THE IMPACT OF EMPLOYER BRANDING, EMPLOYEE ENGAGMENT, EMPLOYEE RETENTION IN THE TEXTILE MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY OF PAKISTAN

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Abstract

Currently, many organisations around the globe have realised the importance of their people and have taken a keen interest in their internal customers by investing heavily in their growth and development. The first and most important requirement for the successful management of an organisation in a competitive environment is the development of an effective workforce. The purpose of this study is to measure that what is the impact of Employer Branding (EB) on employee retention (ER), with and without the mediating effect of employee engagement (EE) in Pakistan's textile/apparel manufacturing industry. For this study, data have been taken from different cities in Pakistan. We select a sample size of 388 and analyse their responses with quantitative analysis using SPSS. The results of the analysis indicate that EB has a 12.1% impact on ER, which is a positive impact. The most important and significant relationship that was found in the study was between EB and EE, which indicates EB can improve rate of retention, and the impact of EB on the emergence of EE on ER is 36.1%. The research concludes that EB is significantly important for any organisation, but its significance and impact will increase many times when it works with EE. In Pakistani industries, where a lack of skilled professionals and a high human resource turnover ratio are very big issues that can be improved by building a good image of the organisation in the market and increasing EE.

INTRODUCTION

For retaining top talent, EB has become an important strategy for organisations. EB is a package of functional, economic, and psychological benefits that are associated with employment (Chen & Ahlstrom, 2025). EB is a set of attributes and qualities that are often intangible, making an organisation distinctive, promising a particular kind of employment experience, and attracting those who will succeed and perform to their best within its culture.

(Ahammad, 2017). To retain new employees, it is important to provide them with organisational support and infrastructure during their early days of employment. Additionally, a strong organisational culture is essential for achieving optimal results (Leary et al., 2025). EB encompasses the organisational culture, corporate social responsibility of the organisation, employee value proposition, employee work-life balance, career development opportunities for employees,

and various other factors that collectively influence organisational branding and promote the organisation's image in the market. If employees feel valued and have opportunities to grow, they will be more likely to stay in the company. EB shows an organisation's values, culture, reputation, and employee experience that influence the decisions of long-term commitment of employees to the company. The extent to which every individual is emotionally, mentally, and behaviour-wise dedicated to the company is called EE (Hee & Rhung, 2019). An engaged employee can learn more from opportunities for his personal development and skill improvement, which leads to retaining him in the organisation. This research will explore the importance of EB in the retention of employees in the textile manufacturing sector of Pakistan, and also focus on identifying the components of EB that impact ER, with the influence of EE. Quantitative approach will be used in this research. Normally, organisations focus on acquiring new talent who are keener to learn new things regarding EB while ignoring their responsibility to retain existing employees who have more experience and knowledge about the organisation's relevant industry, internal industry ups & downs, and market trends (Nabilla et al., 2025). Studies show that many organisations completely ignore internal factors for EB and totally rely on external sources that will affect internal employees' performance. This study will test the relationship between EB and ER directly, and with the influence of EE as a mediator to articulate its impact on organisational performance, so that the company knows what has been achieved as a result of HR; it must measure its impact and be present at the strategic level. Performance is a major multidimensional construct aimed at achieving results and has a strong link to the strategic goals of an organisation (Yunxi, 2025).

Background: Retaining top talent is a major challenge in today's highly competitive business environment. The war for talent increases due to rapid technological advancement in the local and international markets, especially in the textile manufacturing industry of Pakistan. Therefore,

skilful professionals have many options of employment, and their decision to join an organisation and plan to stay there depends not only on salary and other benefits, it link on the organisation's image, its culture, and overall organisational experience. For that, we consider EB as a strong strategy to do so. EB and its different factors can play a vital role in retaining employees in the organisation. EB shows the real image of the organisation to the world. Organisations having good EB can increase employees' loyalty toward the company. In Pakistan, textile manufacturing industry is growing very fast and becoming more competitive. With this growth, many organisations are facing issues in retaining top talent. In many organisations, increasing the employee turnover ratio decreases the overall organisational performance. In this context, EE can be considered an important factor. An employee who is emotionally attached to his company may not think about switching and is more loyal than others. Although this topic is widely explored internationally but in Pakistan, we still have many areas to research on this topic in many industries. Clearly, it is essential to understand how EB can impact ER in the textile manufacturing sector of Pakistan.

