

# Employer Branding through the lens of Bibliometrics: An Analytical Review

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## Abstract

The current study aims to investigate the evolution of employer branding (EB) literature from 1984 to 2024 through a comprehensive bibliometric analysis. The research employs a descriptive research design using bibliometric analysis. Data were sourced from Scopus-indexed publications over four decades. The analysis identified significant growth in EB publications since 2008, reflecting its rising importance in both academia and practice. Employer attractiveness, employee engagement and the influence of digital recruitment strategies were among key themes noted in this study. These findings point to a clear need for organizations that want to compete effectively for top-level talent in today's job market, to make incorporating EB strategies into their recruitment practices a priority. Insights from pioneering research offer pathways for practitioners to move towards better EB practices that lead to building stronger brand reputation and happier employees. This article aims to bridge this gap in the literature by conducting a systematic analysis of EB research through bibliometric analysis.

**Keywords:** Employer Branding, Employer Attractiveness, Bibliometric Analysis.

## INTRODUCTION

Employees those are capable and competent are the backbone of an organization because they help in running the organization smoothly and they generate profits as well (Mujtaba & Mubarik, 2022). The most important asset for a firm, is its talent pool of skilled employees, being the primary source of competitive advantage (Maurya & Agarwal, 2018).

The paramount aim of human resource management (HRM) is to lure, hold and spur on a well-skilled workforce that plays an indispensable role in business prowess (Agustian et al., 2023; Tumasjan et al., 2020). Recently, numerous organizations are moving from traditional, product-oriented business models to more information-rich and technology-based ones (Paschen et al. 2019). Together, these trends have made it more difficult for organizations

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in developed countries to hire and keep good employees (Froidevaux et al., 2020; Alshathry et al., 2017), yet coupled with an ageing workforce, the rapid rise of what has been dubbed the “race for talent,” and low unemployment rates in many areas, mean that the global scarcity is tangible in even these supposedly rich labor pools. Nowadays, organizations attempt strategically to invest in the methods that catch and hold the best employees with a view of maintaining a steady state of qualified workers (Dabirian et al., 2019). The tactics in the basket of marketing strategies have involved employer branding as one of the strategies important for talent acquisition, development and retention (Chopra et al., 2022; Deepa & Baral, 2019; Tanwar & Prasad, 2016).

The concept of employer branding focuses on the workforce, uses employees as valuable human capital, yet another form of capital, with social, structural and intellectual (Bhasin et al., 2019). Additionally, this study seeks to empirically ascertain the extent employer branding is perceived by key demographics as a critical approach for attracting high-skill hires and pinpoint the most relevant antecedents of employer branding for prospective employees when evaluating an employer. Your employer brand consists of “the totality of the psychological, economic, and functional benefits an employer offers its employee” (Leekha Chhabra & Sharma, 2014). A robust employer brand can have several positive outcomes for an organization including enhancing its competitive position in the labor market, attracting better quality candidates for jobs and reducing employee turnover (Saini et al., 2014; Wallace et al., 2014). In this context, the current study intends to enrich the literature on employer branding by means of a bibliometric analysis.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### 1 Employer Branding

Employment branding, also known as employer

branding is a strategy on the part of the employer to promote their company as a desired place to work. The origin for the term Employer Branding can be traced back to Ambler & Barrow (1996) who defined it as a package of functional and economic benefits appealing welfare, career prospects, working environment, and reliability ported by an employer in return for which a strong so that better position is taken up by qualified personnel. Employer branding according to Mosley & Schmidt (2017) is characterized as a modern way as Sourcing talent and Communicating Vision. Jiang & Iles (2011) consider that employer branding is a 'powerful attractor' for the applications from potential employees and to the loyalty of existing works. Employer branding is coined as the company-wide strategy devoted to growing awareness among employees and prospective employees of what makes your company a unique place to work, (Lloyd, 2002).

### 2 Employer Attractiveness

Employer attractiveness refers to the perceived appeal of a company as an employer, encompassing factors such as its reputation, work environment, and employee value proposition, influencing the desirability of the organization among potential job applicants. It reflects the positive attributes that make a company an attractive and sought-after place to work. Forming impressions of potential employers, which encompass perceptions of organizational appeal, plays a pivotal role in successfully attracting candidates (Carless, 2007). Employer attractiveness entails a set of anticipated advantages that potential employees associate with working within an organization (Berthon et al., 2005). Employer branding is performed to elevate employer attractiveness and to build their reputation. Employer attractiveness, as defined by Berthon et al. (2005), refers to the benefits that potential employees perceive from working at a particular organization.

