

# Employer Branding And Talent Retention In Private Indian HEIs, Especially In Light Of Nanoeducation Advancements

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In today's times when the competition among organizations makes it necessary to hire the best employees and talented employees too then look for and get lured by the greenest pastures, it is imperative that the organizations, including those in the Higher Education Sector, devise strategies that work towards the retention of these talented employees. This becomes even more pronounced with the Gen Z, which is ever-ready to substitute classroom teaching with AI simulated virtual tools and make the best of the nano technology advancements in education, or nanoeducation. This paper thus attempts to study those traits that work towards the retention of the talents in Higher Education Institutes (HEIs). We discovered that individuals who were seeking employment considered the development value of potential employers as the most crucial factor. This means they valued opportunities for growth, training, and career advancement offered by the employers. On the other hand, they considered the interest value, which pertains to personal interest or passion in the industry or work of the potential employers, as the least important factor. Social Value and Work Life Balance were the other two variables that affected talent retention, in that order. Thus, this paper sheds light on the parameters that organizations, especially the HEIs, have to focus on to retain the best talent with themselves.

## INTRODUCTION

Organizations are becoming more and more interested in differentiating themselves from their competitors as they encounter fierce rivalry in their industries. Due to this, businesses have begun to understand the need of investing in human capital to maintain their competitive edge. (Barney, 1991; Grant, 1991). The importance of distinctive resources that cannot be simply replaced by other resources is emphasized through attracting and keeping the appropriate individuals on board. Organizations have so begun to place greater emphasis on the problem of recruiting and retention, which has prompted researchers in HR and marketing to look into the problem. Employer branding (EB) is one such tactic that has grown to be an essential tool for luring, securing, and keeping talent (Ambler and Barrow, 1996).

Organizations now need to develop a coordinated plan to choose, put into practice, and track a

successful employer branding strategy as a result of globalization, a never-ending battle for talent, and deregularization with characteristics of market disruption (Chhabra and Sharma, 2014). The capacity to draw in and keep outstanding talent is quickly emerging as a critical concern for university human resource management. (Brink et al, 2013, p. 180). Understanding the importance of bringing on and keeping the proper academic talent on board has become increasingly important in light of globalization and a disruptive corporate environment. (Baruch, 2013)

Employers are described as fatalists who devote a lot of time and energy on EB strategy and see their workers as competitive facilitators by Universal, the global authority on employer branding. (Maheshwari et al., 2017). The capacity to draw in and keep outstanding talent is quickly emerging as a critical concern for university human resource management. (Brink et al, 2013 p. 180). Researchers have acknowledged in the past that the employer branding approach in the academic arena is an understudied yet crucial subject. (Brosi and Welpe, 2015; Hamidizadeh and Fadardi, 2019).

India's education system is hampered by a shortage of competent instructors due to its fast growth. (Sen, 2012; Sharma, 2013). Less than 0.5% of students enrolled pursue doctoral degrees, and there aren't many resources available for research activities, which adds to the shortage of qualified independent researchers already present. (Ravi et al, 2019). The gap between supply and demand for teacher resources in the academic market has grown even wider as a result of the professor shortage and the sharp increase in enrolment. The gross enrolment has virtually grown from 24.30% in 2014-2015 to 26.3% in 2018-2019.

Deloitte (2016) reports that institutions are beginning to understand the value of hiring and retaining a diverse and talented staff. The university boards are figuring out the best tactics for motivating academics and encouraging desirable conduct. This becomes further need of the hour in light of the nanotechnological advancements occurring in the field of education. With the advancements of AI, the use of nanotechnologies in education and development of nanoeducation curricula by many of the upcoming universities, especially in the west, it is expected that this trend would soon catch up with the Indian HEIs as well and the need for retention of the best talent would then become even more pronounced. In this light, it needs to be identified as to what are the factors that shall be useful to the employers to brand themselves in a manner that the best of the talent gets retained with them.

