



Perceived Employer Branding, Employee Engagement and Employee Outcomes: A Proposed Mediation Model

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Abstract

This paper develops a conceptual framework to understand the relationship between perceived employer branding, employee engagement, and desirable attitudinal and behavioural outcomes. This conceptual framework proposes employee engagement as a mediator between perceived employer branding and different attitudes and behaviours such as job satisfaction, organisational commitment, turnover intention, task performance, and organisational citizenship behaviour in accordance with social exchange theory and the job-demand resources model. The paper expanded the research on employer branding by presenting a comprehensive framework incorporating engagement as a mediator between perceived employer branding and several new outcome variables, namely, job satisfaction, turnover intention, and task performance. With this comprehensive conceptual framework, a foundation has been laid for future researchers to verify the relationship between these constructs empirically. Further, implications have been suggested for organisations in designing their human resource policies and practices.

Keywords: Employee Engagement, Organisational Commitment, Turnover Intentions, Job Performance

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Introduction

Eager to learn from the branding approach in marketing, researchers in human resource management have turned their attention to employer branding in recent years. Employer branding recognises the value of a branding approach to people management practices and has become an influential concept in the academic and practitioner literature (CIPD, 2021; Edwards, 2010; Mosley, 2014; Theurer et al., 2018). It is a strategy to market employee value propositions to improve recruitment, retention, and increase the value of human capital (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004). Since the beginning, two traditions in employer branding have developed—external and internal employer branding (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004). External employer branding refers to the attraction of prospective employees, whereas internal or perceived employer branding refers to maintaining current employee commitment through oneness to organisational goals and values (Backhaus, 2016; Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004; Sengupta et al., 2015). This paper focuses on internal or perceived employer branding as it is an umbrella predictor of desirable attitudes and behaviours such as job satisfaction, organisational commitment, turnover intention, task performance, and organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) (Bareket-Bojmel & Shuv-Ami, 2019; Biswas & Suar, 2018; Kashyap & Chaudhary, 2019; Schlager et al., 2011; Tanwar & Prasad, 2016a).

Additionally, researchers have predicted employee engagement as a potent predictor of desirable attitudinal and behavioural outcomes (Bailey et al., 2017), which makes it an essential factor for practitioners and academics worldwide (Albrecht et al., 2015). Employee engagement is described as an employee's physical, cognitive, and emotional presence in their work roles where they harness their preferred selves for active role performances (Kahn, 1990). Schaufeli et al. (2002) described it as an employee's "positive, fulfilling, and work-related set of mind characterised by vigour, dedication, and absorption" (p. 74). Other researchers have conceptualised it as a work-related energetic resource (Shantz et al., 2016). Hence, employee engagement contributes to positive job and organisational attitudes and helps reduce turnover intention and enhance employee performance in the workplace (Albrecht et al., 2015; Bailey et al., 2017; Harter et al., 2002). It is seen as a catalyst for success and sustainability and should not be ignored by organisations.

With increased attention to perceived employer branding, employee engagement, and different attitudinal and behavioural outcomes of these two variables, Researchers have attempted to identify the relationship between these three variables. The popularity of these concepts among practitioners and the lack of a comprehensive

study on all three have raised interesting research questions. Does perceived employer branding lead to better attitudinal and behavioural outcomes? For example, are those with positive employer branding experiences satisfied and committed to their jobs and organisations? Do they show high task performance and OCB or reduced turnover intentions? Does positive employer branding lead to high employee engagement, which leads to better attitudinal and behavioural outcomes? Addressing these research questions, there is a substantial amount of research aimed at understanding the relationship between perceived employer branding, employee engagement, and different attitudinal and behavioural outcomes. For instance, previous researchers have attempted to explore the relationship of employer branding with one or more attitudinal and behavioural outcomes, such as organisational commitment, job satisfaction, turnover intention, task performance, and OCB, in a single research (Bharadwaj et al., 2021; Biswas & Suar, 2018; Davies et al., 2018; Gupta et al., 2021; Hanin et al., 2013; Kashyap & Chaudhary, 2019; Kashyap & Rangnekar, 2016; Kaur et al., 2020; Tanwar & Prasad, 2016a; Wong, 2015). Additionally, researchers have proposed the mediating role of employee engagement between perceived employer branding, and organisational commitment and OCB (Bhasin et al., 2019; Gupta et al., 2021).

