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Employer Branding in the Digital Recruitment Era: A Systematic Literature Review of Person–Organization Fit and Generation Z's Job Application Intention

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Abstract. *The rapid growth of digital recruitment has transformed organizational talent acquisition strategies, particularly in attracting Generation Z, who extensively utilize digital platforms to evaluate prospective employers. In this context, employer branding has become a strategic approach for enhancing organizational attractiveness and influencing job application intentions. However, previous studies have reported inconsistent findings regarding the relationship between employer branding and job application intention, suggesting that the underlying psychological mechanisms remain insufficiently understood. One potential explanatory mechanism is Person-Organization Fit, which reflects the perceived compatibility between an individual's values and organizational characteristics. This study aims to review and synthesize the existing literature on the relationships among employer branding, Person-Organization Fit, and Generation Z's job application intention in the digital recruitment era. Using a systematic literature review approach, this paper critically examines seminal and recent studies published in reputable international and national journals. The review identifies the theoretical foundations, conceptual developments, measurement dimensions, and empirical findings related to the three constructs while highlighting inconsistencies and research gaps in previous studies. The synthesis suggests that employer branding influences job application intention not only directly but also indirectly through Person-Organization Fit, which functions as a key psychological mechanism in job seekers' decision-making. This review contributes to the human resource management literature by integrating Employer Branding Theory, Person-Organization Fit Theory, and the Theory of Planned Behavior into a comprehensive*



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conceptual framework. It also proposes future research directions for examining these relationships empirically in the context of Generation Z and digital recruitment.

Keywords: *Digital Recruitment; Employer Branding; Generation Z; Job Application Intention; Person-Organization Fit.*



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1. Introduction

The digital transformation of the labour market has fundamentally changed how organizations attract, communicate with, and recruit prospective employees. The emergence of social media, online recruitment platforms, corporate career websites, and professional networking sites has transformed employer branding from a predominantly traditional communication activity into a continuous digital process. Organizations increasingly use digital employer branding to communicate their organizational identity, workplace culture, employment value proposition, career opportunities, and employee experiences. In this context, organizational attractiveness is increasingly influenced by the quality, authenticity, and relevance of information available to potential applicants in digital environments.

These developments are particularly significant with the increasing participation of Generation Z in the labour market. As a digitally connected generation, Generation Z can obtain extensive information about potential employers before submitting job applications. Prospective applicants may evaluate organizations through recruitment advertisements, social media content, employee testimonials, online reviews, and professional networking platforms. Consequently, their job application decisions may depend not only on conventional employment attributes such as salary and job security but also on perceived organizational culture, career development, flexibility, work-life balance, technological innovation, social responsibility, and value compatibility.

Person–Organization Fit (P–O Fit) provides an important theoretical perspective for understanding this relationship. P–O Fit concerns the perceived compatibility between an individual's values, goals, preferences, and characteristics and those of an organization. Digital employer branding can communicate organizational characteristics that allow Generation Z applicants to compare their personal expectations with organizational values. When prospective employees perceive greater compatibility, organizational attractiveness may increase and subsequently strengthen their intention to apply. Thus, P–O Fit can function as a psychological mechanism connecting digital employer branding with job application intention.

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However, the rapid development of digital recruitment also requires organizations to reconstruct their employer branding strategies. Effective digital employer branding should move beyond promotional communication toward authentic, interactive, transparent, and value-oriented engagement. This article therefore presents a systematic literature review examining the relationship between digital employer branding, organizational attractiveness, Person–Organization Fit, and Generation Z's job application intention. It focuses on three interconnected dimensions: digital employer branding and organizational attractiveness, P–O Fit as a mechanism influencing application intention, and the reconstruction of digital employer branding strategies to attract Generation Z. The study aims to provide a conceptual foundation for organizations seeking to develop sustainable and effective digital recruitment strategies in an increasingly competitive labour market.