In pursuing the aforementioned problem, this paper aims at helping the academic institutions in developing and implementing an HR strategy that effectively conveys distinctive employer branding characteristics in labor market. To pursue this, the paper uses a factor-analytic method to identify employer branding features that draw in and keep individuals working in the Indian higher education sector.

Thus, to encapsulate and summarise the paper, broadly:

**Purpose-** The aim of this paper is to examine how the dimensions of employer branding, specifically social value and development value, affect the retention of employees working in private higher education institutions in India. This is explored especially in light of the nanotechnological advancements occurring in the field of higher education, more commonly being called as nanoeducation.

**Methodology-** A structured questionnaire was administered to 384 teaching staff members to gather data on their perceptions of employer branding dimensions and talent retention. Multiple regression analysis was employed to test the hypotheses.

**Findings-** There is a significant correlation between employer branding dimensions and talent retention among employees in the private higher education sector in India.

**Practical Implications-** Increased perception of the employer brand's value improves talent retention. Increased employee retention rates further cut the expense of finding and training new hires, boosting an organization's profitability. As a result, it is both theoretically significant for improving talent management concepts and practically relevant for managing employee turnover. Furthermore, once the nanotechnological advancements start taking over the Indian Higher Education Institutions, like they are gradually doing so in the west, the institutions shall find it increasingly difficult to attract students towards traditional classroom learning pedagogy, at which point in time, retaining the best of the talent, shall become an imperative for the HEIs to follow and implement.

### **Kinds of Employer Brandings and available Literature on them**

Broadly, the employer branding has been classified by experts as internal and external employer branding. There has been available literature on both of these aspects and these two are explained and discussed below:

#### **Internal Employer Branding**

Internal Employer Branding refers to the strategies and activities undertaken by an organization to cultivate and promote a positive employer image and reputation among its existing employees. It involves creating an appealing and engaging work environment that fosters employee satisfaction, loyalty, and a sense of belonging.

The purpose of internal employer branding is to attract, retain, and motivate talented employees within the organization. It focuses on enhancing employee engagement, commitment, and alignment with the organization's values, mission, and goals. By cultivating a strong internal employer brand, companies aim to create a positive workplace culture, increase employee morale, and foster a sense of pride and advocacy among employees.

Internal employer branding initiatives can include various practices such as effective communication, transparent leadership, career development opportunities, recognition and rewards programs, employee well-being initiatives, and fostering a positive work-life balance. These initiatives aim to create a supportive and motivating work environment that encourages employees to contribute their best efforts and enhances their overall job satisfaction.

By investing in internal employer branding, organizations can benefit from increased employee retention, improved productivity, enhanced teamwork and collaboration, and a positive organizational reputation. Moreover, satisfied and engaged employees are more likely to become brand ambassadors, spreading positive word-of-mouth about the organization as an employer and attracting potential candidates.

Overall, internal employer branding is a strategic approach that focuses on building a positive and engaging work environment, ultimately leading to a more committed and motivated workforce.

### **External employer Branding**

External employer branding refers to the strategies and activities that organizations undertake to establish and promote a positive employer image and reputation to external audiences, such as job seekers, potential candidates, customers, and the general public. It involves shaping the organization's public perception as an attractive and desirable employer.

The purpose of external employer branding is to attract and retain top talent, differentiate the organization from competitors, and build a strong employer brand in the market. It aims to position the organization as an employer of choice by effectively communicating its values, culture, benefits, and opportunities for growth and development.

External employer branding initiatives typically include various marketing and communication efforts. These can involve creating a compelling employer brand message, developing an appealing careers website, utilizing social media platforms, participating in industry events and job fairs, engaging with potential candidates through targeted recruitment campaigns, and leveraging employee testimonials and success stories.

The key elements of external employer branding include showcasing the organization's unique selling propositions, highlighting its positive work environment, emphasizing employee benefits and perks, and effectively communicating its commitment to employee well-being, diversity and inclusion, career advancement, and work-life balance.