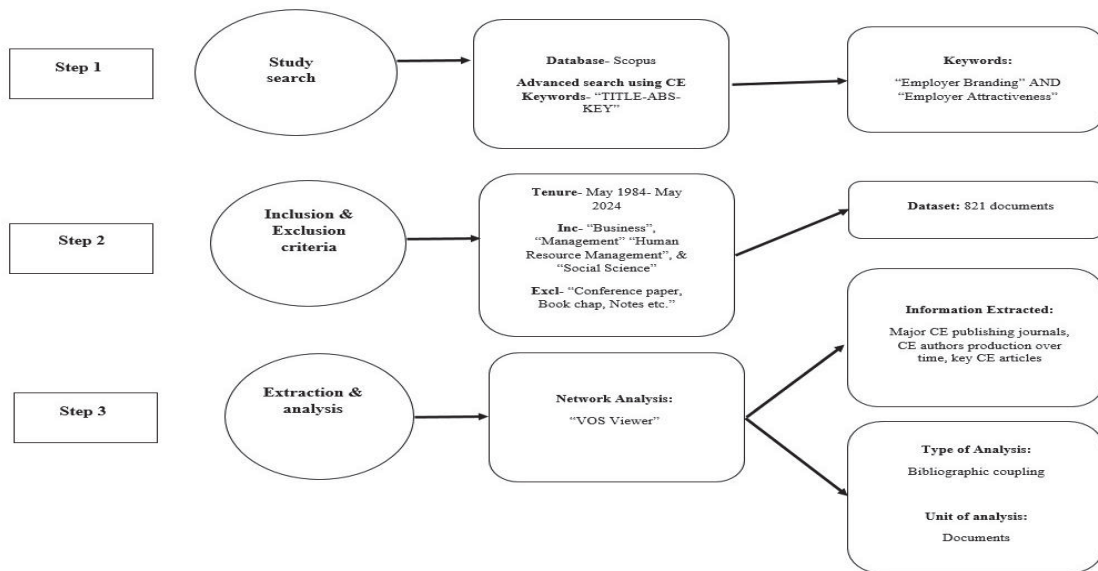
**Research Gap, Objectives & Methodology**

**1 Research Gap**

Even though an employer branding is increasingly recognizing its role in talent acquisition and retention, there is still a significant void of available literature, no less empirical studies. The lack of related research in this area indicates that employer branding is still at initial level as observed by Maheshwari et al. (2017). Existing studies mainly provide theoretical discussions or conceptual frameworks which are too hypothetical to help practitioners making strategic decisions based on data. Existing empirical research in this area appears to be limited and there is a large void demanding quantitative evidence to understand the effect of employer branding on different organization outcomes.

**2 Research Methodology**

The study employed a descriptive research design to investigate the dimensions associated with employer branding using bibliometric analysis. The analysis was conducted with the help of bibliometric analysis. For bibliometric analysis, the articles published in the Scopus-indexed academic publications from the year 1984 to 2024 were taken into consideration. A network analysis utilizing 'VOS viewer' was carried out on the studies. 'Visualisation of Similarities,' or 'VOS viewer,' constructs two-dimensional bibliographic networks based on similarity, as detailed by Waltman et al. (2010). The analysis employed bibliographic coupling, with the unit of analysis being 'documents' and utilizing a fractional counting method. Figure 1 encapsulates this process in a flowchart format.



**Figure 1: Research methodology summarization**

**Data Analysis**

**1 Bibliometric Analysis**

In the research landscape surrounding employer branding, authors utilized VOSviewer software to conduct a

bibliometric analysis. This analysis encompasses a diverse dataset of scholarly articles, books, and conference papers. The resulting network visualization offers a detailed mapping of key themes and interrelationships within the field of employer branding.

