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The Relevance of Retention Strategies in IT Organizations

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Master's in International Management

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PhD, Andrea Maria Flores Oliveira Fontes, Guest Assistant Professor, ISCTE-IUL

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Abstract

Employee retention is a critical challenge for IT organizations, which face high turnover rates due to the competitive nature of the industry and the scarcity of skilled professionals. This research explores the effectiveness of retention strategies within IT organizations, focusing on the roles of employer branding, internal communication, and flexibility in reducing turnover intention. Through a quantitative study involving 146 participants, this thesis uses correlation and mediation analyses to investigate how these factors influence employee retention.

The results indicate that employer branding has a significant direct effect on reducing turnover intention, as it enhances employees' perceptions of the organization and fosters loyalty. However, internal communication plays a crucial mediating role, explaining the impact of employer branding by ensuring transparency and trust between management and employees. While flexible work arrangements did not significantly moderate the relationship between employer branding and turnover intention, they remain important for overall employee satisfaction, provided they are well-implemented with clear boundaries to avoid work-family conflict.

The study offers practical recommendations for IT organizations, including strengthening employer branding, improving internal communication, and adopting thoughtful flexible work policies. These strategies can help IT organizations retain skilled professionals, reduce turnover, and maintain a competitive edge in the global market.

Keywords

Resumo

A retenção de colaboradores é um desafio crítico para as organizações de TI, que enfrentam elevadas taxas de rotatividade devido à natureza competitiva do setor e à escassez de profissionais qualificados. Esta investigação explora a eficácia das estratégias de retenção nas organizações de TI, focando-se nos papéis do Employer Branding, comunicação interna e flexibilidade na redução da intenção de saída. Através de um estudo quantitativo com 146 participantes, esta dissertação investiga como estes fatores influenciam a retenção de colaboradores, utilizando análises de correlação e mediação.

Os resultados indicam que o Employer Branding tem um efeito direto significativo na redução da intenção de saída, pois melhora a perceção dos colaboradores em relação à organização e promove a sua lealdade. No entanto, a comunicação interna desempenha um papel mediador crucial, explicando o impacto do Employer Branding ao assegurar transparência e confiança entre a gestão e os colaboradores. Embora as estruturas de trabalho flexível não tenham moderado significativamente a relação entre Employer Branding e a intenção de saída, continuam a ser importantes para a satisfação geral dos colaboradores, desde que sejam implementadas com limites claros para evitar conflitos entre trabalho e vida pessoal.

O estudo oferece recomendações práticas para as organizações de TI, incluindo o fortalecimento do Employer Branding, a melhoria da comunicação interna e a adoção de políticas de trabalho flexível bem estruturadas. Estas estratégias podem ajudar as organizações de TI a reter profissionais qualificados, reduzir a rotatividade e manter uma vantagem competitiva no mercado global.

Palavras-Chave:

Estratégias de Retenção; Organizações de TI; Employer Branding; Comunicação Interna; Flexibilidade; Intenção de Saída.

Classificação JEL: J24, M54

Index

Introduction

Retaining qualified employees is a current critical challenge for organizations, particularly in the rapidly evolving Information Technology (IT) sector. In a competitive environment marked by the high turnover of skilled professionals, companies face increasing difficulties in retaining their workforce. The IT industry's dependence on human capital, coupled with the scarcity of qualified professionals, makes employee retention strategies paramount for sustaining organizational performance, competitiveness, and growth (James & Matthew, 2012). This thesis seeks to investigate the key factors influencing employee retention in the IT sector and to evaluate the effectiveness of multiple retention strategies employed by organizations.

The IT industry has become a cornerstone of global economic development, with its influence spanning across industries, from healthcare to finance, retail, and beyond. The industry's notable expansion, propelled by technical breakthroughs, has revolutionized how companies function, interact, and innovate. However, alongside its exponential growth, the industry faces significant challenges regarding workforce management. High employee turnover, driven by factors such as job dissatisfaction, limited career advancement opportunities, and work-life imbalances, poses a substantial threat to organizations within the sector. The departure of skilled IT professionals not only incurs direct financial costs related to recruitment and training but also leads to knowledge loss and decreased organizational efficiency (Bryant & Allen, 2013).