Statement of the Problem: Nowadays, many organisations face challenges with a high turnover ratio and employee loyalty toward the company. This is due to top professionals always preferring organisations with strong EB and a company's reputation in the market. Studies show that companies with a negative employer reputation in the market face challenges in retaining top employees, which leads to a high turnover ratio and increased recruitment costs. To retain employees in the long run, an organisational culture that emphasises transparency in compensation & benefits, as well as career growth opportunities, can play a crucial role. Therefore, there is a need to explore the impact of EB on ER and to understand the mediating effect of EE, which plays a critical role for any organisation to motivate employees. It helps drive talent-related actions, including recruitment,

selection, and productivity. The textile manufacturing-related companies will have the opportunity to identify the benefits of these practices and the challenges facing ER processes within their organisation, and find lasting solutions to them. The importance of this research lies in its ability to determine ER, enabling an organisation to operate efficiently and effectively.

Research Questions

1. Does Employer Branding reduce employee turnover ratio and improve Employee Retention?
2. How do Employee Retention and Employee Engagement relate to Employer Branding?
3. Which components and factors contribute the most to improving Employer Branding?

Objectives: The research objective is to identify how EB can help an organisation improve ER rate by influencing EE in Pakistan's textile manufacturing industry.

Significance: This study focuses on textile manufacturing companies operating in Pakistan. This study will help business owners and HR strategists understand how EB can decrease the employee turnover rate, and they will learn about its cost-effectiveness. The findings will support organisations to develop strategies to enhance the quality of their workplace culture and increase their market value. The study will also help address the problem of ER, and employees will understand the importance of engagement.

LITERATURE REVIEW

EB can be defined as the set of functional, economic, and psychological benefits provided by the organization to employees (Kucherov et al., 2022, P. 127). This strategy gives a unique identity to the organization, which is attractive to both employees and candidates (Reis & Sousa, 2021). According to signaling theory, the organization communicates its values, culture, and environment to the external world through specific factors like work-life balance, awards, or CSR (Soeling et al., 2022). Meanwhile, social exchange theory states that the employer-employee relationship is based on reciprocal exchange: when employers treat employees well by offering career development opportunities, support, and strong EB, employees feel valued and respond positively, increasing loyalty and remaining with the company longer (Umrani et al., 2024). Many researchers have identified different factors of EB, such as social, economic, developmental, and practical implementation (Junça Silva & Dias, 2005). As the industry evolves, other aspects of EB have been studied extensively, including employee career development, organizational culture, corporate social responsibility, work-life balance, and reward systems (Sivertzen et al., 2013). Salaries, effective reward systems, and career development are especially important for employees in developing countries like Pakistan. Numerous studies have shown that EB has a significant impact on employee retention. A strong organizational image and corporate social responsibility efforts can foster trust among candidates (Boehnke et al., 2023). A robust EB enhances the organization's reputation in the market, leading to lower hiring costs (Sivertzen et al., 2013). Currently, one of the critical challenges organizations face is employee retention; in this context, EB plays a crucial role. Positive employee experiences during their tenure lead to increased loyalty and stronger bonds with the organization. Research indicates that when employees feel valued and are rewarded fairly, employee turnover decreases (Tanwar & Parsad, 2016). Employee engagement (EE) is a positive approach that boosts motivation and involvement at work (Tsuchihashi et al., 2024). When EB aligns with employees' expectations, EE tends to increase, which in turn decreases turnover rates (A1fes et al., 2013). Among younger generations, there is a strong desire to feel valued, earn fair salaries, and work for organizations involved in CSR and career development. While much research has been conducted domestically and internationally on this topic, many aspects of EB in developing countries still require attention, and several areas

remain unexplored. It is essential to consider how EB can enhance ER through increased EE.
Framework: ER is a multidimensional structure, and its measurement depends on many factors. It