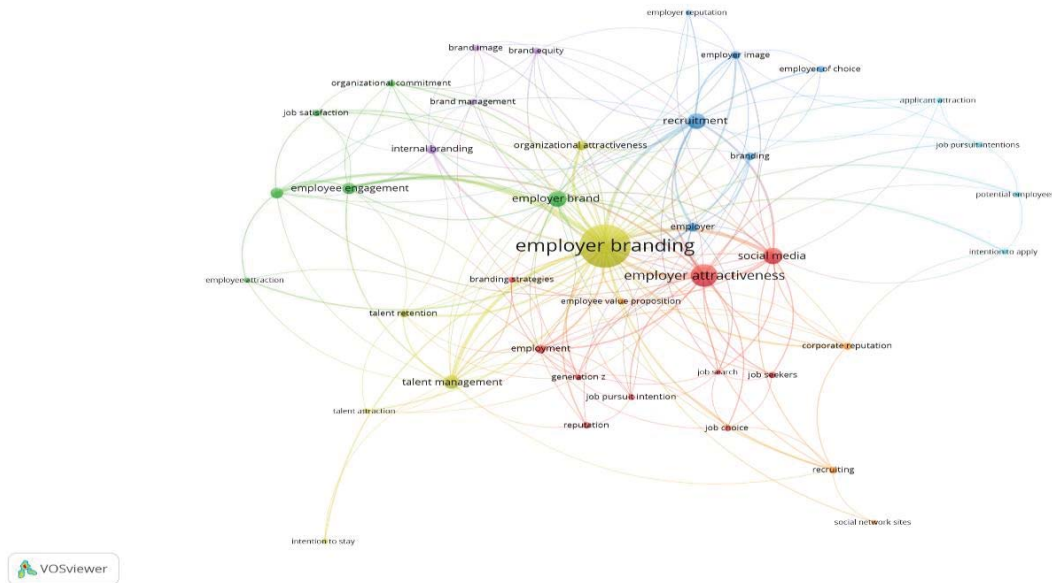


Figure 2: VOSviewer diagram of clusters

### 1.1 Overview of the Network

The network visualization presented by VOSviewer consists of nodes representing keywords, with the size of each node corresponding to the frequency of the keyword's occurrence. Edges connecting the nodes indicate co-occurrence relationships, while the color of each node and edge denotes different thematic clusters. This intricate network illustrates the multifaceted nature of employer branding research.

#### Major Clusters and Themes

##### 1. Employer Branding and Attractiveness (Yellow Cluster)

The topically-centered yellow cluster is built around "employer branding" and "employer attractiveness."

This cluster comprises the nucleus of the network illustrating that branding concept is very central in improving employer attractiveness). The cluster also stresses the related concepts of "employer brand" and "brand management," "branding strategies" as part of this 'internal branding,' and points to the concept of "organizational attractiveness". Most of the research in this cluster relates to how organizations can employ branding as a key strategy by focusing on attracting potential employees and creating itself as a place where everyone wants to work.

##### 2. Employee Engagement and Retention (Green Cluster)

Keywords such as "employee engagement," "job satisfaction," "organizational commitment," "talent retention," and - again - employee attraction make

up the green cluster. It is about the internal effect employer branding has on the current employees in relation to engaging and retaining talent. It also scrutinizes that how these employer branding techniques are working in sustaining job satisfaction and organizational commitment and responsible worker, which can provide a kind of stability and encourage to work.

### 3. Recruitment and Social Media (Red Cluster)

The red cluster suggests about the positive impact of social media in recruitment and employer branding as we have identified keywords like "recruitment, "social media", "employer of choice" & "corporate reputation". It analyses organizations use of social media platforms for recruitment, employer branding and corporate reputation. This cluster highlights that the significance of digital channels in contemporary recruitment strategies is increasing.

### 4. Talent Management and Development (Orange Cluster)

The orange cluster features keywords around talent management, retention and attraction with intention to stay. This cluster is dedicated to the strategic planning, management and training of talent within organizations. It directly connects employer branding with how talent management practices are deployed effectively, echoing how it is essential for

companies to build a slick brand as the mechanism to bring in/retain your share of top end thinking.

### 5. Brand Image and Equity (Blue Cluster)

The blue cluster (which includes the terms "brand image," brand equity" and "employer reputation") looks more broadly at the branded implications of employer branding on an organization's overall external brand constraints. The cluster on employer brand and its impact on, the reputation and brand equity of an organization by using different segmentation for attracting both desired potential employees and customers.

#### 1.2 Interconnections and Implications

The network visualization (overlay) identifies many cross-links between these Clusters, highlighting the interdisciplinary nature of employer branding research. For example, the connection between yellow and red clusters shows that career recruitment can be leveraged through employer branding integrated with social media strategies. Likewise, the green and orange clusters show an intersection between both employee engagement and talent management domains, leading to the conclusion that better branding strategies may improve not only business attractiveness, but also employee satisfaction and loyalty simultaneously.

