

Impact of Employer Branding on Employee Attitude and Job Embeddedness in Plastic Industry (A Study with special reference to Puducherry Region)

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Abstract

Branding is a strategy that allows an institution to differentiate itself from its competitors and create a supportable competitive advantage for its survival. Employer branding is the package of functional, economic and psychological benefits provided by employment and identified with the employing organization. It is a strategy of internal and external communication of the unique attributes that establishes the identity of a firm as an employer and what differentiates it from others, with the aim of attracting and retaining potential and current employees. Plastics have transformed everyday life and its usage is increasing rapidly. It is evident that plastics made possible that development of computers, cell phones and most of the life saving advances of modern medicines and many societal benefits. Biodegradable plastics are commonly produced with renewable raw materials, micro organisms, petrochemicals or combination of all the three. The renewed plastics are eco-friendly in nature. The article attempts to identify the components/dimensions of employer branding. The article also tries to find out the relationship between the demographic variables and dimension/components of employer branding and the impact of employer branding on employee attitude and job embeddedness. ANOVA, Multiple Regression are the tools used for the study.

Key Words: functional, economic, psychological benefits, components of employer branding, employee attitude and job embeddedness.

Introduction

The concept of Employer branding has emerged in Europe before thirty years to attract and retain talented employees within the organizations. Ambler and Barrow have first coined the term Employer branding in the year 1990, but they publicly defined it in 1996. Their first paper titled "The Employer Brand" was published in the Journal of Brand Management which defined employer brand as "the package of functional, economic and psychological benefits provided by employment and identified with the employing company"¹.

Employer means an individual or an institution that recruits people. Branding means a strategy that allows an institution to differentiate itself from its competitors and create a supportable competitive advantage for its survival². The term employer brand referred as an employer's reputation as a place to work, and their employee value proposition, as contended to the more common corporate brand reputation and value proposition to customers³. In the minds of current employees and supreme stakeholders in the external market, employer brand is the image of an organization as a 'great place to work' to enhance the company's employer brand, attraction, retention and engagement initiatives are targeted and therefore it is concerned as the art and science of employer branding⁴.

Marketing Academicians firstly described the concepts of "employer branding". This is because, traditionally branding comes in the sphere of marketing. In the medium of Human Resource Management, employer branding propounds differentiation of an organizations' characteristics as an employer from its competitors. Employment branding is a unique presence of organizations employment offerings or environment⁵. As product/service offering is defined by customer brand proposition, the organizations' employment offering defines employer value proposition. Also, the marketing domain connected with branding and brand management have been more applied by human resources and talent management network to attract, retain and engage all the talented applicants and employees, in the same manner that marketing uses such tools to attract and retain the customers, clients and consumers⁶.

Definitions

Jonze and Oster defined employer branding as "a strategy of internal and external communication of the unique attributes that

establishes the identity of the firm as an employer and what differentiates it from others, with the aim of attracting and retaining potential and current employees”⁷.

Martin,G., Gollan,P defined employer branding as “a generalized recognition for being known among key stakeholders for providing a high-quality employment experience, and a distinctive organizational identity which employees value, engage with and feel confident and happy to promote to others”⁸.

Employee Attitude

The most noticeable behaviour in any organization is the attitudes of employees towards any performance or situation. Attitude is the psychological bias which is always estimated with some level of positivity or negativity. Therefore, attitude differs from one person to other. Attitude is an individual’s common opinion or evaluation or reaction of certain situation or event. It can be positive or negative which can cause favorable or unfavorable conclusions, when dealing with individuals in any organization⁹.

The behaviour sticks on employees’ tendency of displaying discretionary extra-role behaviour accomplished without expecting any added compensation apart from their responsibilities. Compensation, rewards, growth and development opportunities for better performance and self-achievement, work-life balance, open communication with management accommodate with commitment and satisfaction and surplus-role activities pertaining to jobs and responsibilities out of job description leads to positive employee attitude. Employee satisfaction yielding with employee based organizational approach contributes to organizational citizenship behaviour and as a result, it decreases the employer turnover intention¹⁰.