2. Research Methods

This study aims to review and synthesize the existing literature on the relationships among employer branding, Person-Organization Fit, and Generation Z's job application intention in the digital recruitment era. Using a systematic literature review approach, this paper critically examines seminal and recent studies published in reputable international and national journals.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Digital Employer Branding and Organizational Attractiveness in the Recruitment Era

The digital transformation of recruitment has fundamentally changed the way organizations construct and communicate their identity to prospective employees. Employer branding refers to the strategic process through which an organization develops a distinctive image as an attractive place to work. In the contemporary recruitment environment, this process increasingly takes place through digital channels, including social media, corporate career websites, online recruitment platforms, professional networking sites, recruitment videos, and employee-generated content. These channels allow organizations to communicate their employment value proposition more broadly and interactively than traditional recruitment methods. At the same time, they provide job seekers with greater opportunities to evaluate an organization's reputation, culture, and employment conditions before deciding whether to apply.

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Digital employer branding contributes significantly to organizational attractiveness because it shapes applicants' initial perceptions of an organization. Potential employees may assess organizational characteristics based on information concerning career development, compensation, workplace culture, leadership, flexibility, employee well-being, innovation, diversity, and corporate social responsibility. When such information is communicated clearly and consistently, applicants may develop more favourable perceptions of the organization. Conversely, inconsistent, exaggerated, or misleading employer branding can undermine organizational credibility and create negative expectations among potential applicants.

The importance of digital employer branding is particularly evident among Generation Z, which has entered the labour market with extensive familiarity with digital communication and social media. Rather than relying exclusively on formal job advertisements, Generation Z applicants can investigate employers through multiple online sources. They may examine organizational social media accounts, employee testimonials, online reviews, professional networking platforms, and digital discussions concerning workplace experiences. Consequently, organizational attractiveness increasingly depends on the ability of employers to maintain a credible and authentic digital presence.

Authenticity represents a central element of effective digital employer branding. Organizations should ensure that the image communicated through digital recruitment channels corresponds with actual employment experiences. A strong online reputation may attract applicants initially, but a substantial discrepancy between employer branding and workplace reality can produce dissatisfaction, negative word-of-mouth, and employee turnover. Digital employer branding should therefore be understood as an extension of organizational culture rather than merely a promotional instrument.

Interactive and visually engaging digital content can further strengthen organizational attractiveness. Recruitment videos, employee stories, virtual workplace experiences, and behind-the-scenes content can provide applicants with more concrete representations of organizational life. Such content may reduce uncertainty by helping prospective employees understand the organization's working environment and expectations. It can also create emotional connections between applicants and the organization before direct interaction occurs.

Ultimately, digital employer branding has become an important strategic instrument for attracting talent in an increasingly competitive labour market. Its

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effectiveness depends not only on the visibility of recruitment messages but also on their relevance, authenticity, consistency, and ability to communicate meaningful organizational characteristics. Organizations that successfully integrate digital communication with genuine workplace practices can strengthen organizational attractiveness and establish stronger relationships with prospective employees. In this context, digital employer branding should be positioned as a strategic component of recruitment and human resource management that connects organizational identity with the expectations, values, and career aspirations of contemporary job seekers.

3.2. Person–Organization Fit as a Mechanism Linking Employer Branding and Generation Z's Job Application Intention

Person–Organization Fit (P–O Fit) represents an important theoretical mechanism for explaining how employer branding influences individuals' intentions to apply for employment. P–O Fit refers to the perceived compatibility between an individual's values, goals, preferences, and characteristics and those of an organization. In the recruitment process, prospective employees tend to develop more favourable attitudes toward organizations when they believe that their personal expectations and values are compatible with the organizational culture. Therefore, P–O Fit can function as a psychological bridge between an organization's employer brand and an applicant's intention to pursue employment.

Digital employer branding provides prospective employees with information that enables them to evaluate this compatibility. Through social media, career websites, recruitment platforms, employee testimonials, organizational videos, and digital campaigns, organizations communicate characteristics concerning their culture, working environment, leadership, career development, flexibility, innovation, and social values. Applicants interpret these signals and compare them with their own expectations. When the information communicated through employer branding corresponds with an individual's preferences, the applicant may perceive a stronger level of P–O Fit. This perception can subsequently increase organizational attractiveness and strengthen the intention to apply.

The relationship is particularly relevant to Generation Z because this group has developed within a highly digital and interconnected environment. Generation Z applicants can obtain extensive information about potential employers before submitting an application. They may examine organizational social media accounts, employee-generated content, online reviews, professional networking platforms, and discussions concerning workplace experiences. Consequently,



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employer branding is no longer controlled exclusively by the organization. The digital environment allows applicants to compare organizational claims with information generated by employees and other external stakeholders.

