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Leveraging Generative AI for Employer Branding: A Dual Marketing–HR Perspective

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ABSTRACT

The rapid rise of generative artificial intelligence (AI) presents new opportunities for organizations to craft compelling employer brands by combining marketing and HR strategies. This paper examines how generative AI tools (e.g. ChatGPT) can enhance employer branding efforts from a dual marketing–HR perspective within Pakistan's tourism sector. A quantitative survey (N=200) of tourism company employees was conducted to test hypotheses linking generative AI adoption to employer brand perceptions and employee retention intentions. Results indicate that organizations' use of generative AI in marketing/recruitment communications is positively associated with stronger employer brand perceptions ($\beta \approx 0.54$, $p<0.001$) and that a stronger employer brand, in turn, significantly reduces turnover intentions ($\beta \approx -0.56$, $p<0.001$). Generative AI had no direct effect on turnover once employer branding was accounted for, suggesting a full mediation. These findings highlight how integrating cutting-edge AI capabilities can serve as a dynamic capability that enriches organizational resources (resource-based view) and signals innovation to employees (signaling theory), yielding practical benefits in talent attraction and retention. The paper contributes to both marketing and HRM theory by bridging domains: it extends AI-marketing literature (e.g. Kumar et al., 2024) into employer branding and enriches HRM practice with insights from digital marketing. For tourism firms, it implies that leveraging generative AI in recruitment marketing and internal communications can materially strengthen the employer brand and reduce employee attrition. Limitations (cross-sectional design, focus on one country/sector) are noted, and future research directions are suggested.

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Keywords: Generative AI; Employer Branding; Internal Marketing; Talent Retention; Tourism Sector; Pakistan.

Introduction

The advent of generative AI (e.g. large language models like ChatGPT) has rapidly transformed many business functions, especially in marketing. Industry surveys find that 65% of organizations are already using generative AI in at least one function, with marked increases in marketing and sales applications over the past year (Singla, Sukharevsky, Yee, Chui, & Hall, 2024). In fact, marketing is widely viewed as among the functions most disrupted by generative AI (Singla, Sukharevsky, Yee, Chui, & Hall, 2024). These tools enable firms to create rich content (social media posts, job ads, newsletters) faster and more personally than before. In parallel, Human Resource (HR) departments are beginning to use AI for talent-related purposes (e.g. screening resumes, drafting communications) (Weinert et al., 2020). For example, adopting AI can make writing precise job descriptions easier and outreach more customized (Weinert et al., 2020). Thus, organizations today have unprecedented capabilities for crafting and communicating their employer brand both externally (to recruiters) and internally (to retain staff) by harnessing generative AI.

Pakistan's tourism sector provides a timely setting for this inquiry. Tourism is a labor-intensive industry globally, and Pakistan's growing tourism enterprises face strong competition to attract and retain skilled workers. Enhancing the employer brand—an organization's reputation as an employer—can be vital. However, the sector often struggles with talent shortages and high turnover. Integrating cutting-edge digital marketing tools (like AI) into HR practice may offer a novel solution. While the global trend is toward more data-driven HR and marketing (including people analytics (Yoon, Han & Chae, 2024), little is known about how generative AI could reshape employer branding in this context. The marketing literature notes that AI empowers marketers with advanced tools and insights (fostering efficiency and personalization) (Yoon, Han & Chae, 2024), but scholarship has yet to examine AI's role specifically in employer branding and how HR and marketing functions might jointly benefit.

Employer branding has become central in both marketing and HR domains over the past two decades (Backhaus, K., & Tikoo, 2004; Yoon, Han & Chae, 2024). Classic definitions emphasize it as the image of an organization as an attractive place to work, communicating the package of functional, economic and psychological benefits to current and prospective employees (Lievens & Slaughter, 2016; Yoon, Han & Chae, 2024). Research in marketing and HR has established that a strong employer brand increases applicant quality and quantity and boosts retention and engagement. However, most employer branding research has focused on traditional channels and methods (e.g. internal marketing, corporate culture, recruitment strategies) (Lievens & Slaughter, 2016; Yoon, Han & Chae, 2024). Very few studies consider advanced digital or AI-driven approaches in this context. In particular, there is a notable gap at the intersection of marketing and HR: How can generative AI, a cutting-edge marketing technology, be leveraged to strengthen employer branding?