is important to determine whether the purpose of the measurement is to assess outcomes.
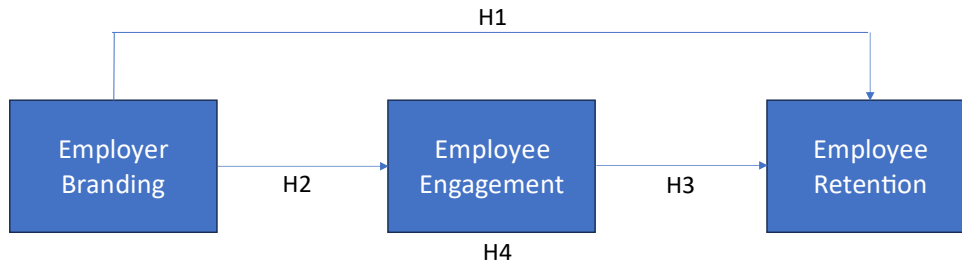
Hypothetical Model (figure 2.1)

Figure 2.1 is a framework of the study, which is based on singing theory and social exchange theory. EB is taken as an independent variable (IV). Employer Engagement is taken as a mediating variable (MV) as it plays a critical role in translating EB into the outcome of ER. The Dependent variable (DV) is ER, which reflects EB activities to retain employees. There are two types of relationships in framework one: is direct relationship of EB with ER, and the other is an indirect relationship with the influence of EE.

Hypotheses: The research hypotheses are as follows.

H1: Employer Branding has a significant and positive impact on employee retention.

H2: Employer Branding has a significant and positive impact on employee engagement.

H3: Employer Branding has a significant and positive impact on employee retention.

H4: Employee engagement has positively mediated the relationship between employee retention and Employer Branding.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is based on the impact of EB on ER, the influence of EE in the textile manufacturing industry of Pakistan. The design is an explanatory study using quantitative tools. This study used questionnaires. These approaches are used

because they are satisfactory tools for collecting data from the sample population to investigate the research topic. This study is quantitative and uses a positivist approach, which believes that every variable can be measured in numbers. Later, while applying the statistical tools to the collected data, the relationship or the impact can be measured between the variables. It's a cross-sectional study and explanatory because it measures the impact of EB on ER with and without the influence of EE.

Data was collected through a survey method by distributing questionnaires to employees working in the different textile manufacturing companies in Pakistan. The questionnaires were adopted. The perception about EB and its different factors, perception about EE, and ER were measured on a five-point Likert scale through a questionnaire designed for the study.

A questionnaire was used to collect the data. The tool provided expected information regarding the EB and its factors. Questions were distributed to the employees of different companies. The questionnaire has demographic questions for respondents to get more relevant data. All questions in the questionnaire are designed to determine the relationship between EB on ER. The questions were adopted from the following resources:

Constructs	Number of Items	Reference
Questions were used to measure perception about EB.	07	(Chopra et al., 2024)
Questions used to measure perception about EE.	09	
Questions used to measure perception about EB.	09	(Suresh et al., (2019)

A five-point Likert scale was adopted in the questionnaire for the study, with which 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, and 5 = strongly agree.

Based on an extensive literature review, independent variables, employee branding, were selected for the study to measure ER (dependent variable), considering EE as a mediating variable. The study population consists of all textile companies from various cities of Pakistan and includes all their departments, including Human Resources, Marketing, Production, and Quality Assurance. A sample size of 471 employees has been chosen from different organisations for the study. To ensure that the sample is sufficient to conclude. The sample size was determined by a sample size calculator that uses Cochran's equation (Qing & Valliant, 2025) The response rate is deemed sufficient when it reaches 70% (Nully, 2008). In the study at hand, 471 questionnaires were issued, and 388 were filled out successfully. This represents an 82.4% response rate, which, according to the researcher, was sufficient.

Table 1: Response Rate		
Response	**No**	**Percentage**
Total	471	100%
Unfilled /not returned	83	17.6%
Filled	388	82.4%

Table 3.1 shows that 388 out of 471 employees responded fairly, and 83 forms were not filled/not returned. Therefore, the responding percentage was 82.4%.

We applied Cronbach, mean, SD, regression, correlation, and the Sobel Test. The collected data were statistically analysed by using MS Excel and SPSS packages. Presentations such as tables and graphs were used to facilitate the interpretation of data easily and quickly. The answer is expressed as a percentage.