These studies have helped provide new developments in the literature on perceived employer branding and its outcomes and have thrown some light on the mediation of employee engagement between the two. However, the literature lacks a unifying and comprehensive framework that includes perceived employer branding and its different outcomes and mediates the impact of employee engagement between these two in a single model. Hence, this paper proposes a relationship between perceived employer branding and resulting attitudes and behaviours (job satisfaction, organisational commitment, turnover intention, task performance, and OCB) explained by the social exchange theory (SET, Bharadwaj et al., 2021; Hanin et al., 2013; Kaur et al., 2020; Xia & Yang, 2010; Yadav et al., 2020; Yousf & Khurshid, 2021). Additionally, this paper proposes the mediation impact of employee engagement between perceived employer branding and new attitudinal and behavioural outcomes of job satisfaction, turnover intention, and task performance underpinned by SET and the job-demand resources model (JD-R). Consequently, this paper makes the model more comprehensive and proposes that perceived employer branding helps in a high level of employee engagement, which, in turn, is estimated to impact different attitudinal and behavioural outcomes.

This research paper is structured as follows. First, it summarises the relationships between perceived employer branding and the resulting employee's attitudes and

behaviours, and current research examining the mediating impact of employee engagement on the relationship. Then, it presents a theoretical foundation for supporting the relationships between perceived employer branding, employee engagement, and desirable attitudes and behaviours. Finally, it develops propositions and presents the conceptual framework of the current paper.

Perceived Employer Branding and, Employee Attitudes and Behaviours

Perceived employer branding or internal employer branding focuses on the perceptions of current employees toward employment brands (Backhaus, 2016). Martin et al. (2011) described perceived employer branding as “generalized recognition for being known among key stakeholders for providing a high-quality employment experience, and a distinctive organizational identity that employees value, engage with, and feel confident about, and are happy to promote to others” (p. 3618–3619). Backhaus and Tikoo (2004) explained it as “a process of building a unique employer identity that differentiates the company from its competitors” (p. 502). Maxwell and Knox (2009) conducted qualitative research to understand the perceptions of current employees and highlighted the significance of employment-related attributes in motivating employees to live the brand. Likewise, Edwards (2010) highlighted the importance of employment-related attributes or employment experiences in building identification among employees that lead to favourable attitudes and behaviours. Consequently, organisations should focus on building positive perceptions of employer branding attributes among current employees who are important brand ambassadors and impact the organisations through their attitudes and behaviours.

Perceived employer branding is the sum of different employment-related attributes such as work environment, diversity, reputation, training and development, ethics and corporate social responsibility, work-life balance, and compensation and benefits (Tanwar & Prasad, 2016a; Tanwar & Prasad, 2017). Evidence has shown that favourable attitudes and behaviours are a function of positive employer branding (Hanin et al., 2013). For instance, Tanwar and Prasad (2016b) reflected that employers’ constructive branding efforts lead to two-pronged benefits, i.e., enhanced job satisfaction and organisational commitment. The authors found that employees are satisfied and committed because of employer branding practices such as compensation, development opportunities, and security. Alves et al. (2020) investigated the relationship between perceived employer branding and organisational commitment among employees in the public and private sectors in Portugal. The researchers asserted that a positive perception of employer branding

practices expresses an organisation's concern towards employees, which is a cause of their commitment in the long run. Kashyap and Verma (2018) have explicated the potency of perceived employer branding in testing significant aspects of the turnover intentions of employees. The authors have examined the significant relationship between positive and conducive environments and turnover intention.

