

Exploring the Effect of Employer Branding on Generation Z's Job Market Preferences

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Abstract: This article explores the conceptual relationship between employer branding and Generation Z's interest in joining the workforce. Raised in an era of rapid technological and information growth, Generation Z typically seeks dynamic, inclusive, and purpose-driven work environments. Employer branding, which refers to an organization's efforts to project a favorable image to potential employees, plays a pivotal role in drawing the attention of this generation. Through a literature review and conceptual analysis, the article examines how factors such as corporate values, workplace culture, digital presence, and a company's dedication to sustainability and employee welfare contribute to shaping Generation Z's perceptions. Therefore, employer branding emerges not just as a promotional tactic, but as a strategic approach to attract emerging talent. This discussion aims to offer companies valuable insights for developing more responsive and generation-aligned branding strategies.

Keywords: Employer Branding; Generation Z; Job Interest; Corporate Image; HR Strategy;

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I. INTRODUCTION

The evolving landscape of the workforce in the digital age has notably influenced corporate approaches to attracting and retaining talent, particularly among members of Generation Z. Born between 1997 and 2012, this generation has been shaped by constant exposure to technology, abundant access to information, and a tendency to critically assess conventional workplace norms (Francis & Hoefel, 2018). They prioritize work environments that not only offer competitive compensation but also promote inclusivity, flexibility, and alignment with their personal values.

In the context of intensifying global competition, employer branding has emerged as a key strategy for positioning a company as an employer of choice. Employer branding refers to an organization's initiative to cultivate a positive identity and reputation among both potential and existing employees (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004). By building an appealing image, companies can attract young, talented individuals whose values and aspirations match those of the organization.

Generation Z closely observes how companies present themselves online, treat their workforce, and engage with social and environmental issues. A Deloitte report (2021) indicates that this generation favors employers that actively support social and environmental causes. Consequently, a credible and compelling employer brand can greatly influence Generation Z's willingness to join an organization.

In light of these trends, it becomes essential to explore how employer branding strategies can be effectively tailored to capture Generation Z's interest. This article seeks to contribute conceptually by examining the link between employer branding and Generation Z's job preferences through a review of relevant literature and theoretical perspectives.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Employer Branding

Employer branding refers to the strategic process of shaping a company's reputation and identity as an attractive place to work, targeting both current and prospective employees. The concept was initially introduced by Ambler and Barrow (1996), who described it as the application of branding techniques within the field of human resource management. Its core objective is to generate added value that distinguishes the organization in the talent market.

Building on this foundation, Backhaus and Tikoo (2004) expanded the framework by outlining two essential elements of employer branding: the employer value proposition and internal branding. The employer value proposition encompasses the benefits and opportunities a company promises to its employees, while internal branding involves the company's efforts to effectively communicate and fulfill these promises.

As noted by Backhaus and Tikoo (2004, p. 502), employer branding centers on crafting a unique and compelling employer identity that resonates with both potential recruits and existing staff.

B. Characteristics of Generation Z in the Workforce

Generation Z possesses unique characteristics that set them apart from previous generations. Known as digital natives, they prioritize speed, convenience, and openness to diversity and change (Francis & Hoefel, 2018). In the workplace, they tend to prefer flexibility, work-life balance, and environments that support personal growth and development.

A Deloitte survey (2021) highlights that Generation Z highly prioritizes corporate social values and sustainability initiatives. This generation expects companies to demonstrate transparency, integrity, and provide avenues for making a meaningful social impact through their roles.

As stated in the report, “Generation Z prefers to be employed by organizations whose values reflect their own and that actively contribute to societal advancement” (Deloitte, 2021).

C. Job Interest and Influencing Factors

Job interest refers to an individual's tendency to choose and pursue certain types of work based on personal interests, values, and perceptions of the work environment. According to Robbins and Judge (2017), factors such as perceptions of the company, organizational image, and the values conveyed by the workplace culture greatly influence individuals' decisions when selecting an employer.

A positive employer brand can enhance a company's attractiveness in the eyes of job seekers, especially among younger generations who are more sensitive to reputation and organizational values. Therefore, employer branding strategies must be carefully designed to shape perceptions that align with the expectations of Generation Z.

III. METHODOLOGY

This article employs a literature review method and a qualitative descriptive approach grounded in theoretical thinking. This method was chosen as the article aims to analyze and synthesize various relevant sources to understand the relationship between employer branding and Generation Z's job interest.