For Generation Z, P–O Fit may also involve dimensions extending beyond traditional employment considerations. Career development, meaningful work, flexibility, work-life balance, technological innovation, ethical business practices, diversity, inclusion, and social responsibility may contribute to perceptions of organizational compatibility. Organizations that successfully communicate these characteristics can facilitate applicants' self-assessment and enable them to determine whether the organizational environment corresponds with their personal aspirations.

P–O Fit can also reduce uncertainty associated with job application decisions. Applicants typically possess incomplete information about an organization, particularly before direct interaction with recruiters. Authentic employer branding can reduce this information asymmetry by providing realistic information about organizational culture and employment conditions. When applicants perceive a strong fit, they may experience greater confidence that the organization can satisfy their professional and personal expectations. This confidence can increase their willingness to invest time and effort in the application process.

However, organizations must ensure that employer branding accurately reflects actual workplace conditions. An exaggerated or misleading employer image may create an initial perception of strong P–O Fit but ultimately produce dissatisfaction when applicants discover inconsistencies after recruitment. Authenticity, transparency, and consistency are therefore essential to establishing sustainable P–O Fit.

Ultimately, P–O Fit provides a valuable explanation of why digital employer branding can influence Generation Z's job application intention. Employer branding communicates organizational characteristics, applicants evaluate those characteristics against their personal values and expectations, and perceived compatibility influences their willingness to apply. Thus, strengthening P–O Fit through authentic and value-oriented digital employer branding can help organizations attract suitable Generation Z talent while simultaneously supporting more sustainable recruitment outcomes.

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3.3. Reconstruction of Digital Employer Branding Strategies to Strengthen Generation Z's Job Application Intention

The emergence of Generation Z as an increasingly significant segment of the labour market requires organizations to reconstruct conventional employer branding strategies in response to changing patterns of recruitment and employment expectations. Generation Z has developed in a highly digital environment in which social media, online communities, professional networking platforms, and digital information sources play an important role in shaping perceptions and decisions. Consequently, organizations can no longer depend exclusively on traditional job advertisements or standardized recruitment messages. Digital employer branding must instead provide authentic, relevant, interactive, and accessible representations of organizational identity and employment opportunities.

The reconstruction of digital employer branding should begin with the development of a clear and credible Employer Value Proposition (EVP). The EVP should communicate more than salary, benefits, and job descriptions. It should incorporate organizational culture, career development, learning opportunities, flexibility, employee well-being, technological innovation, leadership, diversity, inclusion, and organizational values. These dimensions are important because Generation Z applicants may evaluate potential employers according to both professional opportunities and broader personal values. A clearly articulated EVP enables prospective employees to assess whether an organization's characteristics correspond with their career aspirations and expectations.

Social media should also become an integral component of reconstructed employer branding strategies. Organizations can use digital platforms not only to announce vacancies but also to provide continuous representations of workplace culture. Employee testimonials, behind-the-scenes content, career development stories, organizational activities, and realistic descriptions of working conditions can provide applicants with valuable information before they enter the recruitment process. Such communication can reduce uncertainty and strengthen organizational familiarity. However, organizations should prioritize authenticity because Generation Z applicants can easily compare corporate claims with employee reviews and independent online information.

4. Conclusion

Digital employer branding has become a strategic instrument for organizations seeking to attract Generation Z in an increasingly competitive recruitment

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environment. This systematic literature review demonstrates that digital communication through social media, recruitment platforms, and career websites can strengthen organizational attractiveness by providing information about organizational culture, values, career opportunities, and workplace experiences. Person–Organization Fit (P–O Fit) plays an important role in this relationship because Generation Z applicants are more likely to develop positive perceptions when they identify compatibility between their personal values, career aspirations, and organizational characteristics. Therefore, P–O Fit can function as a psychological mechanism connecting employer branding with job application intention. The findings further indicate the need to reconstruct digital employer branding strategies through authentic, transparent, interactive, and value-oriented communication. Organizations should move beyond promotional recruitment and provide realistic representations of employment conditions and organizational culture. By aligning digital employer branding with genuine organizational practices and Generation Z's expectations, organizations can enhance organizational attractiveness, strengthen job application intention, and establish more sustainable recruitment outcomes.

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