Adding to the importance of perceived employer branding, Biswas and Suar (2018) and Piyachat et al. (2015) have explained the relationship of perceived employer branding with employee performance. It has been stated that positive perceptions of employer branding lead to increased levels of task performance and OCB. Through the lens of SET, former researchers have proposed a link between perceived employer branding and desirable attitudes and behaviours (Bharadwaj et al., 2021; Hanin et al., 2013; Kaur et al., 2020; Xia & Yang, 2010; Yadav et al., 2020). Hence, employees with positive perceptions of employer branding reciprocate with favourable attitudes and behaviours such as job satisfaction, organisational commitment, turnover intentions, task performance, and OCB (Jung & Takeuchi, 2019; Rubel et al., 2021; Xiu et al., 2019; Zhu et al., 2019).

In the relationship between perceived employer branding and employee attitudes and behaviours, employee engagement can be a driving mechanism (Saks, 2006; Saks, 2019). In this regard, previous literature has examined the mediating role of employee engagement between perceived employer branding and organisational commitment and OCB (Bhasin et al., 2019; Gupta et al., 2021; Piyachat et al., 2015; Yousf & Khurshid, 2021). Nonetheless, the role of engagement as a mediator between perceived employer branding and different attitudes and behaviours is yet to be explored. Hence, this paper proposes the mediating impact of employee engagement between perceived employer branding and the resulting attitude (job satisfaction) and behaviours (turnover intention, and task performance) based on the SET and JD-R model.

Theoretical Foundation for Employer Branding, and Employee Attitudes and Behaviours

In this section, the focus is on presenting the theoretical foundation for the development of propositions. Hence, the major theories used on the relationship between perceived employer branding, employee engagement, and desired attitudes and behaviours are discussed in the succeeding paragraphs.

First, the SET and its effect on the employee-employer relationship provide a theoretical basis for understanding the relationship between perceived employer

branding and resulting employee attitudes and behaviours. The SET and the norm of reciprocity assert that relationships are built on a give-and-take philosophy where one is obligated to repay another that provides value to them (Blau, 1964; Dechawatanapaisal, 2018; Gouldner, 1960). In the organisational environment, a close and reciprocal relationship exists between employer and employee (Andrew & Sofian, 2012). The employer-employee exchange or reciprocal relationship is based on employees' perceptions of the resources offered to them by their employer. In general, an employee who receives favourable resources through perceived employer branding would reciprocate in favour of their organisation (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). For example, perceived employer branding provides employees with a supportive organisational environment that fulfils their needs for self-esteem, approval, and emotional support. It also gratifies their need to make decisions related to their work by providing autonomy. Hence, perceived employer branding provides a benefit to employees, and according to the reciprocity principle of SET, employees would want to reciprocate with favourable attitudes and behaviours.

Second, the JD-R model provides a theoretical base for understanding the mediating role of engagement between job resources and different attitudes and behaviours (Bakker & Albrecht, 2018). Job resources refer to the social, physical, psychological, and organisational aspects of a job that help in achieving work goals, stimulate growth, learning, and development, and reduce job demands and their associated psychological and physiological costs (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). The model assumes a motivational process in which job resources play an intrinsic or extrinsic motivational role and are positively related to engagement, which, in turn, is related to desirable attitudes and behaviours (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008). However, the model fails to explain why the various kinds of job resources lead to different attitudes and behaviours (Schaufeli & Taris, 2014). To overcome this limitation, the model is extended by the SET. Based on the JD-R model and SET, when employees receive a higher level of job resources from their organisations, they become more engaged and indulge in favourable attitudes and behaviours (Bakker et al., 2023). For example, job resources such as autonomy fulfil the basic or intrinsic motivational need of an employee to make decisions regarding their work. Further, an innovative culture provides a resourceful work environment that helps an employee dedicate his or her abilities or efforts to achieve work-related or extrinsic motivational goals. Hence, perceived employer branding provides resources to employees and would lead to a high level of engagement and concomitant attitudes and behaviours based on the motivational process of the JD-R model and the reciprocity principle of SET.