A strong external employer brand can lead to several benefits for the organization, such as attracting high-quality candidates, reducing recruitment costs, improving the organization's reputation and credibility, and increasing customer loyalty. Moreover, a positive external employer brand can also contribute to the organization's overall brand equity and competitiveness in the market.

In summary, external employer branding is the strategic effort to shape and promote a positive employer image and reputation to external stakeholders. It involves effectively communicating the organization's unique attributes, values, and opportunities to attract top talent and differentiate itself in the competitive job market.

### **Available Literature on Employer Branding**

In order to attract and keep new and present workers, employer branding is "a strategy of internal and external communication of the unique attributes that establish the identity of the firm as an employer and what differentiates it from others." (Wahba and Elmanadily, 2015).

A satisfying atmosphere that fosters employee engagement and loyalty is the result of a company's efforts to provide employee value propositions (Aldousari et al., 2017). The phrase "employer value propositions" (EVPs) is derived from the marketing strategy of "brand positioning," which is a brand key that enhances the reputation of a company's goods or services. (Mascarenhas, 2019).

To desire achieve employee attraction and retention has forced the firms to develop an efficient EB strategy that gives their employees a great working experience. (Mascarenhas, 2019). According to research, encouraging working conditions, an informal workplace culture, just and moral leadership, and a good reputation are some of the things that keep current workers and draw in new ones. (Deepa and Baral, 2019).

**Objectives of Study and Hypothesis**

In line with the broad objective of achieving talent retention in HEIs, ‘Talent Retention’ has been taken as the dependent variable, dependent on the variables Social Value, Development Value, Work Life Balance and Interest Value. Accordingly, hypothesis were drawn as having significant associations between each of these independent variables and talent retention.

For this analysis, the questionnaire covered various aspects some of which, like social status, job reputation, personal social growth, etc. were counted towards the variable social value; likewise variables like on the job training, personal developmental targets, etc. made for the variable Development Value; time available for personal and work life pertained to the variable Work Life Balance; and similarly, the interest created by the employer for the employees by including certain values of interest made up for the parameter of Interest Value. As stated, a correlation of each of these with the dependent variable, talent retention, was studied, as well as their individual correlation with each other was also estimated.

**Methodology and Data Analysis**

As mentioned earlier, SPSS was used to analyze the data for this investigation. A stepwise multiple regression analysis was used to show the variables' importance.

**Reliability**

**Cronbach alfa test values**

To check the internal consistency or reliability of the surveyed variables, the Cronbach Alfa test was applied. The below table gives these values for each of the surveyed values. Since the Cronbach Alfa value for each of these variables is ‘high, while not being ‘too high’, it can safely be concluded that these variables have a high value of agreement among them and can be used to test this analysis.

Social value	.798
Development value	.786
Interest value	.821
Work_ life balance	.822
Talent retention	.851

**Convergent and Discriminant (divergent) validity tests among independent variables**

This test was done to test how the independent variables are correlated to each other, to see if these variables can be a good fit for the correlation analysis or not. Since convergent and divergent validity, with strong convergent validity among similar independent variables and strong divergent validity among different independent variables, indicates all independent variables to be a good fit for the dependent variable, convergent and divergent validity tests were done among different independent variables, taking them in pairs.

For the first such test, Social Value was taken as one construct and Development Value as another construct. As desirable, all questions of social value have strong correlation with each other but there is no correlation with questions of the variable Development Value.