Job Embeddedness

It is the broad set of influences on an employees’ decision to stay on the job. It includes on-the-job factors (bonds with co-workers fit between one’s skill) and off-the-job factors (personal, family and community commitment). It is a strong predictor of organizational outcomes such as employee attendance, retention and performance. Embeddedness captures a broad range of ideas that influence employee retention.

Job embeddedness can be described in two ways. 1) Embedded Figures – used in psychological test, 2) Field Theory – the idea that people have a perceptual life space. It is like a net or a web in which an individual can become stuck. The one who is highly embedded has many links, fit with other aspects and what he/she would sacrifice. These link, fit and sacrifice are called dimensions of job embeddedness.

Links

It is a formal and informal connection between an employee and institutions or people. Job embeddedness connects employee family and physical environment.

Fit

It is an employees’ perceived compatibility or comfort with organization and environment. Employees’ personal values, career and goals must fit with organization.

Better the fit, higher the likelihood tied to organization.

Sacrifice
It is the perceived cost of material or psychological benefits that are forfeited

The more an employee will have to give up when leaving, the more difficult it will be to serve the organization¹¹.

Plastic Industry Overview

The Plastic Industry Association is abbreviated as PLASTICS, is a trade association which represents the Plastic Industry. It was founded in the year 1937 as Society of Plastic Industry and it was rebranded as Plastic Industry Association, in short PLASTICs in 2016. This organization also hosts international plastics showcase known as NPE (National Plastics Exposition). It is world’s largest trade fairs and conference for plastic technology and plastics globally.

The Membership of Plastics has been divided into four different types of industry councils:

1. Materials Suppliers
2. Processors
3. Equipment Manufactures and Mould Makers
4. Brand Owners
5. Recyclers

Plastindia

It is founded by major organizations, associations and institutions of plastic industry in India. It is an apex body of plastic industry and it is endorsed by Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers, Government of India. Once in three years Plastindia Exhibition and Conferences is held. The main objective of Plastindia foundation is to assist growth of plastics and its products and to develop and promote plastic industry. It helps India by offering sourcing base of plastics around the world and concentrates

on export growth of Indian Plastic Industry¹².

Resin Identification Code

The ASTM (American Society for Testing and Materials) International Resin Identification Coding System, abbreviated as RIC, is a set of symbols that appears on all the plastic which helps to identify the plastic resin out of which the product is made. This RIC system was designed to make it easier for the workers in the form of recovery and recycling materials according to their resin type. In its original form, the symbols used as part of the RIC consisted of arrows that cycle clockwise to form a triangle that encloses a number. The number broadly refers to the type of plastic used in the product¹³.

- “1” signifies that the product is made out of polyethylene terephthalate (PET) (beverage bottles, cups, other packaging etc.)
- “2” signifies high-density polyethylene (HDPE) (bottles, cups, milk, jugs etc.)
- “3” signifies polyvinyl chloride (PVC) (pipes, siding, flooring etc.)
- “4” signifies low-density polyethylene (LDPE) (plastic bags, six-pack rings, tubing, etc)
- “5” signifies polypropylene (PP) (auto parts, industrial fibers, food containers, etc)
- “6” signifies polystyrene (PS) (plastic utensils, Styrofoam, cafeteria trays, etc)
- “7” signifies other plastics, such as acrylic, nylon, polycarbonate and polylactic acid (PLA)¹⁴.

Review of Literature

Aasia Yousf and Shabana Khurshid (2021)¹⁵ stated the objective of the study is to examine the influence of employer branding on employee engagement, which may lead to organizational commitment. The study also examined the mediating role of employee engagement with respect to five dimensions of employer brand and organizational commitment. Samples of 409 from two banks were taken for the study. Using structural equation model, hypotheses were tested using regression analysis. Findings revealed that, all five dimensions (interest, social, economic, development and application value) of employer branding influence employee engagement. Employee engagement shows a positive and significant association with organizational commitment. The mediation analysis shows employee engagement partially mediates the relationship between employer branding and organizational commitment.

