

## Employer Branding Dimensions in Library and Information Science Sector: A Study on Talent Retention Across Age Groups

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### Abstract:

Attracting and retaining skilled human capital has emerged as a pivotal factor for gaining a competitive edge, especially within specialized fields like library and information science (LIS). To secure top-tier talent, organizations have increasingly integrated branding principles and strategies into their human resources management practices. This adaptation of branding principles within HRM is commonly referred to as employer branding. This research aims to delineate, especially among the LIS professions, the dimensions contributing in talent retention through employer branding, assess their perceived levels of significance, and explore potential variations in perceptions based on age groups. To address these inquiries, a field study was carried out, gathering data from a randomly selected sample of 384 faculty members employed in private higher education institutions in Delhi NCR, with special focus on LIS faculty members. The analysis revealed noteworthy distinctions in the perceived importance levels of employer attractiveness dimensions across different age groups, particularly in the context of retention. These insights not only contribute to a deeper understanding of human resource practices within educational institutions but also aid in developing targeted strategies aimed at enhancing organizational appeal and employee retention within the library and information science sector.

### Introduction

In contemporary times, the capacity of firms, including those in the library and information science (LIS) domain, to effectively attract, recruit, and retain highly skilled human resources has emerged as a strategic cornerstone for corporate success. Recognizing the significance of this, organizations have recently embraced branding principles and practices in the realm of human resources management to enhance their ability to attract top-tier employees. Despite the growing popularity of employer branding practices among human resources practitioners, there remains a limited body of literature on the subject, and academic research is notably lacking. Addressing this gap, our study focuses on identifying the dimensions of attractiveness within the context of Indian organizations. We aim to explore the importance levels attributed to these dimensions and investigate potential variations in perceptions across different age groups. To achieve this objective, we conducted a comprehensive field research initiative, employing survey methodology with a sample drawn from employees in private higher education institutions.

This study seeks to contribute to the current Human Resource Management (HRM) literature by delving into the perceived importance levels of various dimensions within employer branding, specifically in the context of talent retention in the Indian job market. The findings of this research endeavor are anticipated to offer valuable insights into the efficacy and significance of employer branding practices within the Indian context, especially in the Library and Information Science sector, thereby enriching the existing body of HRM knowledge.

## **Literature Review**

### **Employer Branding**

The genesis of employer branding can be traced to the application of marketing principles within human resource management, often referred to as internal marketing (Cable and Turban, 2001). The fundamental premise of internal marketing is rooted in the idea that employees serve as the internal customers of an organization, and jobs represent internal products. This perspective asserts that to cultivate satisfied external customers, the organization must prioritize the satisfaction of its internal customers, namely its employees (George, 1977; 1990).

The term 'employer brand' was introduced by Ambler and Barrow in their seminal 1996 paper titled "The Employer Brand." Through in-depth interviews with respondents from various companies, they articulated the idea that the concept of branding, traditionally associated with economic and consumer contexts, is equally applicable to the perceptions and experiences of employees within an organization. This pioneering work emphasized the unique and desirable qualities that distinguish an organization as an employer of choice (Ambler and Barrow, 1996).

In essence, employer branding is concerned with cultivating a positive and distinctive image as an employer, making it both attractive and distinct in the eyes of potential and existing employees (Ambler and Barrow, 1996; Cable and Turban, 2001). This strategic approach recognizes the importance of building a strong employer brand to enhance organizational attractiveness and foster positive employee perceptions (Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004). With very low unemployment levels, competition for the best employees is extremely keen. Firms that strive to maximize job candidates' job offer acceptance should realize increased competitive advantage through more effective recruitment programs (Ferris et al., 2002).

### **Data Analysis and Interpretation**

#### **Age Group Vs. Dimensions of Employer Branding**

Data was gathered from a randomly selected sample of 384 faculty members employed in private higher education institutions in Delhi NCR. Among them, the responses of library and information science professionals were analyzed in detail to understand the age-based perceptions of employer branding dimensions specific to their profession.