	SV1	SV2	SV3	SV4	SV5	SV6	SV7	SV8	SV9	SV10	SV11	SV12	DV1
SV1	1	.930**	.945**	.963**	.928**	.899**	.938**	.963**	1.000**	1.000*	1.000**	.930**	-0.192
SV2	.930**	1	.873**	.928**	.894**	.859**	.864**	.928**	.930**	.930**	.930**	.857**	-0.169
SV3	.945**	.873**	1	.905**	.872**	.877**	.882**	.905**	.945**	.945**	.945**	.873**	-0.134
SV4	.963**	.928**	.905**	1	.888**	.896**	.902**	.922**	.963**	.963**	.963**	.891**	-0.148
SV5	.928**	.894**	.872**	.888**	1	.827**	.869**	.925**	.928**	.928**	.928**	.858**	-0.192
SV6	.899**	.859**	.877**	.896**	.827**	1	.828**	.859**	.899**	.899**	.899**	.823**	-0.195
SV7	.938**	.864**	.882**	.902**	.869**	.828**	1	.902**	.938**	.938**	.938**	.864**	-0.189
SV8	.963**	.928**	.905**	.922**	.925**	.859**	.902**	1	.963**	.963**	.963**	.965**	-0.199
SV9	1.000*	.930**	.945**	.963**	.928**	.899**	.938**	.963**	1	1.000*	1.000**	.930**	-0.192
SV10	1.000*	.930**	.945**	.963**	.928**	.899**	.938**	.963**	1.000*	1	1.000**	.930**	-0.192
SV11	1.000*	.930**	.945**	.963**	.928**	.899**	.938**	.963**	1.000*	1.000*	1	.930**	-0.192
SV12	.930**	.857**	.873**	.891**	.858**	.823**	.864**	.965**	.930**	.930**	.930**	1	-0.169
DV1	-0.192	-0.169	-0.134	-0.148	-0.192	-0.195	-0.19	-0.2	-0.192	-0.19	-0.192	-0.169	1

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Now taking Development Value as one construct and Interest Value as another construct, similar results were obtained, as follows.

	DV1	DV2	DV3	DV4	DV5	DV6	DV7	DV8	DV9	DV10	DV11	DV12	DV13	IntV1
DV1	1	.903**	.968**	.903**	.899**	.939**	.939**	.935**	.874**	.939**	.968**	.899**	.912**	0.14
DV2	.903**	1	.871**	1.000**	.870**	.906**	.969**	.907**	.842**	.969**	.871**	.937**	.941**	0.04
DV3	.968**	.871**	1	.871**	.937**	.906**	.906**	.907**	.842**	.906**	.935**	.870**	.878**	0.09
DV4	.903**	1.000**	.871**	1	.870**	.906**	.969**	.907**	.842**	.969**	.871**	.937**	.941**	0.04
DV5	.899**	.870**	.937**	.870**	1	.844**	.844**	.966**	.778**	.844**	.870**	.861**	.820**	0.04
DV6	.939**	.906**	.906**	.906**	.844**	1	.937**	.881**	.937**	.937**	.906**	.910**	.970**	0.04
DV7	.939**	.969**	.906**	.969**	.844**	.937**	1	.881**	.875**	1.000**	.906**	.910**	.970**	0.04
DV8	.935**	.907**	.907**	.907**	.966**	.881**	.881**	1	.814**	.881**	.907**	.895**	.858**	0.1
DV9	.874**	.842**	.842**	.842**	.778**	.937**	.875**	.814**	1	.875**	.906**	.910**	.908**	-0.1
DV10	.939**	.969**	.906**	.969**	.844**	.937**	1.000**	.881**	.875**	1	.906**	.910**	.970**	0.04
DV11	.968**	.871**	.935**	.871**	.870**	.906**	.906**	.907**	.906**	.906**	1	.870**	.878**	0.09
DV12	.899**	.937**	.870**	.937**	.861**	.910**	.910**	.895**	.910**	.910**	.870**	1	.885**	0.04
DV13	.912**	.941**	.878**	.941**	.820**	.970**	.970**	.858**	.908**	.970**	.878**	.885**	1	-0
IntV1	0.143	0.038	0.089	0.038	0.042	0.036	0.036	0.098	-0.06	0.036	0.089	0.042	-0.015	1

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Taking Interest Value and Work Life Balance as the two constructs this time, it was again found that all questions of Interest value have strong correlation with each other but there is no correlation with the construct of Work Life Balance.