Conceptual Framework

Perceived Employer Branding, and Employee Attitudes and Behaviours

Previous research on employer branding shows it to be associated with different attitudes and behaviours. In the organisational behaviour literature, attitudes and behaviours have been operationalised in many ways, such as identification, satisfaction, commitment, engagement, turnover intention, task performance, and OCB (Sessa & Bowling, 2020; Woznyj et al., 2022). In this paper, we have considered different attitudes (job satisfaction and organisational commitment) and behaviours (turnover intention, task performance, and OCB) explained by SET (Jung et al., 2019; Rubel et al., 2021; Xiu et al., 2019; Zhu et al., 2019). Therefore, the relationship between perceived employer branding and desirable attitudes and behaviours is portrayed in the following sections.

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is an evaluative state that describes a positive and content feeling among employees with their jobs (Judge & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2012). Lin and Huang (2020) described it as a cognitive, emotional, and affective response to the workplace. It is the most widely researched construct in the human resource management and organisational behaviour literature and represents an individual's pleasurable and positive attachment to their jobs that depends upon the evaluation of job characteristics (Madan & Srivastava, 2015; Robbins & Judge, 2009). Organisational policies and practices such as training and development opportunities, recognition, workplace relationships, work-life balance initiatives, and innovative cultures impact employee satisfaction with jobs (Jamal et al., 2021; Lin & Huang, 2021; Waltz et al., 2020). Existing literature has also established the importance of employer branding attributes such as supportive organisational culture, challenging and interesting work activities, and growth opportunities in enhancing employee satisfaction (Davies, 2008; Davies et al., 2018; Schlager et al., 2011; Tanwar & Prasad, 2016a). For example, employees working in a healthy and supportive organisational environment receive socio-emotional resources that fulfil their needs for self-esteem, approval, and emotional support, which translates into job satisfaction. This notion is rooted in SET and the norm of reciprocity, which posits that parties in high-quality social exchange relationships feel an obligation to repay for the resources received (Blau, 1964; Gouldner, 1960; Jung & Takeuchi, 2019). Moreover, employers satisfy the employees' needs through constructive branding efforts, and in turn, employees fulfil their obligations by exhibiting satisfaction towards their jobs (Bharadwaj et al., 2021). Based on this evidence, we propose the succeeding proposition:

Proposition 1_a: Perceived employer branding positively impacts job satisfaction.

Organisational Commitment

Organisational commitment is defined as “individual strength of identification and involvement with a particular organization and their belief in organizational goals and values, strong aspiration to uphold membership, and willingness to put forth substantial effort on behalf of the organization” (Mowday et al., 1979, p. 226). It is a distinct psychological state of an individual with their organisation (Allen & Meyer, 1990; O’Reilly & Chatman, 1986). Concerning its determinants, Meyer et al. (2002) have shown that commitment is significantly associated with favourable job conditions and work experiences. Moreover, employer branding dimensions such as growth opportunities and organisational culture have a significant impact on organisational commitment (Alves et al., 2020; Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004; Botella-Carrubi et al., 2021; Tanwar & Prasad, 2016b). For instance, organisational inducements in the form of growth opportunities signal to employees that they are being taken care of and valued by the organisation, which in turn enhances their commitment. Based on SET and the norm of reciprocity, social exchanges promote the feeling of mutual obligations between employer and employee, with each party’s action depending on the other. Hence, organisational inducements inspire employees to reciprocate by being committed to their organisation (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Gouldner, 1960; Hanin et al., 2013). On this basis, we put forth the following proposition:

Proposition 1_b: Perceived employer branding positively impacts organisational commitment.

Turnover Intentions

Mowday et al. (1982) define turnover intentions as the “subjective estimation of an individual regarding the probability of leaving an organisation in the near future.” It represents the risk of an employee ending his relationship with the organisation (Cotton & Tuttle, 1986). Organisations are driven by indispensable human resource practices critical to an employee's intention to stay. Human resource practices such as training and development opportunities, recognition, feedback, and empowerment reduce turnover intentions (Chang & Chang, 2008; Chew & Chan, 2008). Perceived employer branding is the sum of all these practices and predicts the negative impact of attributes such as development opportunities, autonomy, work-life balance initiatives, and a supportive workplace environment on employees’ intentions to leave (Kashyap & Rangnekar, 2016; Kashyap & Verma, 2018; Yadav et al., 2020). For instance, autonomy gratifies the employee’s need for authority to determine their

work activities and generates motivation to maintain a long-term association with the organisation. This notion is explained by SET and the norm of reciprocity, where organisation branding efforts are seen as long-term investments and obligate employees to respond with lower turnover intentions (Cropanzano et al., 2017; Shore et al., 2009). We, therefore, propose the following proposition:

Proposition 1c: Perceived employer branding negatively impacts turnover intentions.