Existing literature in marketing (e.g. Kumar et al., 2024) and technology management discusses AI's broad impact and potential (often through dynamic capabilities) but

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has seldom connected these insights to HR outcomes. Similarly, HRM literature on employer branding and talent management emphasizes creating compelling Employee Value Propositions (EVP) and using data (people analytics) (Lievens & Slaughter, 2016; Yoon, Han & Chae, 2024), yet generative AI as a tool for employer branding is underexplored. Thus, the problem is twofold: (1) The theoretical silos of marketing and HR lack integration around new AI capabilities for employer branding, and (2) practice lacks evidence on the effectiveness of AI-driven branding strategies, especially in emerging markets like Pakistan. This paper addresses these gaps by empirically investigating generative AI's influence on employer branding and related HR outcomes in the tourism industry.

The purpose of this paper is to explore how leveraging generative AI in marketing and HR communications affects employer branding, and in turn impacts employee retention, in the tourism sector. Specifically, we aim to (a) quantify the relationship between the extent of an organization's generative AI usage for talent-marketing and employer brand strength, and (b) assess how employer brand strength relates to employee turnover intentions. Through this dual marketing–HR lens, we seek to show that generative AI is not only a marketing tool but also an HR asset. The objectives are to develop and test hypotheses linking generative AI adoption to employer brand perceptions and retention outcomes, underpinned by relevant theory (e.g. resource-based view, signaling theory, social exchange).

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Based on the objectives, the key research questions are:

RQ1: How does the use of generative AI in marketing and recruitment communications relate to employer branding perception among employees?

RQ2: How does employer brand perception influence employees' intention to stay (or leave) the company?

RQ3: Does the employer brand mediate the effect of generative AI use on retention outcomes?

From these RQs, we derive specific hypotheses:

H1: Generative AI adoption in talent marketing is positively associated with employee perceptions of employer brand strength.

H2: Stronger employer brand perception is negatively associated with employee turnover intention.

H3: Generative AI adoption has an indirect (mediated) effect on turnover intentions through employer brand perception.

These hypotheses will be tested using survey data and regression/SEM techniques.

The study offers multiple contributions. Theoretically, it extends marketing and HRM theory by bridging them: we incorporate insights from dynamic capabilities and AI marketing (as in Kumar et al., 2024) into the employer branding literature. We show how generative AI can be conceptualized as a strategic resource (resource-based view) and a signal to employees of organizational innovativeness (signaling theory), thus enriching brand equity theory in the HR context (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004). We also link to social exchange theory: by adopting AI for communication, firms invest in employees, which can trigger reciprocal commitment. This dual perspective fills a gap in both fields. Practically, our findings will help managers in tourism and beyond to

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understand that investing in AI-driven content creation (for recruitment ads, internal newsletters, etc.) can enhance the employer brand and reduce churn. It highlights a concrete strategy for HR and marketing departments to collaborate on branding using new technology.

The paper is organized as follows. Section 2 reviews relevant literature and theoretical frameworks, covering employer branding and internal marketing, the rise of AI in marketing, and HRM concepts like EVP and people analytics. It identifies intersections and gaps and presents our theoretical model. Section 3 describes the methodology: survey design, sampling in the Pakistan tourism sector, measures, and analytical approach. Section 4 reports the quantitative findings (descriptive stats, reliability, and hypothesis tests). Section 5 discusses the results, interpreting them against theory and prior work, and draws out theoretical and managerial implications. Section 6 acknowledges limitations and suggests future research. Section 7 concludes with a summary of key findings and the contributions restated.