	IntV1	IntV2	IntV3	IntV4	IntV5	WLB1
IntV1	1	.523**	.908**	.428**	.519**	0.114
IntV2	.523**	1	.460**	.688**	.610**	.314*
IntV3	.908**	.460**	1	.376**	.408**	0.051
IntV4	.428**	.688**	.376**	1	.657**	0.034
IntV5	.519**	.610**	.408**	.657**	1	0.268
WLB1	0.114	.314*	0.051	0.034	0.268	1
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).						

In the next analysis, Work Life Balance is one construct and Interest Value is another construct. Again it was found that all questions of Work Life Balance have strong correlation with each other but there is no correlation with the construct of Talent Retention.

	WLB1	WLB2	WLB3	WLB4	WLB5	WLB6	WLB7	TR1
WLB1	1	.913**	.911**	.945**	0.112	.913**	.941**	0.026
WLB2	.913**	1	.885**	.972**	0.074	.885**	.913**	0.107
WLB3	.911**	.885**	1	.919**	0.152	.885**	.911**	0.009
WLB4	.945**	.972**	.919**	1	0.11	.915**	.945**	0.059
WLB5	0.112	0.074	0.152	0.11	1	0.148	0.112	.370*
WLB6	.913**	.885**	.885**	.915**	0.148	1	.913**	0.107
WLB7	.941**	.913**	.911**	.945**	0.112	.913**	1	0.091
TR1	0.026	0.107	0.009	0.059	.370*	0.107	0.091	1
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).								
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).								

And finally, all questions of Talent Retention have been found to have strong correlation with each other.

	TR1	TR2	TR3	TR4	TR5	TR6	TR7	TR8	TR9
TR1	1	.929**	.858**	.806**	.586**	.965**	.622**	.793**	.738**
TR2	.929**	1	.858**	.806**	.586**	.965**	.622**	.793**	.738**
TR3	.858**	.858**	1	.730**	.586**	.894**	.622**	.719**	.659**
TR4	.806**	.806**	.730**	1	.515**	.833**	.832**	.845**	.796**
TR5	.586**	.586**	.586**	.515**	1	.623**	.554**	.588**	.593**
TR6	.965**	.965**	.894**	.833**	.623**	1	.651**	.822**	.770**
TR7	.622**	.622**	.622**	.832**	.554**	.651**	1	.668**	.687**
TR8	.793**	.793**	.719**	.845**	.588**	.822**	.668**	1	.797**
TR9	.738**	.738**	.659**	.796**	.593**	.770**	.687**	.797**	1
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).									

RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION

The data was analyzed through both regression and ANOVA tests, the former being done to check the description or otherwise of the dependent variable, talent retention, on the four independent variables, namely Social Value, Development Value, Interest Value and Work Life Balance.

### Regression Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.943 <sup>a</sup>	.889	.888	.19152

Predictors: (Constant), Social\_Value, Development\_Value, Interst\_Value, Work\_Life\_Balance

As is seen from the regression model, the independent variables can account for 88.8% of the variance in the dependent variable, according to the modified R square of .888.

Although an adjusted R square of between 70% and 80% indicates a reasonably decent model fit, a low R square isn't always bad and a high R square isn't always excellent. (Source: Jim Forest) Since our model includes characteristics that relate to how people perceive things, its adjusted R square of 88.8% is respectable and it can be considered as a good fit model.

The outcomes of an analysis of variance (ANOVA) model are displayed in the ANOVA table provided. The statistical procedure known as an ANOVA is used to compare the means of two or more groups to see whether there are any statistically significant differences between them. Let's analyse this ANOVA model's findings:

#### Model 1:

Sum of Squares: 111.471 Degrees of Freedom (df): 4 Mean Square: 27.868

F-value: 759.794

Significance (Sig.): .000 The model sums of squares (111.471) represent the variability in the dependent variable (or response variable) that is explained by the independent variables (or predictors) included in the model.