Task Performance

Task performance also termed “in-role performance”, contemplates how effectively an employee performs official duties required by the job that help an organisation make administrative decisions concerning the employee (Borman & Motowidlo, 1997; Sessa & Bowling, 2020; Viswesvaran & Ones, 2000). Motowidlo and Van Scotter (1994) delineated in-role performance as the accomplishment of core job outcomes and behaviour directly related to organisational goals. SET provides a prominent framework to explain the relationship between perceived employer branding and task performance. It explains a two-way social exchange relationship based on the norm of reciprocity. It is argued that employees who receive socio-emotional resources from their organisation develop a feeling of obligation to respond with favourable behaviour (Blau, 1964; Cropanzano et al., 2017; Gouldner, 1960). An organisation’s employer branding attributes, such as organisational support and work-life balance initiatives, are viewed as a signal for long term investment that obligates employees to respond with increased task performance (Biswas & Suar, 2018; Wong, 2015). For instance, recognition fulfils an employee’s need for belongingness and increases their work efficiency and productivity. Taking cognisance of the above discussion, we put forth the following proposition:

Proposition 1d: Perceived employer branding positively impacts job performance.

Organisational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB)

Organ (1988) has proposed OCB as the most common label for extra-role behaviour. OCB is described as an individual’s propensity to behave in a certain way that facilitates a social and psychological environment conducive to the achievement of tasks involved in the technical core of an organisation (Borman & Motowidlo, 1997). It includes behaviour such as helpfulness, sportsmanship, courtesy, civic virtue, and conscientiousness (Organ, 1988). Concerning its precursors, various practices such as job security, organisational support, growth opportunities, and autonomy significantly predict OCB (Hemakumara et al., 2019). This can be explained by SET, which suggests a norm of reciprocity where employees reciprocate for the resources provided by their organisation to build and maintain long-term social exchange relationships (Blau, 1964; Cropanzano et al., 2017; Piyachat et al., 2015). Hence,

perceived branding attributes such as work-life balance initiatives, growth opportunities, and supportive organisational culture have a positive influence on the OCB (Gupta et al., 2021; Wong, 2015). For instance, work-life balance initiatives provided by an organisation help employees maintain their personal and professional lives and create a feeling of being supported, which results in their extra-role behaviour. On this basis, we hypothesise the following proposition:

Proposition 1e: Perceived employer branding positively impacts OCB.

Employee Engagement Mediates the Relationship Between Perceived Employer Branding, and Employee Attitudes and Behaviours

Perceived Employer Branding and Employee Engagement

Employee engagement is the positive psychological state of an employee regarding their work (Bailey et al., 2017). Kahn (1990) explained it as the “physical, cognitive, and emotional presence of individual employees in their work roles and harnessing their preferred self for active role performances” (p. 694). At the heart of engagement is the positive social exchange relationship between employer and employee, underpinned by the SET and the norm of reciprocity (Blau, 1964; Gouldner, 1960). SET posits that socio-emotional resources provided by an employer to their employees create a feeling of reciprocity, trust, and gratitude and obligate them to return in kind. Based on this reasoning, existing literature has examined the significant impact of employer branding dimensions such as growth opportunities, supportive organisational culture, autonomy, and innovative culture on employee engagement (Kashyap & Chaudhary, 2019; Yadav et al., 2020; Yousf & Khurshid, 2021). For instance, autonomy gratifies an individual’s authority for decision-making, whereas growth opportunities foster an individual’s need for job competence, which in turn encourages them to harness their full selves in their work role performances. Taking the above into account, we propose the following proposition:

Proposition 2: Perceived employer branding positively impacts employee engagement.

