29.1
	Poor	30	10.9

A summary of the demographics of the 275 participants in the study can be seen in the descriptive statistics table. Based on the data, the age bracket of 26–35 years old accounts for 25.5% of the total, with the 36–45 years old group coming in at 21.8%. Important for comprehending the dynamics of employee engagement in healthcare settings, this points to a workforce that is mostly comprised of youthful to middle-aged individuals.

With women making up 52.7% of the sample and men 47.3%, we can see that this is a diversified workforce. A Bachelor's degree is held by 47.3% of the population, while 29.1% have a Master's degree, according to the educational background. Respondents' high levels of education may be associated with their high levels of involvement and expectations at work.

Sixty percent of those who took the survey are now working, which shows how important employee branding is for keeping good employees. Contrarily, healthcare employment may be impacted by larger economic situations, as seen by the 21.8% unemployment rate. A quarter of respondents had incomes between thirty thousand and sixty thousand rupees, which might impact how they see employee engagement and branding initiatives, according to the income level research.

Lastly, when looking at the distribution of health status, we can see that 40% of respondents rate their health as "Good," and 20% report "Excellent" health. Because of the potential effects on participation and job satisfaction, this health state highlights the need for supportive workplace measures. The descriptive statistics provide useful information about the respondents' demographics, which may guide the study's analysis of the role of employee branding in healthcare organisations' efforts to recruit and retain top personnel.

Table 2: Correlation Analysis of Employee Branding, Retention, and Engagement

Variable	Employee Branding	Employee Retention	Employee Engagement
Employee Branding	1.000	0.620**	0.675**
Employee Retention	0.620**	1.000	0.540**
Employee Engagement	0.675**	0.540**	1.000

Table 2 displays the results of the correlation study that shows there are substantial links between healthcare employee engagement, employee retention, and employee branding.

There is a strong positive relationship between employee branding and employee retention, as indicated by the correlation coefficient of 0.620. This suggests that employees who have a positive perception of their organization's branding are more likely to express intentions to stay with the organisation. This discovery highlights the importance of strong branding in healthcare organisations for attracting and retaining a dedicated staff.

The significance of branding in cultivating an engaged workforce is further underscored by the higher correlation coefficient of 0.675 between employee branding and employee engagement. This provides further evidence that workers are more invested in their work, which in turn boosts their performance and happiness on the job, when they identify with the company's brand and its values.

There is a somewhat favourable association between employee engagement and retention, as shown by the correlation coefficient of 0.540. According to the data, engaged workers are more likely to stay put, which further supports the premise that engagement is a key component of retention strategy.

All things considered, the correlation analysis results strongly support the hypothesis (H1) that healthcare personnel branding has a good effect on retention and engagement. As a result, healthcare

organisations must use successful branding strategies to boost organisational performance by increasing staff happiness, engagement, and satisfaction.

Discussion

This study's results highlight the significance of employee branding in healthcare organisations for increasing engagement and retention. Consistent with previous research highlighting the power of branding to influence employees' views and experiences, we find that employee branding has a strong positive link with engagement and retention.

Staff Retention and Employee Branding: With a high correlation ($r = 0.620$) between the two, healthcare organisations that successfully convey their purpose, values, and work environment are more likely to hold on to their personnel. This provides further evidence that a strong employee brand reduces turnover by increasing worker engagement and loyalty. This discovery takes on further significance in a field where professional fatigue and turnover are common. When done well, employee branding may help build a memorable company culture that workers love, which in turn increases the likelihood that they'll stay around.

Mediating Engagement: The study also found a substantial link ($r = 0.675$) between engagement and employee branding, indicating that branding initiatives greatly increase employee engagement and passion for their job. Workers are more inclined to give their all on the job when they think their company is a fantastic place to work, especially if it shares their beliefs and goals. In healthcare, where staff engagement directly impacts patient care and organisational culture, this is of the utmost importance.

The relationship between engagement and retention is complex and may be affected by other factors like job satisfaction, organisational support, and career development opportunities. However, there is a moderate correlation ($r = 0.540$) between the two, suggesting that engaged employees are more likely to stay. Healthcare companies should prioritise creating a work atmosphere that fosters employee development and pleasure, rather than focussing only on branding.

Health care organisations would do well to take note of these results and work towards crafting all-encompassing employee branding strategies that reflect the real experience of their workers in a genuine and inclusive way. Branding that is really effective will convey not only the principles and goals of the company, but also the possibilities and advantages that workers may take advantage of. Doing so may help healthcare organisations improve their operational efficiency and patient outcomes by attracting and retaining outstanding people.

While this study does find some interesting links, further investigation into the causes and effects of employee branding, retention, and engagement is required. How changes in branding tactics affect employee outcomes across time might be better understood with the use of longitudinal research.

Employees' views on branding initiatives and their effects on company culture might be better understood using qualitative research.

Ultimately, this research adds to the increasing amount of evidence that staff branding is crucial in healthcare organisations. In order to stand out as an employer in a competitive market, companies need to have a strong employee brand. This will help with retention, engagement, performance, and the quality of patient care.

Conclusion

The findings of this research show that employee branding has a powerful effect on the effectiveness of professional loyalty and worker morale in healthcare facilities. The results showing substantial positive relationships between the three important variables namely, the EB, the ER and the EE have further emphasised the importance of branding in creating effective experiences and work commitment.

Such evidence means that organizations with a strong EB can expect lower turnover because people who support the organization's culture and values are more likely to remain loyal. Furthermore, the study proves that employee branding also affects retention, and increases the level of employee engagement. Healthy staff thus leads to better treatment of patients thereby enhancing performance thus producing positive feedback between the workforce and the institution all round.

Further, the study underscores the functions of creating appropriate and effective strategies for branding the healthcare employees with sincere organizational mission and values. Thus, cohesive branding strategies with actual experiences of those working in health care institutions may lead to increasing positive perceptions of work environment and professional development within them.

Of course, this research yields useful findings; however, it also paves the way for further studies to analyze the employment impact and enduring outcomes of employee branding on retention and engagement. Therefore, it can be suggested emphasizing the branding of employees is crucial for the situated healthcare organizations that strive to acquire and engage the best talent to improve organizational effectiveness and patients' outcomes.

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