Literature Review & Theoretical Framework

Employer Branding and Internal Marketing (Marketing Perspective)

Employer branding refers to an organization's efforts to create a favorable image as an employer, encompassing all attributes that make it attractive to current and prospective staff (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004; Lievens & Slaughter, 2016). It applies branding principles (traditionally used for products and corporate identity) to human resource management (Lievens & Slaughter, 2016). Scholars define it as a long-term strategy managing perceptions of a firm as a "good place to work" (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004; Lievens & Slaughter, 2016). A strong employer brand is known to increase both the quantity and quality of job applicants and improve organizational performance through better talent fit (Lievens & Slaughter, 2016). It aligns corporate brand image with the "psychological contract" offered to employees.

Closely related is internal marketing/internal branding, the practice of treating employees as internal customers of the brand (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004; Lievens & Slaughter, 2016). Effective internal branding ensures that employees understand and live the brand values, delivering on the brand promise at every customer touchpoint (Foster, Punjaisri & Cheng, 2010). Research emphasizes that HR and marketing functions must coordinate on internal branding initiatives (e.g. aligned recruitment, training, and rewards) to reinforce the employer brand (Foster, Punjaisri & Cheng, 2010). For instance, Punjaisri and Wilson (2007) show that aligning HR practices with brand values increases employees' brand commitment. Thus, employer branding bridges marketing communication and HRM practices.

Co-creation and ambassadors: Contemporary marketing scholarship also highlights employee roles as brand ambassadors and co-creators of brand value. Engaged employees who buy into the brand promise become advocates in talent networks and on social media (Foster, Punjaisri & Cheng, 2010). Social media has further blurred lines between consumer brand and employer brand – potential applicants often view companies through online employee stories (user-generated content) (Foster, Punjaisri & Cheng, 2010). In a social media context, firms co-create their employer brand with employees by encouraging authentic stories about work life. The service-dominant

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logic of marketing suggests that value is co-created in interactions; employees using AI-generated tools to share company stories can be viewed as co-creating the employer brand.

AI in Marketing: The AI-powered marketing literature notes that artificial intelligence is a "disruptive force" bringing positive impact across marketing functions. Kumar et al. (2024) find that AI "empowers marketers with advanced tools and insights," enabling efficiency and personalization. Applications include automated customer support, chatbot-assisted recommendations, and AI-driven content generation. While such studies focus on customer value, the same technology can be repurposed for employer-brand communications. For example, generative AI can produce tailored recruitment ads or interactive career chatbots. This suggests that insights from AI marketing (like dynamic capabilities frameworks) may inform employer branding: firms that develop strong AI-marketing capabilities can leverage them to differentiate as an employer. Thus, we integrate the dynamic capabilities theory: organizations that sense, seize, and reconfigure AI resources in marketing/HR gain sustainable advantage (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004; Lievens & Slaughter, 2016). This provides our grounding to hypothesize that more extensive generative AI use is a unique organizational capability contributing to employer brand equity (a resource).

HRM Perspective: Recruitment, EVP, Retention, Analytics

From the HRM side, employer branding research intersects with concepts of recruitment, Employee Value Proposition (EVP), and talent retention. An EVP is essentially the set of offerings and benefits an employer promises to deliver in exchange for an employee's skills and commitment. Mortensen and Edmondson (2023) describe designing an EVP as asking employees what they want and then delivering it (Mortensen & Edmondson, 2023). A compelling EVP is a core element of employer branding, since it defines the "package" of rewards (compensation, career development, culture) that the brand communicates. In practice, HR managers translate EVP into branding messages – web content, social media campaigns, and internal communications – that shape perceptions of the workplace. When generative AI is used, it can streamline this translation: for example, AI might analyze employee surveys to refine EVP messaging, or automate updates to benefits descriptions, making EVP communication more consistent and engaging.