Employee Engagement, and Employee Attitudes and Behaviours

Job Satisfaction

Drawing on the assumption of SET, employers and employees develop a trusting and high-quality social exchange relationship when both act by the rules of exchange (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). As a result, parties in the exchange relationship start exchanging resources, knowledge, and emotional support. Based on this reasoning, Rich et al. (2010) expound that favourable treatment from the employer results in a high level of engagement among employees. Employees with a high level of

engagement have a trusting relationship with their employers, which leads to favourable attitudinal and behavioural outcomes (Saks, 2006). In this regard, previous researchers have predicted job satisfaction as a function of employee engagement (Akingbola & Van den Berg, 2019; Borst et al., 2020; Nguyen et al., 2018; Shacklock et al., 2014). For instance, engaged employees find their work more motivating and fulfilling, which leads to a pleasurable and enthusiastic emotional state at work, indicating a high level of job satisfaction. Based on the preceding discussion, the following proposition is suggested:

Proposition 3_a: Employee engagement positively impacts job satisfaction.

Organisational Commitment

In the organisational behaviour literature, the lens of SET has been used to explain the construct of organisational commitment (Cropanzano et al., 2017). The theory expounds that, positive actions by an employer lead to positive reciprocating responses from employees and lead to the development of a social exchange relationship based on trust and unspecified obligations with a long-term orientation (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Shore et al., 2006; 2009). When an employer provides positive organisational inducements, employees return them with increased engagement (Saks, 2006). Employees with an increased level of engagement have a trusting and long-term relationship that leads to a high level of organisational commitment (Hakanen et al., 2008). Based on this reasoning, previous researchers have also found a significant impact of employee engagement on organisational commitment (Akingbola & Van den Berg, 2019; Bailey et al., 2017; Byrne et al., 2016; Yousf & Khurshid, 2021). For instance, employees with a high level of engagement find their work meaningful and safe, which leads to identification and attachment, indicating organisational commitment. Thus, we propose the following proposition:

Proposition 3_b: Employee engagement positively impacts organisational commitment.

Turnover Intention

The relationship between employee engagement and turnover intention can be explained through the JD-R model (Bakker et al., 2023). The model expounds a motivational process where resources provided by an organisation lead to engagement, which in turn impacts different attitudes and behaviours (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). Based on this reasoning, when an employer provides resources (e.g., social support, autonomy, and self-efficacy), employees return them with an increased level of engagement (Crawford et al., 2010). Engaged employees invest

their energies in their role performance and are more dedicated to their work, which causes lower intentions to leave their jobs (Albrecht & Marty, 2020). For instance, engaged employees find their jobs psychologically fulfilling and maintain long-term associations with the organisation, which translates into lower turnover intentions. In addition, previous researchers have examined employee engagement as a predictor of reducing turnover intentions (Bailey et al., 2017; Borst et al., 2020; Fletcher et al., 2020; Memon et al., 2021; Saks, 2006). Based on these arguments, the following proposition can be advanced:

Proposition 3c: Employee engagement negatively impacts turnover intention.

Task Performance

Task or in-role performance is the first narrower aspect of job performance. It is a relatively static behaviour central to any given task, and there is a consensus about activities for performing tasks (Ilgen & Hollenbeck, 1991). Previous researchers have examined engagement as a predictor of task performance (Bailey et al., 2017; Guan & Frenkel, 2019; Wang & Chen, 2020) because engagement allows employees to invest their full selves in their work role and demonstrate energy, enthusiasm, and passion while performing specific tasks (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). In accordance with the JD-R, engagement is an energetic, enthusiastic, and motivational state that directs employee efforts and helps them achieve a high level of task performance (Christian et al., 2011). For instance, engaged employees find their work fulfilling their needs for self-esteem, optimism, and self-efficacy and leading to higher levels of task performance. Based on the preceding discussion, we hypothesise the succeeding proposition:

Proposition 3a: Employee engagement positively impacts task performance.