Respondent's Age was divided into four groups:

Age Group 1: less than or equal 35 Years,

Age Group 2: 36-45 Years,

Age Group 3: 46-55 Years, and

Age Group 4: Above 55 Years.

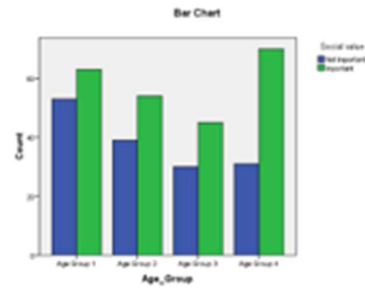
The dimensions of employer branding responsible for retention of the employee were Social Value, Development Value, Interest Value and Work Life Balance. Data was collected from respondents with different age and experience groups on a five-point Likert scale with 1 as Strongly Disagree and 5 as Strongly Agree.

Chi Square test was applied to see if there is a significant association between Age Groups and dimensions of employer branding responsible for retention of the employee, which were Social Value, Development Value, Interest Value and Work Life Balance.

#### Age\_Group \* Social value

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	5.358 <sup>a</sup>	3	.148
Likelihood Ratio	5.445	3	.142
Linear-by-Linear Association	4.926	1	.026
N of Valid Cases	385		

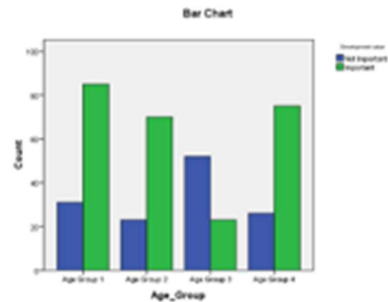
a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 29.91.



#### Age\_Group \* Development

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	50.872 <sup>a</sup>	3	.000
Likelihood Ratio	48.655	3	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.650	1	.103
N of Valid Cases	385		

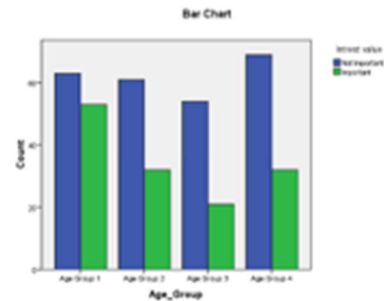
a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 25.71.



#### Age\_Group \* Intrest value

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	7.740 <sup>a</sup>	3	.052
Likelihood Ratio	7.677	3	.053
Linear-by-Linear Association	5.433	1	.020
N of Valid Cases	385		

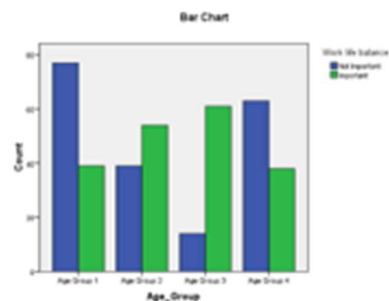
a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 26.69.



#### Age\_Group \* Work life

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	50.567 <sup>a</sup>	3	.000
Likelihood Ratio	53.130	3	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.371	1	.124
N of Valid Cases	385		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 37.40.



It can be seen that there is no significant association between age group and social value and age group and interest value ( $p$  value  $\geq 0.05$ ). This may be due to the fact that Age groups are broad categories that encompass a wide range of individuals with varying preferences, experiences, and values. The diversity within each age group may dilute any observable patterns or associations. Further Age alone may not sufficiently capture the complexity of all constructs.

It may also be possible Relationships between age and values may not follow a linear pattern. Certain age ranges or life stages might have a more pronounced impact on social and interest values, and these nonlinearities may not be captured in the analysis.