The literature review was conducted by examining scholarly journals, global survey reports, and reputable publications that discuss the concepts of employer branding, the characteristics of Generation Z, and the factors influencing job interest. These sources were critically analyzed to develop a conceptual framework that explains how employer branding shapes Generation Z's perceptions and preferences regarding the world of work.

A qualitative descriptive approach is used to illustrate the relationships between concepts based on findings from the literature. This technique enables the author to construct logical and systematic arguments based on existing theories, without the need for primary data collection.

“Literature review-based studies are useful for synthesizing existing knowledge and identifying conceptual relationships in a structured manner” (Snyder, 2019, p. 334).

This approach also enables the author to provide conceptual insights and suggestions for companies and HR professionals on the significance of crafting employer branding strategies that resonate with Generation Z's values and expectations in the current workforce landscape.

IV. RESULTS

The following section presents a selection of articles examined through a literature review and qualitative descriptive approach. This method facilitates a thorough analysis of existing research and viewpoints concerning the impact of employer branding on Generation Z's interest in entering the workforce. By employing this approach, the study seeks to offer a comprehensive understanding of the key factors that shape Generation Z's workplace preferences, with a particular focus on the employer branding strategies adopted by organizations.

Table 1. List of Reviewed Articles

No.	Discussion Topic	Study	Quotation	Source
1	Employer Branding Increases Generation Z's Intention to Apply	Jordan & Desiana (2023)	Employer branding significantly influences the intention to apply, mediated by organizational reputation and person-organization fit.	Jurnal Syntax Literate
		Wardani & Ikhran (2023)	Employer branding, corporate reputation, and CSR partially influence Generation Z's intention to apply for jobs.	Jurnal Kewirausahaan dan Inovasi
2	Dimensions of Employer Branding That Attract Generation Z	Fadilah & Putranto (2023)	Four out of five dimensions of employer branding significantly influence Generation Z women's intention to apply for jobs.	Jurnal Syntax Literate

No.	Discussion Topic	Study	Quotation	Source
		Nguyen (2023)	Attractive compensation, company reputation, work environment, and engaging tasks positively affect Generation Z's intention to apply for jobs.	Journalajeba.com
3	The Role of Employer Branding in Retention and Work-Life Balance	Hendriana et al. (2023)	Employer branding mediates the relationship between work-life balance and employee retention among Generation Z.	E-Journal Universitas Airlangga
4	The Influence of Social Media and E-Recruitment	Zahira et al. (2024)	Employer branding and the use of social media influence Generation Z's intention to apply for jobs through company reputation.	E-Journal Universitas Airlangga
		Lestari & Manggiasih (2023)	Employer branding and e-recruitment affect Generation Z's intention to apply for jobs.	Journalajeba.com
5	A Systematic Review on Employer Branding and Generation Z	Vieira et al. (2024)	Effective employer branding includes values of sustainability, inclusivity, and work-life balance, which are highly appreciated by Generation Z.	-

Source: table processed by researchers, 2025

V. DISCUSSION

The literature review reveals that employer branding plays a substantial role in shaping Generation Z's intention to pursue job opportunities. This section highlights key insights from multiple studies that examine how employer branding affects Generation Z's interest in entering the workforce.

A. Employer Branding Increases Generation Z's Intention to Apply

Jordan and Desiana (2023) found that employer branding has a notable positive impact on Generation Z's intention to seek employment with a company. A strong and consistent corporate image is vital in fostering a favorable perception, particularly among younger generations who value transparency and ethical corporate practices. The study emphasizes that organizational reputation and alignment between personal and organizational values (person-organization fit) serve as key mediating factors in this relationship. Generation Z tends to be more attracted to companies that project a solid image and uphold values such as social justice, diversity, and work-life balance.

As noted by Jordan and Desiana (2023), "Employer branding significantly influences the intention to apply, mediated by organizational reputation and person-organization fit."

Furthermore, research by Wardani and Ikhrum (2023) supports these findings by showing that employer branding, organizational reputation, and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) all play a role in influencing Generation Z's job application intentions. Their study reinforces the idea that Generation Z seeks more than just financial compensation, placing high value on companies that demonstrate social and environmental responsibility.

According to Wardani and Ikhrum (2023), "Employer branding, company reputation, and CSR partially influence Generation Z's intention to apply for jobs."