DATA ANALYSIS

Table 2: Demographics of respondents		
Demographics	**Frequency**	**Percent (%)**
Gender		
Female	138	35.57%
Male	250	64.43%
Age		
<25	43	11.08%
25-34	51	13.14%
35-44	204	52.58%
45-54	81	20.88%
55+	9	2.32%
Education		
Intermediate	85	21.91%
Bachelor's	169	43.56%
Master's	132	34.02%

PhD	2	0.52%
Designation		
Staff	142	36.60%
Lower Management	68	17.53%
Middle Management	106	27.32%
Sr. Management	72	18.56%
Work Experience		
<1	43	11.08%
1-3	33	8.51%
4-6	39	10.05%
4–6	18	4.64%
7-10	134	34.54%
Note: n=388		

Table 4.1 shows that, according to demographic analysis, diverse results were achieved in terms of gender, age, education, designation, and work experience.

Table 3: Cronbach Alpha, Mean & SD					
Scale	**Cronbach alpha**	**Mean (M)**	**SD**	**No Items**	**N**
EB	0.96	3.16	1.04	7	388
EE	0.97	3.13	1.05	9	388
ER	0.96	3.14	1.02	9	388

A total of 25 items in 3 scales of questionnaire for every 388 responses received, and all 3 scales show excellent internal consistency ($\alpha \approx 0.96$ to 0.98). This indicates all the items are suitable for further analysis. The mean shows that the average response rate for all variables lies between neutral to high, and SD shows a moderate spread, not extremely varied.

Table 4: Correlation: r			
Variables	**EB**	**EE**	**ER**
EB	-	-	-
EE	0.53 **	-	-
ER	0.35 **	0.60 **	-
N = 388			

Table 4.3 shows that EB is moderately, positively correlated with both EE and ER. All variables are positively correlated, and the double Asterisk indicates that the model is significant at a 0.05 level and even at a 0.01 level.

Regression analysis with an independent variable, EB, contributes significantly to ER. So, it can be concluded that ER in different textile companies in Pakistan is significantly affected by EB and EE.

Model A: EB → ER

Table 5: Regression Coefficient, standard error, and model summary			
Predictors	DV (ER)		
	Coeff (β)	SE	P
IV (EB)	0.3398	0.047	< .001
Constant	1.748	0.144	< .001
	R^2 = 0.121		
	F(1, 386) = 53.273, p < .001		

Table 4.4 shows that the value of β = 0.3398 indicates a moderate positive effect of EB on ER, meaning that EB significantly predicts the ER. The value of R^2 = 0.121 shows that 12.1% of variance in retention is explained by the model.

Table 6: Regression Coefficient, standard error, and model summary			
Predictors	DV (EE)		
	Coeff (β)	SE	P
IV (EB)	0.5304	0.044	< .001
Constant	1.381	0.127	< .001
	R^2 = 0.276		
	F (1, 386) = 147.415, p < .001		

Model B: EB → EE

Table 4.5 shows that the value of β = 0.5304 indicates a strong positive effect of EB on EE, meaning that EB significantly predicts EE. The value of R^2 = 0.276 shows that 27.6% of variance in retention is explained by the model.

Model C: EE → ER by Controlling EB

Table 7: Regression Coefficient, standard error, and model summary			
Predictors	DV (ER)		
	Coeff (β)	SE	P
IV-1 (EB)	0.0405	0.05	.418 (ns)
IV-2 (EE)	0.5565	0.054	< .001
Constant	0.752	0.148	< .001
	R^2 = 0.361		
	F(2, 385) = 108.724, p < .001		

Table 4.6 shows that when both EB and EE are taken together, the value of β=0.0405 for EB indicates a weak effect of EB on ER. This means that EB does not significantly predict ER when EE enters. On the other hand, the value of β=0.0405 for EE indicates a strong positive effect of EE on ER. EE significantly predicts ER. The value of R^2 = 0.361 shows that 36.1% of variance in retention is explained by the model, which is a great improvement over the individual impact of EB (12.1%).