However, there is a significant association between age group and development value and age group and work life balance ( $p$  value  $< 0.05$ ) This may be due to the fact that

1. Different age groups may be at various points in their careers, and this can influence their attitudes and priorities. Younger individuals might be more focused on skill development and career advancement, while older individuals may prioritize other aspects of their professional lives.
2. Each generation tends to have its own set of values, shaped by the historical, social, and economic context in which they grew up. The observed association could be a reflection of distinct generational perspectives on career development and work-life balance.
3. Organizations often implement different policies and practices to accommodate the needs and expectations of employees at different career stages. The observed association may result from workplace initiatives that target specific age groups regarding career development opportunities and work-life balance.
4. Work-life balance is often influenced by family and personal responsibilities. Younger individuals may prioritize career development, while those in later stages of life might emphasize achieving a balance between work and personal life.
5. Societal attitudes towards work, including the importance of personal and professional development and work-life balance, may evolve over time. The observed association may reflect these changing societal norms.

As a sequel to above findings an immediate question that arises is “Is Development Value and Work Life Balance equally important for all age groups?” To answer this ANOVA was carried out on the same data set with Post Hoc Analysis as Games Howell Test

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Development value	Between Groups	11.462	3	3.821	19.336	.000
	Within Groups	75.281	381	.198		
	Total	86.743	384			
Work life balance	Between Groups	12.627	3	4.209	19.176	.000
	Within Groups	83.623	381	.219		
	Total	96.249	384			

Since  $p$  values in both the cases, i.e., Development Value and Work Life Balance, are less than 0.05, there is a significant difference in the importance of these parameters for different age groups.

Further to determine as to which age group each of these parameters are most important and for which least Post Hoc Analysis with Games Howell Test was carried out.

## Multiple Comparisons

Games-Howell

Dependent Variable	(I) Age_Group	(J) Age_Group	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Development value	Age Group 1	Age Group 2	-.01993	.06104	.988	-.1781	.1382
		Age Group 3	.42609*	.06765	.000	.2504	.6018
		Age Group 4	-.00982	.06012	.998	-.1655	.1459
	Age Group 2	Age Group 1	.01993	.06104	.988	-.1382	.1781
		Age Group 3	.44602*	.06998	.000	.2643	.6278
		Age Group 4	.01011	.06273	.999	-.1525	.1727
	Age Group 3	Age Group 1	-.42609*	.06765	.000	-.6018	-.2504
		Age Group 2	-.44602*	.06998	.000	-.6278	-.2643
		Age Group 4	-.43591*	.06917	.000	-.6156	-.2563
	Age Group 4	Age Group 1	.00982	.06012	.998	-.1459	.1655
		Age Group 2	-.01011	.06273	.999	-.1727	.1525
		Age Group 3	.43591*	.06917	.000	.2563	.6156
Work life balance	Age Group 1	Age Group 2	-.24444*	.06773	.002	-.4200	-.0689
		Age Group 3	-.47713*	.06318	.000	-.6410	-.3133
		Age Group 4	-.04003	.06548	.928	-.2096	.1295
	Age Group 2	Age Group 1	.24444*	.06773	.002	.0689	.4200
		Age Group 3	-.23269*	.06854	.005	-.4106	-.0548
		Age Group 4	.20441*	.07066	.022	.0213	.3876
	Age Group 3	Age Group 1	.47713*	.06318	.000	.3133	.6410
		Age Group 2	.23269*	.06854	.005	.0548	.4106
		Age Group 4	.43710*	.06632	.000	.2650	.6091
	Age Group 4	Age Group 1	.04003	.06548	.928	-.1295	.2096
		Age Group 2	-.20441*	.07066	.022	-.3876	-.0213
		Age Group 3	-.43710*	.06632	.000	-.6091	-.2650

\*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

**For Development Value** there is no significant difference between age group 1 and 4 and 2 and 4 (p values = 0.99 > 0.05). However, there is a significant difference in the importance of development value for the age groups 1 and 3, 2 and 3 and 4 and 3.

**For Work Life Balance** except in age group 1 and 4 there is a significant difference between all other pairs of age groups.

With respect to the above findings, it was debatable that in case only one of the dimensions of employer branding is responsible for retention of the employee viz. Social Value, Development Value, Interest Value and Work Life Balance, which are to be assigned to one age group so as to optimise/maximize overall employee retention, then how should these be mapped. For this the technique of “Assignment Problem” was used.