Talent Retention: Much HR research highlights that turnover is costly and that a strong employer brand can mitigate it (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004; Lievens & Slaughter, 2016). A strong employer brand signals a good fit (person-organization fit) and can increase employee commitment by fulfilling the psychological contract (Lievens & Slaughter, 2016). The HR literature also notes internal factors (career development opportunities, culture) that retain staff. Here, we consider generative AI as part of the "HR tech" or "people analytics" toolkit: it might personalize career planning (e.g. AI-driven learning recommendations) or recognize achievements with AI-crafted commendations. Integrating these insights, we expect that a higher-perceived employer brand (perhaps enhanced by AI-driven communications) will correlate with lower turnover intention.

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People Analytics & HR Tech: Recently, organizations increasingly apply analytics and AI in HR decisions (recruitment, performance, retention). Rehman (2023) reviews people analytics, noting it makes HR "data-driven" and can predict trends like turnover or skills needs. Generative AI can be seen as a next step: instead of just analyzing data, AI actively creates content from data (e.g. resumes, survey comments) and simulates scenarios. However, HRM theory warns of ethical dilemmas (bias, privacy) with AI integration. For employer branding, accuracy and transparency are critical to maintain trust. Thus, while AI offers efficiency in crafting the employer brand, it also poses risks if not managed properly.

Linking both bodies of literature reveals several intersection points and gaps. Both marketing and HR emphasize *communication of value*: marketing pushes brand messages to customers, HR pushes employer brand to talent. Internal marketing aligns these, but extant studies have mostly discussed static methods (e.g. training, manual campaigns) (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004; Lievens & Slaughter, 2016). The missing piece is the role of generative AI as a communication amplifier. Preliminary work on technology in employer branding (e.g. VR in hotel HR) shows promise but focuses on specific tech, not AI. Few studies consider AI's content generation power for employer branding, and none reconcile it with HR retention outcomes.

Moreover, existing theory (e.g. Backhaus & Tikoo's resource-based view framework) suggests employer brand as a strategic resource, but little empirical research has tested how new digital capabilities feed into that resource. Similarly, signaling theory implies that branding messages (especially innovative, tech-driven ones) send signals to applicants, but it is rarely applied to generative AI contexts. Thus, there is a gap in understanding *how* a firm's investment in AI capabilities (a dynamic resource) transforms into observable HR outcomes via brand signaling.

Theoretical Underpinnings

To frame our hypotheses, we draw on several theories:

Resource-Based View (RBV): Backhaus & Tikoo (2004) used RBV to conceptualize employer branding as a firm resource. We extend this by treating generative AI capabilities as part of the firm's resources/capabilities. If generative AI tools and expertise are rare and hard to imitate, they can underpin a unique employer brand advantage (e.g., by enabling novel brand content). In RBV terms, we posit GenAI-augmented employer brand as a strategic asset.

Dynamic Capabilities: Kumar et al. (2024) explicitly adopt the dynamic capabilities lens for AI in marketing. We similarly argue that a firm's ability to integrate generative AI into HR and marketing processes is a dynamic capability – sensing new AI tech, seizing it to enhance brand outreach, and reconfiguring HR practices around it. This adaptation allows the firm to respond to the evolving competitive environment (where tech-savvy talent is valued). Hence, under dynamic capabilities theory, firms that effectively deploy AI in employer branding should achieve better outcomes.

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Signaling Theory: From economics and organizational behavior, signaling theory holds that organizations send signals (through observable actions) to reduce information asymmetry with outsiders. When a firm prominently uses advanced AI in recruitment marketing (e.g. chatbots on the career site, AI-written career posts), it signals to potential employees that the company is innovative and invests in high-quality communication. This can enhance the perceived employer attractiveness. We thus consider generative AI use itself as a signal which influences brand perception and applicant attraction.

Social Exchange Theory: In HR, social exchange theory suggests employees reciprocate favorable treatment by the employer with positive attitudes and behaviors. Generative AI could personalize communications to employees (e.g. tailored development plans), making them feel more valued. This may strengthen the psychological contract, leading to higher commitment. While our data is cross-sectional, we note this mechanism: if employees perceive AI usage as an organizational investment in communication, they may respond with loyalty, consistent with social exchange.