Organisational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB)

OCB or extra-role performance is the second aspect of job performance. It is a kind of behaviour that helps an employee perform core job tasks by providing a favourable social and psychological environment (Motowidlo et al., 1997). Building on the JD-R model (Bakker et al., 2023), engagement is associated with the dimensions of OCB. The theory explains that employees with a high level of engagement generate additional resources by efficiently accomplishing their work goals and tasks that enable them to participate in extra-role behaviours (Rich et al., 2010). Hence, engaged employees have additional access to resources, better health, and experience positive emotions that lead them to step outside the boundaries of their formal job roles and show extra-conscientious, helpful, collaborative, and innovative behaviour (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008). Previous researchers like Bailey

et al. (2017), Farid et al. (2019), and Saks (2019) have also examined engagement as a significant predictor of OCB. For instance, engaged employees experience positive emotions like interest, which foster their desire to grow and explore new information and indulge them in extra-role behaviours. Accordingly, we hypothesised that:

Proposition 3_c: Employee engagement positively impacts OCB.

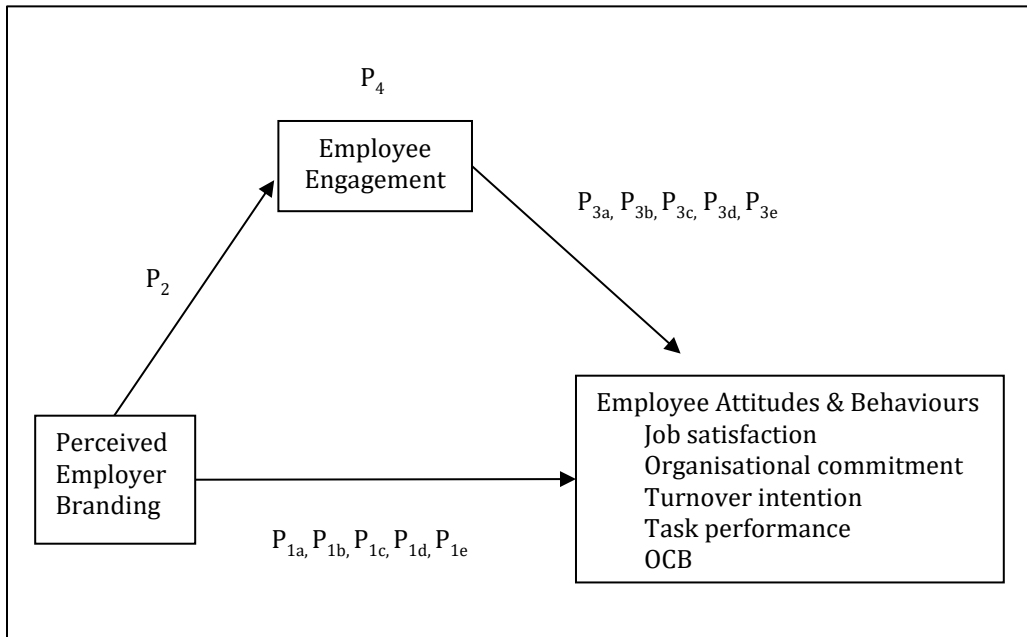
The JD-R and SET (Bakker & Demerouti, 2014, 2017; Blau, 1964) provide a framework to explain the mediating role of employee engagement between perceived employer branding and desired attitudes and behaviours. Based on the motivational process and reciprocity principle, job resources received by an employee help them complete their tasks and satisfy their basic needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness, which lead to engagement and concomitant attitudes and behaviours (Schaufeli, 2017; Gouldner, 1960). Previous literature has examined the mediating role of employee engagement between job resources such as autonomy, feedback, social support, innovative culture, and growth opportunities and the resulting attitudes and behaviours of job satisfaction, organisational commitment, turnover intentions, task performance, and OCB (Albrecht & Marty, 2020; Bakker & Demerouti, 2014; Junça Silva et al., 2022; Naveed et al., 2022).