Those responding as 1 to 3 were coded as 1 meaning “Disagree” and as 4 to 5 coded as 2 meaning “Agree”. A

cross tabulation of respondents' age that was divided into four groups, along with the dimensions of employer branding that were recoded into 2 groups responsible for retention of the employee viz. Social Value, Development Value, Interest Value and Work Life Balance, was developed with percentage of respondents opting for a dimension.

Using Excel Solver, the technique of assignment problem was applied so as to pair each group with the most suitable dimension so that employee retention is maximised, especially in the LIS sector. It is important to note here that in Age Group 2, value 58 appears at two places – Social value and Work life balance. While working out the solution, the solver selected Social value and not Work life balance else that would have change other assignments and will decrease the total retention from 281. Moreover in order to maximise total retention in Age Group 2, for the same reason, Development value with 59 respondents has been ignored

Age

Age group	Social value	Development value	Interest value	Work life balance
Group 1	54	73	47	34
Group 2	58	59	34	58
Group 3	60	11	81	28
Group 4	37	53	31	69

Age group	Social value	Development value	Interest value	Work life balance
Group 1	0	1	0	0
Group 2	1	0	0	0
Group 3	0	0	1	0
Group 4	0	0	0	1

1 1 73  
1 1 58  
1 1 81  
1 1 69  
**281**

1 1 1 1  
1 1 1 1

### Conclusions:

This study sheds light on the employer branding dimensions that play a critical role in the retention of library and information science professionals across different age groups.

1. For age group 1, i.e., those with less than 35 years of age, the most important attribute of employer branding responsible for retention of the employee is Development Value. This aligns with the ongoing need for professional growth and skill enhancement within educational institutions, especially in the LIS sector, where knowledge advancement and adaptation with the changing techniques is a core focus.
2. For age group 2, i.e., those between 36 to 45 years of age, the most important attribute of employer branding responsible for retention of the employee is social value, which has however been found to be equally important for all age groups as well. Chi-Square Analysis suggests that social value is consistently significant across all age groups, reflecting the importance of a collaborative and inclusive work environment, especially within the library and information science sector, which fosters community and shared knowledge.
3. For age group 3 i.e., those between 46 to 55 years of age, the most important attribute of employer branding responsible for retention of the employee is Interest value,, which too has been found to be equally important for all age groups, as has been suggested by the Chi Square Analysis
4. For age group 4, i.e., those above 55 years of age, the most important attribute of employer branding responsible for retention of the employee is Work Life Balance.

These findings highlight that the institutions looking to retain top talent in the LIS field should tailor their strategies based on these findings. For younger employees, offering opportunities for professional development

is key, while for older professionals, policies that promote work-life balance are essential. By adopting a targeted employer branding strategy, higher education institutions can foster a work environment that not only attracts but also retains skilled LIS professionals. There is thus the need for educational institutions to prioritize work-life Balance, which is particularly important in sectors like library and information science, where employees often manage multiple roles and responsibilities.

**To summarise in a tabular form, it is:**

<b>Age group</b>	<b>Age Interval</b>	<b>Most Important dimension for employer retention</b>
Group 1	Below or equal 35Yrs.	Development value
Group 2	36-45 Yrs.	Social value
Group 3	46-55 Yrs.	Interest value
Group 4	More than 55 Yrs.	Work life balance

The policies can accordingly be prescribed to the companies, especially those in the Library and Information Science Sector, to choose branding strategies to retain the best of their employees, depending on the age group of the target employees. This shall help the companies to design pay packages and perks accordingly. These insights not only enhance our understanding of how different dimensions of employer branding impact employee retention across age groups but also underscore the importance of targeted HR strategies that resonate with the unique values within the library and information science field. As educational institutions, especially those in the LIS sector, evolve in response to advancements, emphasizing development, social connection, engagement, and work-life balance becomes essential to maintaining a dedicated workforce.

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