#### ANOVA<sup>b</sup>

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	111.471	4	27.868	759.794	.000 <sup>a</sup>
Residual	13.901	379	.037		
Total	125.372	383			

**Predictors:** (Constant), Work\_life\_balance, Social\_value, Interst\_value, Development\_value

**Dependent Variable:** Talent\_retention

Null Hypothesis ( $H_0$ ): None of the coefficients exhibit a significant difference from zero. Alternative Hypothesis ( $H_1$ ): At least one coefficient exhibits a significant difference from zero. The p-value obtained (0.000) is less than the predetermined significance level ( $\alpha$ ) of 0.05. Consequently, we reject the Null Hypothesis ( $H_0$ ). Therefore, with a 95% confidence level (5% significance level), we can conclude that at least one coefficient exhibits a significant difference from zero.

For the Coefficients<sup>a</sup>



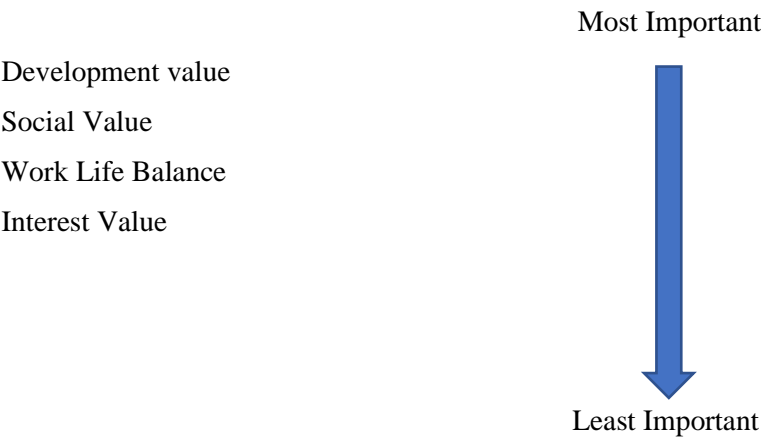
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.074	.078		.956	.340
	Social_value	.189	.017	.192	10.803	.000
	Development_value	.803	.021	.795	37.659	.000
	Interest value	.053	.013	.079	4.048	.000
	Work_life_balance	.055	.013	.080	4.129	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Talent\_retention

So, as seen:

Talent retention = .189 Social value + .803 Development value + .053 Interest value + .055 Work life balance – .074

As the P-values for all regression coefficients are below the significance level of 0.05, it indicates that all attributes have statistical significance at a 5% level of significance. Therefore, the independent variables or attributes that contribute to the dependent variable, i.e., talent retention can be listed in descending order of their importance as follows:



**CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY IMPLICATION**

We discovered that individuals who were seeking employment considered the development value of potential employers as the most crucial factor. This means they valued opportunities for growth, training, and career advancement offered by the employers. On the other hand, they considered the interest value, which pertains to personal interest or passion in the industry or work of the potential employers, as the least important factor.

Furthermore, when we conducted further analyses, we found significant variations in how participants perceived the importance of different dimensions of employer attractiveness. This

suggests that participants had differing opinions and priorities when evaluating employers based on factors such as company culture, reputation, benefits, and work environment.

Overall, this paper highlighted the varying importance individuals place on different aspects of potential employers, shedding light on the factors that influence their employment decisions and preferences.

Such an analysis helps organisations, especially the private sector institutions in the Higher Education spectrum in India, to understand the parameters that affect employee retention and work on the areas to promote those strategies and policies that encourage employee retention. Retaining the best of the talent has always been one of the most important factor in promoting the growth of an organization, as recruiting new staff becomes an expensive, time consuming, results in knowledge loss and is a productivity affecting exercise. With the advent of nano technology and especially nanoeducation, employee engagement becomes the further need of the hour. Thus, the relevance of this paper, to help employers indulge in internal and external branding practices that promotes employee retention. Furthermore, the nano technology and nanoeducation advancements can rather be used as tools to help in this branding process, rather than be seen as a substitute for employees.

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