Perceived employer branding is the sum of all these resources, such as autonomy, social support, growth opportunities, innovative culture, and work-life balance initiatives (Tanwar & Prasad, 2017). Hence, perceived employer branding satisfies intrinsic or extrinsic motivational needs and fosters engagement, which, in turn, predicts desirable outcomes of job satisfaction, organisational commitment, turnover intention, task performance, and OCB. Moreover, existing literature has examined the mediating role of engagement between perceived employer branding and organisational commitment and OCB (Bhasin et al., 2019; Gupta et al., 2021). For instance, social support received from the organisation satisfies employees' need for relatedness or belongingness and also helps them achieve work goals, which leads to employees' investment of their full selves in their organisations and concomitant favourable attitudes and behaviours. In the cognisance of the preceding discussion, we put forth the final proposition of this paper as follows:

Proposition 4: Employee engagement mediates the relationship between perceived employer branding and (a) job satisfaction, (b) organisational commitment, (c) turnover intention, (d) task performance, and (e) OCB.

Figure 1 presents the proposed conceptual relationships.

Figure 1: Relationships between Perceived Employer Branding, Employee Engagement, and Employee Attitudes and Behaviours



Theoretical Implications

This paper extends the existing literature on perceived employer branding and its attitudinal and behavioural outcomes by exhibiting that perceived employer branding has a direct relationship with different attitudinal and behavioural components like job satisfaction, organisational commitment, turnover intention, task performance, and OCB based on the SET and the JD-R. The research extends its direct effect argument to suggest that perceived employer branding is indirectly related to different attitudinal and behavioural outcomes through employee engagement as a mediator. This is pivotal because prior studies have examined the relationships between the three in a piecemeal fashion, and to the best of our knowledge, have not explored both the direct effects and the indirect effects between perceived employer branding and employee engagement with different attitudinal and behavioural outcomes in a single research. Hence, the current paper constructs an integrative perceived employer branding – employee engagement – employee attitudes and behaviours model depicting the relevant role of employer branding. With this comprehensive conceptual framework, a foundation has been laid for future researchers to empirically verify the relationship between perceived employer branding, employee engagement, and desirable attitudes and behaviours.

Managerial Implications

This paper has relevant implications for organisations while designing their human resource policies and practices. In particular, organisations should develop constructive employer branding practices for the sustenance and growth of employees. This is pivotal because, in knowledge-intensive or high-value-added businesses, employees are the intangible resources that provide unique and sustainable competencies for organisational success (Ewing et al., 2002). Therefore, organisations should keep a continuous tab on the perceived employer branding experiences of their workforce. Perceived employer branding is a precursor for achieving engagement, which impacts job satisfaction, organisational commitment, turnover intention, and job performance. Henceforth, for the wholesome growth and success of individuals and organisations, organisations should maintain favourable employer branding perceptions that contribute towards attitudinal and behavioural outcomes through building and sustaining a highly engaged workforce.

Conclusion

Employees are intangible resources for the success and growth of an organisation. They contribute to organisational goals and values through favourable attitudes and behaviours. For their positive attitudinal and behavioural outcomes, organizations should strive towards providing favourable resources to their employees, such as a favourable work environment, growth opportunities, wellness and wellbeing management, diversity, ethics and corporate social responsibility, and work-life balance. By doing so, organisations can offer a bundle of resources for employees to have a strong positive perception of employer branding, which in turn contributes towards desirable employee attitudes and behaviours. Further, by maintaining positive perceptions of an employment brand, employers motivate employees to live the brand and become brand ambassadors for organisations (Maxwell & Knox, 2009; Minchington, 2010) which will retain and attract future talent.

This paper proposed a direct relationship between perceived employer branding and resulting attitudes and behaviours such as job satisfaction, organisational commitment, turnover intention, task performance, and OCB. Additionally, the paper extended its direct effects argument by proposing an indirect relationship between perceived employer branding and different attitudes and behaviours through employee engagement as a mediator. Hence, the model presented in Figure 1 above portrays a comprehensive picture of all these constructs and explicates both the direct and indirect effects between perceived employer branding and employee engagement

with different attitudinal and behavioural outcomes such as job satisfaction, organisational commitment, turnover intentions, task performance, and OCB. This conceptual paper can be a good starting point for advancement in knowledge (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004; Edwards, 2010).

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