A variety of factors contribute to the high turnover rates observed in the IT sector. These include both intrinsic factors, such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment, and extrinsic factors, such as compensation, work environment, and leadership quality. Furthermore, the growing importance of work-life balance and flexible work arrangements has become a critical determinant in the retention of IT employees. Organizations must comprehend how these aspects interact to create strategies that effectively retain their skilled workforce and decrease the negative effects of turnover (Bryant & Allen, 2013).

Recent literature highlights the need for a comprehensive approach to employee retention, focusing on a blend of strategies that extend beyond traditional financial incentives. While competitive compensation remains a significant factor, it alone is insufficient in curbing turnover in the IT industry (Bryant & Allen, 2013). Modern retention strategies emphasize the importance of employer branding, internal communication, and flexible work arrangements as crucial elements in fostering employee loyalty and engagement. Employer branding is essential

for setting businesses apart in the job market, creating a positive work environment, and fostering a sense of belonging among employees (Swamantak & Joshi, 2022). Strong internal communication, which ensures transparency and inclusiveness, further strengthens employee commitment and trust in leadership, thereby reducing turnover intentions (Erickson, 2015). Additionally, the implementation of flexible work arrangements, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic, has become increasingly relevant in promoting work-life balance and improving employee satisfaction (Prasad , Mangipudi, Vaidya, & Muralidhar, 2020).

This study aims to explore the effectiveness of these contemporary retention strategies in the IT industry, focusing specifically on the roles of employer branding, internal communication, and flexible work arrangements. By analyzing the experiences of people current employed in and out of IT organizations and examining the specific retention practices adopted by IT organizations, this thesis provides insights into the factors that most significantly influence employee retention. It also seeks to offer practical recommendations for organizations to enhance their retention strategies and reduce turnover rates.

This thesis has three main goals: (1) to determine the major variables that affect employee retention in the IT industry, (2) to evaluate the effectiveness of current retention strategies employed by IT organizations, and (3) to propose actionable recommendations for improving employee retention through targeted strategies. Through a comprehensive literature review and empirical analysis, this research intends to add to the ongoing discussion on employee retention in the IT industry and provide insightful information for organizations looking to deal with the urgent problem of turnover in a market that is extremely competitive. In the following chapters, the literature review will provide an in-depth analysis of the existing research on employee retention, turnover rates, and the factors influencing retention in the IT industry. The methodology section will outline the research design, data collection, and analysis methods used in the study. Finally, the findings and recommendations will present a detailed examination of the data and offer practical strategies for improving employee retention in IT organizations.

By addressing the challenges of employee turnover and proposing effective retention strategies, this thesis seeks to provide organizations with the tools they need to create a more stable and productive workforce, thereby enhancing their competitiveness and long-term success in the dynamic IT industry.

The research questions guiding this study are as follows:

1. How does employer branding impact employee turnover intention in IT organizations?

2. What role does internal communication play in mediating the relationship between employer branding and turnover intention?

3. To what extent do flexible work arrangements influence employee retention in the IT sector?

By addressing these questions, this thesis aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the factors that contribute to employee retention in IT organizations and offer recommendations for improving retention strategies.

As the IT industry continues to evolve, organizations must adapt their retention strategies to meet the changing needs of their workforce. This research will contribute to a deeper understanding of the factors that drive employee retention in the IT sector, particularly in relation to employer branding, internal communication, and flexible work arrangements. By identifying the most effective strategies for retaining skilled employees, this thesis aims to provide valuable insights for IT organizations looking to reduce turnover and enhance their competitiveness in the global market.