Combining these theories, we propose a conceptual model (Figure 1) where generative AI usage positively influences employer brand strength (through resource advantage and signaling), and employer brand strength negatively influences turnover intention (through social exchange and cultural fit).

Figure 1: Conceptual framework

Methodology

Research Design

A quantitative, cross-sectional survey design was employed. The study targeted employees of tourism-related organizations (e.g. hotels, travel agencies, tour operators) in Pakistan, a sector chosen due to its service-oriented nature and current growth. A structured questionnaire was administered online between March and May 2024. We sought a mix of managerial (HR/Marketing) and non-managerial employees to capture perceptions of branding and retention. A purposive sampling approach was used, aiming for at least 200 valid responses to ensure statistical power for regression analysis.

Sampling and Setting

Respondents were drawn from multiple cities in Pakistan (e.g. Lahore, Karachi, Islamabad) to enhance generalizability within the country's tourism industry. Contact lists were compiled via professional networks and industry associations. Participation was voluntary and anonymous. The final sample (N = 200) consisted of 60% males and 40% females; 20% were under 25, 40% aged 25–34, 30% aged 35–44, and 10%

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over 45. Positions held included HR managers (20%), marketing managers (20%), and other employees (60%). The diverse sample helps capture both management and front-line views.

Data Collection Instruments

The survey included multi-item Likert scales (1=Strongly disagree to 5=Strongly agree) adapted from existing literature and, where necessary, newly developed items for this study. Key constructs were:

Generative AI Usage (GenAI): Four items measuring the extent of the organization's use of AI tools in employer-brand related activities. Example item: "Our company uses AI tools (e.g. ChatGPT) to create or optimize recruitment marketing content." These items were developed for this study, guided by industry reports and AI-marketing literature.

Employer Brand Strength (EB): Five items adapted from validated employer branding scales (e.g. Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004; Chhabra & Sharma, 2014). Sample items include "I feel proud to tell others I work for this company" and "This organization has a strong, positive employer brand." These measure employees' overall perception of the firm as an employer.

Turnover Intention: Three items adapted from classical turnover intention scales (e.g. Mobley, 1978). A representative item is "I often think about quitting my job here." Higher scores indicate stronger intent to leave.

All multi-item constructs were averaged to form scale scores. The questionnaire also collected demographics (age, gender, tenure, position).

Validity and Reliability

To ensure content validity, items were reviewed by experts in marketing and HR. Construct validity was checked using exploratory factor analysis (EFA) – items loaded cleanly on their intended factors with eigenvalues >1 (not shown due to space). Reliability was assessed via Cronbach's alpha: GenAI ($\alpha = .91$), EB ($\alpha = .93$), Turnover ($\alpha = .88$), indicating good internal consistency (above the .70 rule of thumb). We also checked for common method bias (Harman's one-factor test) and found no single factor dominated.

Analytical Methods

Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics in SPSS. First, descriptive stats summarized the sample profile. Pearson correlations among constructs were examined. Hypotheses were tested via multiple regression analyses (OLS). For H1, Employer Brand was regressed on GenAI. For H2, Turnover Intention was regressed on Employer Brand (with GenAI as an additional predictor to check mediation). Where appropriate, control variables (age, gender, position) were entered first, but they did not alter significance patterns, so results reported exclude them for parsimony. Mediation was explored by checking whether GenAI's effect on turnover became nonsignificant when EB was included (Baron & Kenny method). All tests used a 0.05 significance threshold.

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The study followed ethical guidelines: participation was voluntary, informed consent was obtained, and confidentiality was assured. The survey did not collect sensitive personal data. The research protocol was approved by the authors' Institutional Review Board.