Total Model Summary

Table 8: Whole Model Summary					
Model	R	R²	Adj R²	F	p
EB → ER	0.348	0.121	0.119	53.27	<.001
EB → EE	0.526	0.276	0.274	147.42	<.001
EB, EE → ER	0.601	0.361	0.358	108.72	<.001

Table 4.7 shows that adding EE to the model increases the explanatory power for the prediction of ER.

Mediation (Indirect effect): A combination of Baron & Kenny Mediation procedure (Zhao et al., 2010), Sobel Test (Abu-Bader & Jones, 2021), and Bootstrapping (Halevi Shoup, 2021). An indirect effect is used to measure the mediation effect of EE.

Table 9: Mediation	
Path	Estimate
a (EB → EE)	0.5304
b (EE → ER controlling EB)	0.5565
c (EB → ER total)	0.3398
c' (EB → ER controlling EE)	0.0405
Indirect effect (a × b)	**0.2952**
Sobel test	$z = 8.54$, $p < .001$
Bootstrap 95% CI	[0.2309, 0.3665]

Table 4.8 shows that the direct effect of EB becomes insignificant in the presence of EE as a mediator, which indicates complete mediation. This is based on Sobel test ($z = 8.54$, $p < .001$) and Bootstrap CI (0.2309, 0.3665). EE completely mediates the relationship between EB and EE in this model.

Hypothesis Testing Table

Table 10: Hypothesis Testing				
Hypothesis	Tests	Estimate	p	Decision
H1	Regression EB → ER	0.3398	<.001	**Accepted**
H2	Regression EB → EE	0.5304	<.001	**Accepted**
H3	Regression EE → ER (controlling EB)	0.5565	<.001	**Accepted**
H4	Sobel & bootstrap indirect effect	0.2952	<.001	**Accepted**

The above analysis shows that all four hypotheses are supported.

Summary: The study is based on the impact of EB on ER: the influence of EE in textile manufacturing industry of Pakistan. The design is an explanatory study using quantitative tools. This study is based on the use of questionnaires. We used EB as the independent variable and ER as the dependent variable; the mediator variable, EE, is also influenced. We also used five demographic variables, gender, age, education, designation, and work experience, to ascertain true and fair results. 388 out of 471 respondents respond very effectively. Cronbach's Alpha values range between 0.96 to 0.98, showing excellent internal consistency. By applying regression and correlating the results of independent and dependent variables, indicated that the relationship is significantly positive among the variables, but in Pakistan, EE mediates this

relationship very strongly indicated by Sobel test ($z = 8.54$, $p < .001$) and Bootstrap CI (0.2309, 0.3665). Overall, the study model is highly significant, and the EB increases ER by increasing EE.

DISCUSSION

Employer Branding: The analysis of the study shows employers need more intention and most of the respondents are respond between agree and neutral which means that many respondents are understanding EB and its important and many organisation are trying to follow the EB concept but a big number of respondents lies neutral for EB this means the topic is still have many areas to explore and peoples need training on it. If we take about the quantitative analysis of the mean and standard deviation, we notice that most of the employees understand at what level their organisation is in EB. The results of correlation explain that EB makes a moderate type of relationship with ER, but shows a strong relationship of EB with EE when a company gain success in building its image in internal and external environment, is automatically increases EE. After considering the results of regression analysis, we note that EB individually has a 12.1% impact on ER, with a moderately significant effect. This is not very good, but it may boost these processes. Collectively, EB has a significant impact on ER, and many organisations are working on it, but in textile industry of Pakistan, many organisations will need to know the importance of EB to retain skilled professionals and get a competitive advantage.

Employee Retention: The analysis of the study shows that most of the respondents' responses lie between neutral and agree, which we can say is a moderately agree statement of all respondents collectively, but it varies for different industries. Employees are satisfied with their organisation, but not everyone plans to stay longer. Retention is a very important topic for any industry. It was noted that big and multinational companies' ER is better than others, as it is due to a fair reward system, employee career development, and providing work-life balance to employees. Besides this, in textile and manufacturing industries, the retention rate is low due to low salaries of employees and opportunities in market to switch jobs for better career growth. In the analysis of correlation, we found that the relationship of ER with EB is positive, which means, when companies have a strong image in market with good EB, they will be able to retain their existing employees, but the link is not very strong, which means we have to consider other factors also with EB to improve the level of retention. If we talk about the relationship of EE with it is strong explains that when employees feel valued, motivated, and highly engaged in their work, they will go for long in the company. When the values of candidates match the values of the company so their relationship will be strong and long-lasting. Regression analysis shows that the impact of EB on ER was 12.1% and the impact of EE on ER was 27.6%. And when we measure the collective impact of EB with EE, it was 36.1% which means EB with strong EE can play an important role in the retention of employees.