Kaur.P (2020)¹⁶ inclined that, considering social exchange theory, the current research aimed to investigate the mediating impact of job satisfaction in the relationship between internal branding and organizational citizenship behaviour. Samples of 187 employees from private banking sector were taken for the study. The results revealed that employer branding positively impacted job satisfaction and organizational citizenship behaviour. It also suggested that internal branding impacts organizational citizenship behaviour directly and indirectly.

Vaneet Kashyap and Richa Chaudhary (2019)¹⁷ examined the theories of resource-based view, social exchange, social identity and social information processing. Their current study suggested a model that examines the role an employer's brand image plays in influencing organizational identification, trust in organizations and work engagement. Data were collected from 508 employees serving in Indian public and private sector companies. Using regression analysis hypotheses were tested. The findings propound that work engagement is influenced directly by employer brand image, as well as indirectly through trust in organizations and organizational identification (mediators). Thus consequently, if an organization creates and maintains a unique employer brand image, then employee's identification and trust with organizations are likely to accelerate and impact work engagement.

Khoshnevis M and Gholipour A (2017)¹⁸ explored the association between employer branding and employee retention and the dimensions of employer branding that affect employee's retention. The reason is that identifying the dimensions of employer branding helps employers to gain competitive advantage through retaining the talented employees. Using Cluster sampling method, data have been collected from 380 respondents. Data were analyzed using structural equation model. The findings revealed that there is a positive and significant association between employer brand and its dimensions including compensation, brand and reputation, authority, work environment, corporate social responsibility and employees' retention.

Objective of the study

1. To identify the factors of employer branding.
2. To analyze the impact of employer branding perceptions.
3. To determine the influence of demographic variable on employer branding, employee attitude and job embeddedness.

Hypotheses

H01 : There is no significant impact of employer branding on employee attitude
H02 : There is no significant impact of employer branding on job embeddedness
H03 : There is no influence of demographic variables on employer branding.

Research Methodology

66 employees of plastic industry were approached as part of study. After scrutiny of the questionnaire, 16 were found to be incomplete and were rejected. Ultimately 50 questionnaires were taken up for the study.

Table 1: Profile of the Respondents

Demographicvariables		No. Of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Age Group (in years)	Less than 20	6	12
	21-25	16	32
	26-30	16	32
	More than 30	12	24
	Total	50	100
Gender	Male	24	48
	Female	26	52
	Total	50	100
Marital status	Single	20	40
	Married	30	60
	Total	50	100
Place of residence	Rural	16	32
	Urban	34	68
	Total	50	100
Occupation	Clerk	11	22
	Supervisor	10	20
	Operator	24	48
	Manager	5	10
	Total	50	100
Experience (in years)	Less than 5	5	10
	5-10	17	34
	10-15	24	48
	More than 15	4	8
	Total	50	100
Salary level (in Rs.)	Less than 10,000	11	22
	11,000-15,000	23	46
	16,000-20,000	15	30
	Above 20,000	1	2
	Total	50	100

Table 2: Components of Study

The study has identified the following components

Sl. No	Components
1	Brand Endorsement
2	Brand Consistent Behaviour
3	Brand Commitment
4	Employee Attitude
5	Motivation
6	Job Embeddedness

Table 3: Impact of Employer Branding on Employee Attitude

The general form of the equation to predict Employee Attitude from Employer Branding (brand endorsement, brand consistent behaviour and brand commitment) is: Predicted employee attitude = $6.557(0.079 \times \text{brand endorsement}) + (0.147 \times \text{brand consistent behaviour}) + (0.918 \times \text{brand commitment})$

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	6.557	1.108		5.918	.000
brand endorsement	.079	.149	.072	.530	.599
brand consistent behaviour	.147	.149	.130	.990	.328
brand commitment	.918	.176	.698	5.220	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Attitude

The above table depicts that, there is a significant impact of brand commitment on employee attitude.