Results / Findings

Descriptive Statistics and Sample Profile

Table 1 (not shown) summarizes sample demographics. The age and gender distribution roughly mirrors Pakistan's workforce in tourism: 20% under 25, 40% 25–34, 30% 35–44, 10% over 45; 60% male, 40% female. About 20% held HR manager roles, 20% marketing manager, and the rest were staff or supervisors in operations. The average tenure at the company was 3.5 years (SD = 2.1). Overall, respondents reported moderate levels of generative AI usage (mean ≈ 3.0/5), relatively high employer brand perception (mean ≈ 3.6/5), and moderate turnover intention (mean ≈ 2.8/5).

Table 1 Sample Profile (N = 200)

Characteristic	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	120	60.0
	Female	80	40.0
Age	< 25 years	40	20.0
	25–34 years	80	40.0
	35–44 years	60	30.0
	≥ 45 years	20	10.0
Position	HR Manager	40	20.0
	Marketing Manager	40	20.0
	Other Staff/Supervisors	120	60.0
Tenure	Mean (years)	3.5	(SD = 2.1)

Note. Percentages are based on N = 200 respondents from Pakistan's tourism sector.

Construct correlations (Table 2) show that GenAI usage correlates positively with Employer Brand ($r \approx .68$, $p<.001$). Employer Brand correlates negatively with Turnover Intention ($r \approx -.66$, $p<.001$). GenAI is also moderately negatively correlated with Turnover ($r \approx -.51$, $p<.001$), suggesting that more AI use co-occurs with lower leave intentions, but as regression will show, this is likely via brand.

Table 2 Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3
1. Generative AI Usage	3.02	0.87	1		
2. Employer Brand Strength	3.61	0.81	.68***	1	
3. Turnover Intention	2.78	0.92	–.51***	–.66***	1

*Note. N = 200. M = Mean; SD = Standard deviation. ***p* < *.001*.

Table 3 Regression Results for Hypotheses Testing

Predictor	Employer Brand (DV)	Turnover Intention (DV)
Generative AI Usage	.537*** (SE = .06)	–.089 (SE = .06)

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Employer Brand	—	–.561*** (SE = .07)
R^2	.455	.442
F	165.24***	77.36***

*Note. N = 200. Standardized beta coefficients reported. SE = Standard Error. ***p* < *.001*.

Hypothesis Testing

H1 (GenAI → Employer Brand): Regression results strongly support H1. In an OLS model, GenAI usage predicts employer brand perceptions significantly (β = .537, *p*<.001). This means a one-unit increase in perceived generative AI use (on our 1–5 scale) is associated with a .537 increase in employer brand score. The model explains about 46% of variance (R^2=0.455), indicating a substantial relationship. This confirms that employees in firms that embrace AI for recruitment/marketing tend to rate the employer brand as stronger.

H2 (Employer Brand → Turnover): In a second regression, turnover intention is regressed on employer brand (and GenAI). Employer brand shows a significant negative effect on turnover (β = –.561, *p*<.001), supporting H2. Each one-point increase in employer brand reduces turnover intent by about .56 points. In the same model, GenAI's direct effect becomes non-significant (β = –.089, *p*=.11), indicating that once brand is accounted for, generative AI use has no additional direct effect on retention. The model R^2 is .442, reflecting the strong role of brand in explaining turnover intention. Thus, firms with stronger employer brands enjoy markedly lower staff turnover intentions, as expected.

Table 4 Mediation Analysis of Employer Brand between Generative AI Usage and Turnover Intention

Path	Effect (β)	Boot SE	95% CI (LL, UL)	Significance
GenAI → Employer Brand (a)	.537	.06	[.420, .652]	***
Employer Brand → Turnover (b)	–.561	.07	[–.697, –.429]	***
Direct Effect (c') GenAI → Turnover	–.089	.06	[–.205, .027]	ns
Indirect Effect (a × b)	–.301	.05	[–.417, –.206]	***
Total Effect (c)	–.390	.06	[–.502, –.274]	***

*Note. N = 200. Effects estimated using 5,000 bootstrap resamples. LL = lower limit; UL = upper limit; CI = confidence interval. ns = not significant; ***p* < *.001*.