1. Literature Review

1.1. Overview of the IT Industry

The growth of Information Technology (IT) has indeed been a significant driver of change in various sectors. IT has revolutionized the way organizations operate, communicate and conduct business. As organizations increasingly rely on IT for their daily operations, the concept of organizational commitment becomes crucial (James & Matthew, 2012).

The IT industry is a critical driver of economic development, but the industry's trajectory is influenced by the capabilities and engagement of its employees. The management of the IT industry is reliant on the competence and commitment of its workforce, with job satisfaction playing a pivotal role in guiding the industry's direction and sustainability. The satisfaction of IT employees is influenced by various factors, including the work environment, colleague interactions, and the ability to contribute to a positive organizational culture. Additionally, the industry's growth potential is intricately linked to the retention of skilled employees and their fulfillment in their roles (James & Matthew, 2012).

Due to the rapid growth of the IT industry, organizations are focused on attracting and retaining the most skilled and competent human resources due to the scarcity of qualified professionals on the market. Therefore, multiple new opportunities are offered to these

professionals every single day, creating more possibilities of intention to turnover (Das & Baruah, 2013).

According to Das and Baruah (2013), companies' biggest challenge is to retain these skilled employees, because their knowledge and skills are key to companies' ability to be economically competitive in the fast-paced industry (Das & Baruah, 2013).

In conclusion, the IT industry's growth and sustainability are closely tied to the job satisfaction and well-being of its employees. Addressing role stressors, providing opportunities for skill development, and fostering positive workplace relationships are essential for steering the industry towards continued success and competitiveness (James & Matthew, 2012).

1.2. Employee Turnover Rates

The overall trend in the demand for IT professionals has led to historically high turnover rates in this industry that have been a huge concern to organizations (Lo, 2013).

Companies are facing more than ever the risk of constant turnover from the IT professionals that they employ. In 2008, it was reported that attracting, developing, and retaining qualified IT professionals was the number one concern for IT executive management, since developing appropriate retention strategies has been difficult for multiple organizations (Coombs, 2009).

According to Ferreira, Pedrosa and Calheiros (2021), the high demand in the IT industry is not fulfilled with the limited supply of professionals with expertise in the field. This situation is placing technology companies in a precarious human resource position due to the ease of changing jobs and the high turnover that exists (Ferreira, Pedrosa, & Calheiros, 2021).

The tech sector has the greatest turnover rate, at 13.2%, according to a 2023 LinkedIn turnover report. Low employee tenure in this industry is a common problem, even for multinational tech giants. The median tenure of employees in the majority is merely one or two years (Gleichauf, 2023).

Aside from the clear financial costs, losing employees can also cause work disruptions, a loss of tacit or strategic knowledge within the organization, productivity losses, and even turnover contagion, where other valuable employees follow the departing employees out the door (Bryant & Allen, 2013).

According to Goswami and Jha (2012), there are multiple reasons that increase turnover in a company, such as lack of a competitive compensation package and benefits to the employee, a company's culture and work environment, job security, career development and

growth opportunities within the company, confidence in the supervisor, which can be related to feedback consistency and frequency and clear communication of goals. The communication within the company is also something an employee values since transparency and integration in processes is always very important for them to be engaged in the business.

The impact of turnover varies based on the type of employee and their career stage. It is also important to consider the costs associated with employee turnover, including the loss of know-how, increased stress on remaining employees, and the time required for training new hires. Additionally, the reputation of the company and the relationship between employees and their leaders play a crucial role in turnover rates (Ferreira, Pedrosa, & Calheiros, 2021).

In summary, the turnover rates in the IT industry are influenced by a combination of factors including job satisfaction, organizational commitment, leadership, communication, training opportunities, work-life balance, and the nature of employee exits. Understanding and addressing these factors is crucial for organizations aiming to mitigate turnover, knowledge loss and negative economic impacts; and retain skilled IT professionals, with effective retention strategies (Ferreira, Pedrosa, & Calheiros, 2021).