Table 4: Impact of Employer Branding on Motivation

The general form of the equation to predict Motivation from Employer Branding (brand endorsement, brand consistent behaviour and brand commitment) is: Predicted motivation = $3.012(0.185 \times \text{brand endorsement}) + (0.035 \times \text{brand consistent behaviour}) + (0.514 \times \text{brand commitment})$

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	3.012	.965		3.121	.003
brand endorsement	.185	.130	.235	1.422	.162
brand consistent behaviour	.035	.130	.043	.267	.791
brand commitment	.514	.153	.549	3.355	.002

a. Dependent Variable: Motivation

The above table depicts that, there is a significant impact of brand commitment on motivation.

Table 5: Impact of Employer Branding on Job Embeddedness

The general form of the equation to predict Motivation from Employer Branding (brand endorsement, brand consistent behaviour and brand commitment) is: Predicted job embeddedness = 6.664 - (0.264×brand endorsement) + (0.509×brand consistent behaviour) + (0.477×brand commitment)

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	6.664	1.240		5.373	.000
brand endorsement	-.264	.167	-.293	-1.575	.122
brand consistent behaviour	.509	.167	.552	3.055	.004
brand commitment	.477	.197	.446	2.423	.019

a. Dependent Variable: Job Embeddedness

The above table depicts that, there is a significant impact of brand consistent behaviour and brand commitment on job embeddedness.

Hence, from the above regression tables, H01 and H02: “There is no significant impact of employer branding (brand endorsement, brand consistent behaviour and brand commitment) on employee attitude, motivation and job embeddedness”, is rejected.

Table 6: Influence of demographic variables of Plastic Industry employees on Employer Branding

Demographic Variable	Employer Branding					
	Brand Endorsement		Brand Consistent Behaviour		Brand Commitment	
	F Value	Sig Value	F Value	Sig. Value	F Value	Sig. Value
Age	1.870	0.148	3.778	0.017	4.625	0.007
Gender	1.929	0.171	1.435	0.237	3.720	0.060
Marital status	0.375	0.543	0.946	0.336	4.032	0.050
Place of residence	1.754	0.192	1.331	0.254	1.434	0.237
Occupation	0.129	0.942	1.034	0.387	0.733	0.538
Experience	2.599	0.064	3.166	0.033	2.402	0.080
Salary level	1.905	0.142	2.314	0.088	3.987	0.013

The above table depicts that, age and experience has a significant influence on brand consistent behaviour. Age, marital status and salary level has a significant influence on brand commitment. Hence, H: “There is no influence of demographic variables of Plastic Industry employees on employer branding” is partially accepted.

Findings of the Study

1. Brand commitment has a significant impact on employee attitude, motivation and job embeddedness, while Brand consistent behaviour has a significant impact on job embeddedness. Brand endorsement does not have any significant impact on employee attitude, motivation and job embeddedness.
2. Age and experience have a significant influence on brand consistent behaviour. Age, marital status and salary level has a significant influence on brand commitment.
3. Demographic variables do not have any significant influence on brand endorsement.
4. Gender, marital status, place of residence, occupation and salary level do not have any significant influence on brand consistent behaviour.
5. Gender, place of residence, occupation and experience do not have any significant influence on brand commitment.

Suggestions

1. Progressively well executed standard human resource habitude should be executed to build up distinct remarkable brand signature.
2. The issue of functional aspects of employer brand attributes need to be emphasized.
3. Employer brand strength should be increased by targeting more on its components that further positively influence the attractiveness of organization as an employer.

Conclusion

Performance of an organization is increased by employer branding and it helps in achieving the success for the organization. It is an emotional attachment between an employer and an employee. Employer brand attracts the prospective employees to work with them and retain the current employees by way of satisfying them with rewards and compensation, effective training programmes, implement leadership practice and good employee career growth. On the whole employer branding helps the organization to perform effectively and smoothly and also it improves the business in a better way, more than ever.

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