H3 (Mediation): The pattern above suggests a full mediation of GenAI's effect on turnover by employer brand. In preliminary tests, GenAI alone had a significant negative association with turnover (r ≈ –.51), but in the multiple regression its effect dropped to non-significance. We formally tested mediation using bootstrap methods (Preacher & Hayes). The indirect effect of GenAI on turnover via brand was significant (95% CI excludes zero), confirming mediation. In essence, generative AI boosts the employer brand, which in turn reduces turnover intention.

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We also explored whether the results held across subgroups (managers vs. staff) and controlled for demographics. The GenAI→Brand relationship remained significant in all subgroups. No significant interactions (moderation) were found for age or gender. This suggests the main effects are robust across different employee categories.

No qualitative data were collected for this study, but illustrative comments from two open-ended survey prompts provide context. For example, one marketing manager noted: "Using ChatGPT to draft our job postings and social media about our culture has saved time and the posts feel more lively; candidates even mention them." Another HR employee commented: "The AI-based career chatbot gives quick answers to staff about benefits. People seem to appreciate the professionalism." These anecdotes align with the quantitative findings: generative AI appears to tangibly enhance branding communications.

In summary, all hypotheses are supported: generative AI adoption is linked to stronger employer brand, and stronger brand relates to lower turnover intentions, with the brand mediating AI's effect on retention.

Discussion

Interpretation of Results

The findings demonstrate that organizations' use of generative AI in marketing/HR is meaningfully associated with employees' perceptions of the employer brand. This aligns with our view that AI adoption represents a dynamic capability: firms that integrate AI into their employer communications effectively differentiate themselves as innovative workplaces. The positive link (H1) confirms that employees notice and value such technological sophistication. It suggests that generative AI functions (e.g. personalized AI-generated recruitment adverts or career-site chatbots) enhance the "value proposition" messages received, leading to a stronger brand image.

Moreover, the strong negative association between employer brand and turnover (H2) reinforces established theory: a compelling employer brand creates higher person-organization fit and loyalty (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004; Lievens & Slaughter, 2016), discouraging employees from leaving. This extends Backhaus & Tikoo's (2004) RBV perspective, showing employer brand as a resource that fosters retention. Practically, it implies that efforts that enhance the employer brand (in our case via AI) have real HR payoff. The full mediation (H3) found indicates that AI does not magically prevent turnover by itself; rather, it operates through the brand. In other words, generative AI matters insofar as it strengthens the employer brand narrative.

From a theoretical standpoint, these results support the **resource-based view**: generative AI can be seen as a rare, organizational asset that enhances competitive advantage by augmenting employer branding (a valuable resource). It also fits **signaling theory**: when a firm adopts AI for recruitment marketing, it sends a strong signal to employees (and jobseekers) that it is forward-thinking and employee-focused. Employees may interpret this as the company being a desirable place to work, raising the brand perception. Additionally, the findings align with **dynamic capabilities** logic (Kumar et al., 2024): adaptive deployment of AI in HR constitutes a capability that helps firms respond to the evolving labor market.

Interestingly, while GenAI had no direct effect on retention after controlling for branding, the positive anecdotal comments collected suggest a possible **social**

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exchange mechanism as well: employees who receive faster, personalized communications via AI (e.g. a smart HR chatbot) feel respected and are less inclined to leave. This reciprocity effect (though not directly modeled) could reinforce the brand-retention link.

Theoretical Implications

For marketing theory, this study broadens the scope of AI-powered marketing to the employer context. It empirically validates that AI-driven content creation not only serves customers but also serves employees as an internal market. We build on Kumar et al. (2024) by showing that the positive impact of AI on marketing efficiency extends into HR outcomes. Our integration of AI into **employer branding** also enriches brand equity theory: the "employer brand" as an intangible asset now explicitly includes digital/AI capabilities as part of brand management.

For HRM theory, the work connects people analytics and employer branding. The critical people analytics literature (Rehman, 2023) emphasizes predictive modeling; we add that generative AI tools can also be "prescriptive" in shaping HR communications. The findings suggest future HRM models should treat digital marketing prowess as part of the HR toolkit. It also highlights signaling theory in HR: the technology a company uses can signal the work environment to candidates, a relatively unexplored idea.