B. Dimensions of Employer Branding That Attract Generation Z

Fadilah and Putranto (2023) found that there are several aspects of employer branding appeal strongly to Generation Z, especially in terms of development opportunities, financial benefits, practical job applications, and personal interests. These four components are seen as crucial in shaping Generation Z women's willingness to apply for jobs. Career advancement and financial security are top priorities for this generation, leading them to prefer companies that provide growth prospects and attractive compensation packages.

According to Fadilah and Putranto (2023), "Four out of five dimensions of employer branding significantly influence the intention to apply among Generation Z women."

Similarly, Nguyen (2023) emphasizes the significance of competitive pay, a company's reputation, a healthy work environment, and stimulating job roles in attracting Gen Z applicants. In Vietnam's hospitality sector, Generation Z values fair pay and a workplace culture that supports their well-being. They are more likely to apply to employers who offer both strong financial incentives and a nurturing, positive atmosphere.

As Nguyen (2023) notes, "Attractive compensation, company reputation, work environment, and engaging tasks positively influence Generation Z's intention to apply for jobs."

C. The Role of Employer Branding in Retention and Work-Life Balance

Hendriana et al. (2023) found that employer branding plays a mediating role in the link between work-life balance and the retention of Generation Z employees. For this generation, maintaining a healthy balance between professional responsibilities and personal life is highly important. They seek not just financial rewards but also the flexibility to enjoy time with loved ones or engage in personal pursuits. As such, organizations that present themselves as

supportive of work-life balance are more likely to retain employees from Generation Z.

As stated by Hendriana et al. (2023), "Employer branding mediates the relationship between work-life balance and employee retention among Generation Z."

D. The Influence of Social Media and E-Recruitment

In the current digital landscape, social media and e-recruitment are vital tools for conveying employer branding to Generation Z. Zahira et al. (2024) found that when companies utilize social media platforms to communicate their employer brand, it can impact Generation Z's intention to apply, with company reputation acting as a mediating factor. This generation typically researches potential employers on platforms like LinkedIn, Instagram, or Facebook before making application decisions. Therefore, strategically managing social media presence is essential for companies aiming to build a strong employer brand and attract Gen Z candidates.

According to Zahira et al. (2024), "Employer branding and the use of social media influence Generation Z's intention to apply through company reputation."

Similarly, Lestari and Manggiasih (2023) noted that e-recruitment significantly affects Gen Z's job application decisions. A streamlined, user-friendly online recruitment process that clearly communicates company culture and growth opportunities appeals to tech-savvy Gen Z applicants.

As Lestari and Manggiasih (2023) stated, "Employer branding and e-recruitment influence Generation Z's intention to apply for jobs."

E. A Systematic Review on Employer Branding and Generation Z

A systematic review by Vieira et al. (2024) revealed that for employer branding to be effective, it must reflect values such as sustainability, inclusivity, and a healthy work-life balance. Generation Z is particularly drawn to organizations that demonstrate a genuine commitment to environmental responsibility, diversity, and supporting employees' well-being both inside and outside of work. As a result, companies that clearly convey these values in their employer branding efforts are more likely to attract and retain members of Generation Z.

As noted by Vieira et al. (2024), "Effective employer branding includes values of sustainability, inclusivity, and work-life balance, which are highly appreciated by Generation Z."

VI. CONCLUSION

From the discussion above, it is evident that employer branding is essential in influencing Generation Z's perceptions and interest in job opportunities. Elements like a strong company reputation, alignment with Gen Z values, effective use of social media, and support for work-life balance are critical in drawing their attention. Organizations that successfully craft a positive and consistent employer brand

that resonates with Generation Z's preferences will be better positioned to attract and retain this emerging workforce.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To attract and retain Generation Z talent, companies need To build strong employer branding, companies should focus on values that resonate with Generation Z, such as diversity, inclusiveness, and social responsibility. Leveraging social media and digital platforms is also crucial for conveying messages about workplace culture and career prospects, as Gen Z often relies on these channels for information. Moreover, highlighting initiatives that promote work-life balance, flexible work arrangements, and clear career growth paths can significantly influence their decision-making. An accessible and transparent recruitment process via e-recruitment platforms can further boost their interest. Lastly, offering a well-rounded benefits package that includes both monetary rewards and non-financial perks such as wellness initiatives and opportunities for personal growth can strengthen a company's attractiveness to Generation Z.

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