**Table 1: Year wise classification of articles**

Year	Number of Articles
1984	1
1993	1
1994	1
1996	1
1998	1
1999	1
2000	1

2002	1
2004	2
2005	3
2006	8
2007	4
2008	13
2009	15
2010	8
2011	18
2012	6
2013	30
2014	23
2015	37
2016	50
2017	44
2018	65
2019	63
2020	80
2021	86
2022	88
2023	122
2024	48

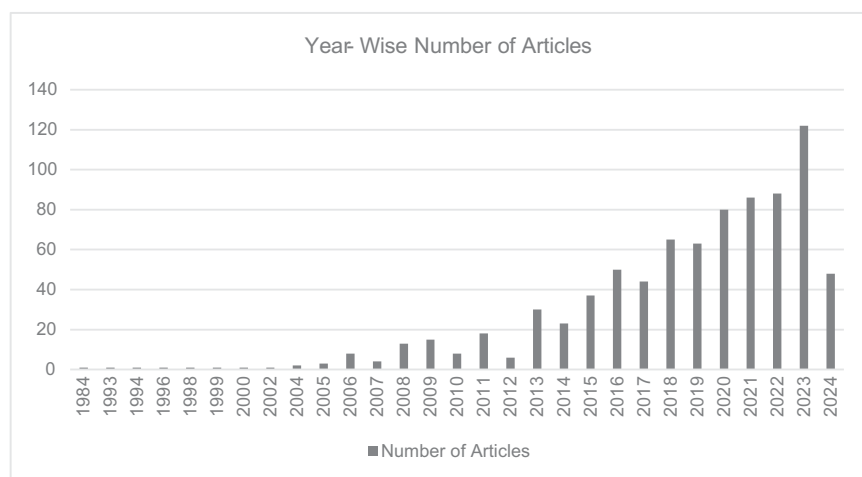
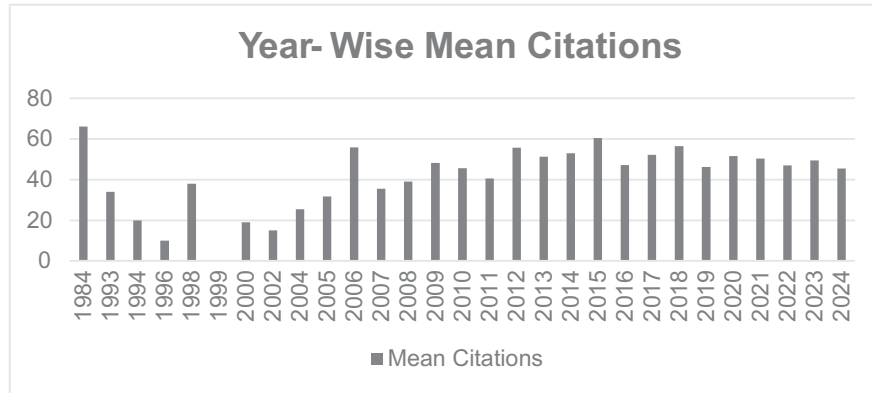


Figure 3: Year wise classification

The bibliometric analysis provides a comprehensive view of the trends in article publications and citations over several decades as shown in Table 1 and Figure 3. The data reveals significant growth in the number of articles published from 1984 to 2024. Initially, the number of articles published each year was relatively low, with only one article published per year from 1984 to 2002, except for slight increases in 2004 and 2005. However, a notable increase in the number of articles begins in 2006, with a sharp rise observed from 2008 onwards.

**Table 2: Year wise Classification of mean Citations**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Mean Citations</b>
1984	66
1993	34
1994	20
1996	10
1998	38
1999	0
2000	19
2002	15
2004	25.5
2005	31.67
2006	55.88
2007	35.5
2008	39
2009	48.13
2010	45.63
2011	40.61
2012	55.67
2013	51.3
2014	52.87
2015	60.35
2016	47.16
2017	52.11
2018	56.42
2019	46.24
2020	51.49
2021	50.27
2022	47.02
2023	49.44
2024	45.52



**Figure 4: Year wise mean citations**

The mean citation data provides insights into the impact and relevance of the articles published each year as shown in Table 2 and Figure 4. In the early years, the mean citations per article vary significantly. For instance, the article published in 1984 received a mean citation of 66, indicating high impact, whereas articles in 1996 and 1999 received only 10 and 0 mean citations, respectively. From 2006 onwards, the mean citations per article generally show an upward trend, with notable peaks and fluctuations.