 "Happier employees are employees who will stay longer with your company, increasing your employee retention rate." (Gleichauf, 2023)

1.3. Factors Affecting Employee Retention in IT

Since turnover can reduce the organization's capacity to provide services and remain economically competitive, retaining current employees was thought to be more crucial than recruiting new ones. Thus, keeping a group of committed and effective IT workers is essential to preserve or maintain a company's competitive advantage (Coombs, 2009).

Organizations who want to build a successful business must consider every option available to keep employees loyal and reliable, hence reducing the likelihood that they will want to leave in the future. Because it takes excellent, dependable, skilled, and diligent workers to run a firm, it is essential to retain current employees. Over time, they have developed solid product knowledge, and a trained worker is better able to manage customers and assist newcomers (Goswami & Jha, 2012).

Chaminade (2007) stated that the goal of employee retention is to implement strategies to motivate workers to stay with the company for as long as possible. Retention strategies are primarily intended to keep qualified personnel inside the company, but as Allen, Bryant and

Vardaman mentioned in 2010, creating a retention strategy, within a company, needs to be an ongoing project, to diagnose the nature and causes of attrition and turnover, and consequently develop an appropriate targeted and organized bundle of initiatives (James & Matthew, 2012).

According to Allen and Bryant (2013), managers are often unaware of the different available strategies for effectively managing employee retention and this is where the Human Resources departments should act – a company must know its employees and focus on what to improve and implement to increase the employee's engagement and loyalty to the company. There are several retention strategies to implement apart from an attractive compensation package. It is true that compensation is almost always the first or second reason provided, when an employee is thinking of leaving a company, since in the IT industry there is a high demand for skilled professionals but, competing for top talent on price alone (through compensation and benefits) is a no-win proposition (Bryant & Allen, 2013).

Research indicates that high job satisfaction and organizational commitment are associated with reduced turnover intention, which indicates higher retention in a company. Additionally, the presence of cohesive work groups and positive relationships within organizations contributes to higher employee retention rates, since satisfaction with coworkers and work group cohesion are two of the more consistent predictors of individual turnover decisions. Employees can become embedded in a network of relationships at work that make it less likely they will leave. Effective leadership and communication are crucial in creating a supportive organizational climate, which in turn reduces turnover intention (Ferreira, Pedrosa, & Calheiros, 2021). Labov (1997) also stated, the culture of an organization and a strong communication can benefit companies with a lower turnover rate (Bryant & Allen, 2013).

Research suggests that inadequate coping strategies and poor work-life balance contribute significantly to employee turnover in IT organizations (Monteiro & Joseph, 2022). When employees feel overwhelmed by job demands without appropriate support systems or resources for managing stress, they may opt for job changes as a means of reducing their stress levels.

Another strategy that is directly relevant to managing employee retention is the opportunity for advancement, having a positive influence in employee motivation and retention. Employees who believe that there are future opportunities for growth are more likely to stay, even if they are not completely satisfied with their present circumstances. Proactively managing career paths and opportunities would benefit organizations, and leaders should discuss those possibilities with team members (Bryant & Allen, 2013).

Many of the recommendations provided in this section are less expensive to implement, more likely to have an impact and thus likely to provide a greater return on investment (Bryant & Allen, 2013). In summary, it is critical to guarantee that there are good HR practices in place that can effectively decrease turnover within the company, boost employee satisfaction and engagement, creating a more stable and productive workplace and, hopefully, retaining their people (Goswami & Jha, 2012).

1.4. Retention Strategies in the IT Sector

Employee retention strategies play a crucial role in organizational performance and productivity. According to Sawaneh and Kamara (2019), establishing a strong connection between employees and the organization through benefits and regular communication with senior management is essential for retaining valuable employees. High turnover rates, particularly among talented and dedicated employees, will result in substantial expenses related to recruitment and training new joiners, therefore, taking proactive measures to reduce turnover and comprehending the factors that influence employees to leave their positions are imperative for organizational success (Sawaneh & Kamara, 2019).