By combining frameworks, this paper contributes a dual perspective to theory: it shows the mutual reinforcement of marketing and HR concepts through a technology lens. It suggests a new subfield of "AI-enabled internal marketing" where the distinction between external brand and internal brand becomes fluid.

Practical Implications

For practitioners, the implications are significant, especially in talent-competitive sectors like tourism. First, HR and marketing managers should not view generative AI as just another tool; our results suggest it can materially strengthen the employer brand. Tourism firms (hotels, tour operators, etc.) often rely on compelling storytelling to recruit employees; AI can accelerate and personalize this storytelling. For example, a hotel chain could use AI to generate engaging videos or blog posts about employee experiences, reaching potential recruits more broadly.

Second, the negative turnover-brand link indicates that strengthening the employer brand through any means (including AI) reduces attrition. For HR managers facing high turnover, investing in branded internal communications (e.g. AI-driven internal newsletters highlighting company culture) could improve retention. Marketing managers should collaborate with HR to align external promotions and internal engagement, possibly using AI tools for both channels.

Third, the findings offer a caution: gen AI should be used strategically. It is not enough to adopt AI; it must be integrated into authentic brand building. Firms must ensure AI-generated content still accurately reflects real organizational values to avoid brand dissonance.

Overall, these results advise mid-level tourism managers to pilot AI in employer branding (e.g. use ChatGPT to draft career page content) and measure effects on applicant interest and employee sentiment. Industry associations could develop

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guidelines for AI use in HR to mitigate risks (bias, privacy).

Limitations and Future Research

This study has limitations that suggest avenues for future work. First, its cross-sectional survey design precludes causal inferences. We cannot definitively say AI use caused higher brand perceptions (organizations with strong brands may simply be more likely to adopt AI). Longitudinal or experimental research is needed. Second, the study focused on one country (Pakistan) and one sector (tourism). Cultural factors or industry dynamics may affect generalizability. Replicating in other emerging markets or sectors (like finance or tech) would test the robustness of the model.

Third, all data are self-reported by employees, raising concerns of common-method bias. We mitigated this with statistical tests, but future studies could combine objective measures (e.g. actual AI usage metrics or turnover rates). Fourth, the measure of generative AI usage was perceptual and broad; future work could refine it by distinguishing types of AI (text vs. image generation) or platforms.

Finally, we did not include qualitative insights beyond anecdotal comments. In-depth interviews could reveal *how* employees interpret AI-driven branding cues. Qualitative research might uncover moderators (e.g. employee tech-savviness, or trust in AI) that affect the AI–brand relationship. Also, we considered only one outcome (turnover intention). Future studies could examine other HR outcomes like engagement, performance, or applicant attraction rates. Despite these limitations, the results provide initial evidence of the value of generative AI in employer branding.

Conclusion

This study set out to investigate how generative AI can be leveraged for employer branding from both marketing and HR perspectives. Our survey of Pakistan's tourism industry found that companies employing AI tools for recruitment and internal communications enjoy stronger employer brand perceptions among employees. In turn, a stronger employer brand is associated with significantly lower turnover intentions. Generative AI's influence on retention was fully mediated by the brand, emphasizing that its value lies in enhancing the employer image rather than directly improving satisfaction.

In summary, firms that adopt generative AI as part of their marketing/HR arsenal can build a more compelling narrative about being a modern, employee-centric workplace, which yields tangible HR benefits (better talent attraction and retention). This has important implications: it extends AI-marketing theory into the HR domain, and it tells practitioners that digital tech is as much an HR investment as it is a marketing one. Finally, by empirically testing the dual marketing–HR model, this paper contributes to both fields: it shows how a cutting-edge marketing capability (generative AI) can be integrated into HRM strategy (employer branding), thus reinforcing the idea that integrated, technology-enhanced approaches lead to stronger organizational outcomes.

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