**Table 3: Top 10 Contributing Journals**

Rank	Journal	Count
1	Human Resource Management International Digest	13
2	Journal of Product and Brand Management	12
3	Developments in Marketing Science: Proceedings of the Academy of Marketing Science	12
4	International Journal of Organizational Analysis	11
5	International Journal of Human Resource Management	10
6	Frontiers in Psychology	10
7	CSR, Sustainability, Ethics and Governance	10
8	Employee Relations	9
9	Problems and Perspectives in Management	9
10	Human Resource Management	8

Source: Scopus database (May, 2024)

The analysis of the dataset in Table 3 reveals significant insights into the landscape of employer branding research. The top contributing journals by publication count provide a clear picture of where most of the academic discussions and advancements in this field are taking place.



**Table 4: Top 10 Contributing Journals Citation Wise**

Rank	Journal	Total Citations
1	Career Development International	731
2	Journal of Product and Brand Management	673
3	International Journal of Human Resource Management	525
4	International Journal of Advertising	519
5	Journal of Marketing Management	483
6	Journal of Brand Management	481
7	Business & Society	453
8	Personnel Review	413
9	International Journal of Business Science and Applied Management	409
10	Journal of Business Research	398

Source: Scopus database (May, 2024)

When examining the citation-wise contributions in Table 4, which highlight the impact and influence of these journals, the data shows a slightly different ranking. The high citation counts in these journals underscore their contributions to foundational theories and practices in employer branding, influencing subsequent research and practice.

**Table 5: Top 10 Most Influential Articles**

Rank	Title	Authors	Year	Cited by
1	Conceptualizing and researching employer branding	Backhaus K.; Tikoo S.	2004	613
2	Captivating company: Dimensions of attractiveness in employer branding	Berthon P.; Ewing M.; Hah L.L.	2005	494
3	Exploring the Relationship Between Corporate Social Responsibility and Firm Innovation	Backhaus K.B.; Stone B.A.; Heiner K.	2002	453
4	An integrative review of employer branding and OB theories	Edwards M.R.	2009	264
5	Organizational identity and employer image: Toward a unifying framework	Lievens F.; Van Hove G.; Anseel F.	2007	244
6	Employer Image and Employer Branding: What We Know and What We Need to Know	Lievens F.; Slaughter J.E.	2016	221
7	Employer branding: Strategic implications for staff recruitment	Wilden R.; Gudergan S.; Lings I.	2010	213

8	Employer branding: Employer attractiveness and the use of social media	Sivertzen A.-M.; Nilsen E.R.; Olafsen A.H.	2013	191
9	Exploring the relationship between corporate, internal, and employer branding	Foster C.; Punjaisri K.; Cheng R.	2010	187
10	Characteristics of successful employer brands	Moroko L.; Uncles M.D.	2008	183

Source: Scopus database (May, 2024)

The analysis of the most influential articles in Table 5 provides further depth into key academic contributions.

The current bibliometric analysis offered a holistic view on the central concepts and their relationships in employer branding research. The clusters represented the still five identified areas in this field; i.e. employer branding and attractiveness, employee engagement and retention, recruitment & social media talent management & development as well as brand image(corrected to equity asset).

The inner connections of these clusters underscore the complex adjacent lines or dimension in employer branding which cries out for a global approach where internal and external factors inherently affect each other. Therefore, recognizing such associations while devising employer branding strategies is critical in order to draw and retain high-quality talent whilst improving organizational commitment and amplifying corporate reputation strengths.