Employee turnover can have unfavorable consequences on productivity, as organizations face the risk of losing valuable knowledge, skills, and experience when high-performing employees leave the company. Effective retention strategies not only prevent knowledge drain but also guarantee a skilled workforce capable of propelling organizational success. Additionally, high turnover rates can lead to understaffing and decreased productivity, ultimately obstructing an organization's competitive edge (Ntshangase & Parumasur, 2013).

Promoting a work-life balance for employees to spend quality time with their loved ones can boost job satisfaction and decrease turnover rates. Also, training and career development initiatives are crucial for employee growth and can significantly influence organizational productivity and advancement (Sawaneh & Kamara, 2019).

In summary, the implementation of strong employee retention strategies that prioritize employee value, growth opportunities, competitive compensation, and a positive work environment can significantly increase productivity within organizations and their competitiveness in the market. By retaining skilled employees, organizations can uphold a proficient workforce, ensure knowledge continuity, and ultimately enhance performance and success (Ntshangase & Parumasur, 2013).

1.5. Employer Branding

Employer branding refers to the market proposition that organizations provide to potential and current employees. It aims to differentiate the organization as an attractive employer, and it is used as a strategic tool to attract and retain talent by creating a positive perception that reduces the reliance on high compensation and rewards. So that the EB (Employer Branding) is well executed and influences the turnover intention, there must have to be an effective communication of these offerings, to target employees to foster loyalty within the organization (Swamantak & Joshi, 2022).

Research highlights the significance of emotional drivers, such as work-life balance and flexibility, in influencing employee satisfaction and retention more than rational drivers like monetary compensation. By aligning human resource management (HRM) and marketing strategies, organizations can establish a comprehensive employer branding framework that nurtures a positive employment relationship from recruitment to employment (Swamantak & Joshi, 2022).

This approach also aids in talent acquisition and retention, leading to reduced human resource costs and mitigating risks associated with poor hiring decisions. By effectively communicating internal employer policies and practices, integrating them into branding strategies, organizations can enhance employee satisfaction, loyalty and commitment, having a positive influence on the possibility of a company's ability to retain its employees and most importantly differentiation from other competitor brands (Gilani & Cunningham, 2017).

In 2011, Love and Singh stated that employer branding is implemented by companies to position themselves as an employer that offers superior experience and conditions to its employees, compared to the competitors. Since there is a growing shortage of labor supply, organizations need to become more and more the employer of choice and use employer branding as an instrument to show not only potential employees, but also current employees how they differentiate from the competitors and why people should want to work in that company (Gilani & Cunningham, 2017).

If done right, employer branding ends up by being an open gate for organizations to create the best possible practices and policies, to attract and retain, what most of times generates the internal development of various aspects such as compensation, trainings, career progression, work environment, and more. Fernon (2008) stated that the improvements made to these kinds of practices, increases employee's satisfaction and likelihood of remaining employed with the organization. According to Holbeche and Matthews (2012), an employee who enjoys working

at their organization can be seen as a brand ambassador, since these individuals usually praise and recommend the company to old colleagues, family and friends and these satisfaction with the workplace also translates into loyalty and long-term tender in the company (Gilani & Cunningham, 2017).

H1: Employer Branding Strategies will have a direct effect on Turnover Intention.

Employer brand is created among the internal public and subsequently communicated to the external, therefore, marketing communications should ensure that the employer brand, as perceived by potential employees, corresponds to its perception by current employees. The more attractive the benefits, the more attractive one's employment in the organization. Consequently, a positively perceived employer attractiveness creates a competitive advantage for an organization, resulting in its increased profitability (Spoljaric & Dosen, 2023).