Employee Engagment: The quantitative results of the study show that most of the employees respond between neutral to agree, which means many employees feel engaged with their work and consider their organisation's work for EE. When we compiled the results of the correlation, we found that EE is a very strong factor in boosting ER. In analysing the relationship of EE with EB, ER is very strong. When we took the regression analysis to measure the impact of EE on ER, we found that the impact on ER was 27.6% which is actually a good number. It means that EE ultimately has a significant impact on the retention of existing employees.

Impact of EB and EE on Employee Retention: The findings of this study are that the mean analysis and standard deviation show that most of the employees did not strongly agree with all the statements about EB, ER, and EE. This can have a bad impact on the retention of good resources. EB has a significant impact on ER. The influence of EE is also very strong. The research question

aimed to determine the extent to which EB predicts ER with and without the influence of EE. The results of the regression analysis show the moderate to strong impact of IV on DVs. The result shows that EB has a positive, significant, and moderate impact on ER. It is clearly shown in the results that when we take EB with EE, their impact on retention is very good. The analysis shows that the most significant impact of EB is on EE. It was noted that the organisations that have a good market image can engage their employees more, and this impact is very important to improve employees' performance and efficiency. When an organisation thinks about its employees' work-life balance, provides them with training, guides them, and supports them in their hard times, then they gain success in making a strong bond with their employees. This thing is much better and stronger than salaries and benefits. The analysis of the study shows the 12.1 percent impact of EB on ER, which is satisfying but not so good for the Pakistani developing textile industry, which can compromise quality, productivity, cost, and efficiency. When we measure the collective impact of EB and EE, so results are different. The impact on ER was 36.1 percent. That is very good, so every industry should improve its EB and increase EE to improve ER.

CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS & LIMITATIONS

Organisations that have strong brand value in market and have best EE activities have a structured and effective system, and the retention rate of their existing employees is very high with a low turnover ratio. These organisations hold top positions in the industry, which contributes to the significant growth of economic activities in Pakistan. The analysis of findings clearly explains that EB is a well-structured strategy that is widely used to improve ER. It has a direct impact on EE. But a main highlight we found in this study is that the relationship of EB with EE is much stronger. One more important thing identified is that EE has a direct and strong impact on employer retention, which means that a strong relationship between EB and EE can give long-

lasting and effective results in this context. In Pakistani textile manufacturing companies, it is the main issue to retain best human resources, making a competitive workforce. This research provides an extensive and best solution to the problem of ER and high turnover ratios.

Recommendations:
1. The organisation should improve its market image by improving organisational culture, employee value proposition, and market competitive reward system so that the candidates stay long in the organisation.
2. Engage your employees by involving employees in decision-making, listening to their suggestions, and motivating them by taking different initiatives like career development and promotions.
3. Designing HR policies by considering employees ' well-being to improve internal company branding.
4. Strong focus on existing employees' retention builds a strong link with employees and provides them support other than salaries and rotten benefits; they should feel safe and secure while working with the organisation.
5. Every practice should be employee-centric, which provides a long-term and competitive advantage.

Limitations of the Study: The results of this study can be viewed with the following limitations in mind.
1. This study was conducted in textile manufacturing industry of Pakistan, so its results cannot be generalized to every country and industry.
2. The questionnaire used to collect data in this research, so there is a chance of bias in respondents' responses.
3. This is a cross-sectional study; therefore, its generalizability, in the long run, cannot be claimed because the industry is frequently transformed due to technological advancement.
4. The three variables are studied in this study, but in the real world, many other factors can also have an impact.
5. The selected demographics of the employees were studied in this study.

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