**DISCUSSION**

A bibliometric analysis using VOSviewer revealed five major thematic clusters: employer branding & attractiveness; employee engagement & retention; recruitment, social media, and talent management/development; brand image/equity. These clusters portray the complexity of employer branding, both from an external perception but also internal strategy. The yellow cluster at the center, focusing on "employer branding" and "attractiveness," connects employer setups with brand concepts by talking over such ideas as

becoming essential in recipient employment. Brand management/person/organizational attractiveness is the strategic actions taken by a firm to more effectively present themselves as an employer of choice. The green cluster is similar with the difference focusing on what falls into 'internal' within employer branding, including employee engagement, job satisfaction and talent retention. The first cluster highlights the necessity to have an engaged and committed workforce where employees are motivated by internal branding efforts which lead to job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

Additionally, the Red cluster delves into opportunities between recruitment and social media, which highlights a trend in how vital digital channels are becoming the mainstays of contemporary recruitment strategies. They are using social media, employer of choice and corporate reputation as the keywords to build their online story to attract the jobseeker. The orange cluster is about talent management and development, focusing upon the strategic elements of managing & developing people in companies. Employer branding and talent management practices are interrelated areas that go hand in hand with acquiring and retaining the best minds.

Lastly, the blue cluster investigates employer branding through a brand image. In this scenario, a strong employer brand can even get directly related to the overall brand reputation which in turn helps attract talent that meets requirements and deliver value on their expected performance.

A bibliometric analysis of employer branding research from 1984 to 2024 provides an exhaustive perspective on how the field has evolved over this period, including its major trends publications and thematic clusters. The number of publications related to employer branding has dramatically increased after 2008, which further illustrates the relevance and increasing popularity in both academic as well practical environments. This presents a trend highlighting the importance that organizations must place on employer branding as they vie for top talent in an increasingly competitive job market. This steady growth in publications suggests that employer branding is becoming institutionally accepted as part of the broader organizational strategy, going far beyond just traditional HR functions.

The focus on employer branding strategies demonstrates an understanding among organizations that they must present themselves in a favorable light to those people seeking jobs. This requires showcasing diversity of workplace cultures, development possibilities and well-rounded branding that resonates with corporate values. This is especially apparent in branding strategies where authenticity plays a major role given that candidates want to know about said values but also see accurate ones being expressed and acted upon. Employer branding also importantly leads to enhanced employee engagement and retention. Branding strategies by organizations should not only capture potential and attract new talent, but also maintain high levels of job satisfaction and organizational commitment on current employees. In ways that sustained good work environments, growth opportunities are provided and the employee is honored. The usage of social media in recruiting is a sign of how employer branding has evolved to meet the demands of our interconnected, digital world. Organizations can utilize social media platforms in targeting a wider audience, connecting with potential candidates and strengthening their employer brand. These measures are further supported by creative implementations of virtual

reality office tours and interactive webinars. By prioritizing talent management and development in employer branding, we acknowledge the strategic value of having an employment brand that directly correlates with greater trends within a company.

### **Conclusion and Implications**

Drawing upon bibliometric analysis of employer branding research from 1984 to 2024, the study indicates important publications trends by reporting a dramatic surge in annual articles published, particularly since year 2008. This indicates an increasing academic interest and awareness of the importance of the field which in turn, underlines organizations should consider employer branding as a strategic tool to attract and retain talent. Among the top contributing journals as well as the most influential articles, key sources and works that are driving the research in the field include Human Resource Management International Digest, and International Journal of Human Resource Management. Influential articles including "Conceptualizing and researching employer branding" by Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004; "Captivating company: Dimensions of attractiveness in employer branding" by Berthon et al., 2005 are critical for providing an understanding of the employer branding process. In this regard, organizations and researchers need to continue to pay attention to these journals and articles to benefit from the latest research in terms of the attractiveness of the employee.

The network visualization highlights five major clusters: Employer Branding and Attractiveness, Employee Engagement and Retention, Recruitment and Social Media, Talent Management and Development, and Brand Image and Equity, suggesting that effective employer branding requires an integrated approach considering various aspects. Practitioners should develop holistic strategies addressing multiple facets to create a compelling and cohesive employer brand, while researchers can use these clusters to identify gaps in the literature and

explore new interdisciplinary connections. Citation-wise contributions of journals like Career Development International indicate their influence and relevance, highlighting the importance of career development and product/brand management perspectives within employer branding. Organizations should leverage insights from these areas to enhance their efforts in not only attracting but also developing and retaining talent.

Future research should investigate the effect of emerging technologies and digital platforms on employer branding, cross-cultural perspectives of employer branding perceptions as well long-run effects of EB strategies towards organizational performance and employee satisfaction. Further, research from interdisciplinary areas of marketing, HR and OB could provide a broader perspective on the contextual dynamics shaping employer branding as well as its implications for practice.

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