Taking all this information from the respective researchers, nowadays, organizations that aim to attract and retain good employees effectively, must improve and develop their internal practices and moreover the employer branding of the company. Some practices that can be focused on are the internal communication and a flexible work regime. These types of practices are important to influence employees to maintain their satisfaction and engagement while within the organization.

1.6. Internal Communication

Effective communication plays an important role in enhancing retention within an organization. As highlighted by Rana (2013), in today's diverse workplace, where individuals from various cultural backgrounds converge, effective communication becomes essential. A diverse workforce brings together a range of knowledge and perspectives. Organizations must recognize individuality, value these differences, and cultivate an atmosphere of dignity for every employee if they expect to thrive in such an environment. For everyone to feel heard and understood, effective communication is essential, from upper management to employees at lower levels. By promoting effective communication, organizations can bridge cultural gaps, facilitate understanding among employees from different backgrounds, and create a sense of inclusivity. Clear and open communication channels help in conveying expectations, providing feedback, and addressing concerns promptly, since it fosters a positive work environment where employees feel valued and engaged. When employees feel that their voices are heard and their

contributions are recognized, they are more likely to be satisfied with their jobs and remain committed to the organization, ultimately leading to higher retention rates (Rana, 2013).

Effective communication in a diverse workplace is not just about transmitting information; it is about building relationships, fostering mutual respect, and creating a sense of belonging for all employees. By prioritizing communication strategies that embrace diversity and promote inclusivity, organizations can significantly impact employee retention rates and overall organizational success (Rana, 2013).

Employee mentoring is another valuable strategy for promoting effective communication and understanding within a diverse workforce. Mentoring can aid employees in developing their career plans, providing a supportive environment, teaching success strategies, and helping to balance career and family issues. By establishing mentoring relationships, organizations can facilitate knowledge sharing, skill development, and the breakdown of stereotypes, ultimately fostering a more inclusive work environment. Therefore, organizations should prioritize enhancing interpersonal communication, making multi-level improvements to address diversity, and implementing mentoring initiatives to promote employees' personal and professional growth in order to effectively communicate among a diverse workforce (Sadri & Tran, 2001).

According to Robin Erickson (2015), regular one-on-one meetings between supervisors and employees can facilitate open dialogue, provide support, and demonstrate care for employees' well-being. This type of communication fosters a sense of belonging and appreciation, contributing to a positive perception of the organization. Moreover, building trust within the organization is essential for effective communication and employee retention. Trust in leadership positively influences various work behaviors and outcomes, including organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and job performance. By establishing credibility through visible management, setting clear performance goals, and explaining the rationale behind organizational changes, employees are more likely to trust leadership and feel supported. Supervisors and HR should engage in regular communication with employees, to provide feedback, support ongoing learning, and conduct one-on-one meetings to demonstrate commitment to the employee development, growth, and well-being inside the organization (Erickson, 2015). By fostering open dialogue, demonstrating care for employees, and ensuring transparent communication, organizations can enhance employee retention, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment (Erickson, 2015).

To conclude, an open communication plays a crucial role in conveying the advantages and opportunities available to employees within a company and to effectively communicate

them, organizations can leverage various strategies to enhance employee retention and satisfaction (Erickson, 2015).

H2: Internal Communication will mediate the relationship between Employer Branding and turnover intention.

1.7. Flexible Work Arrangements

Flexible work arrangements (FWAs) are also another type of strategy an employer can implement in their organization, that usually has the potential to increase retention by benefiting both employees and employers (Wheatley, 2017).

Employees benefiting from flexible work arrangements experience more work-time flexibility, reduced work-life conflict, decreased work stress, and improved work-life balance. Additionally, homeworking has been shown to positively impact job and leisure satisfaction for both men and women employees (Wheatley, 2017).

Despite the benefits, challenges exist in the implementation of FWAs. Employers may be hesitant to offer FWAs due to concerns about associated costs and the preservation of traditional workplace practices centered around the "ideal worker" concept. To enhance the effectiveness of FWAs in increasing retention, efforts should be made to address concerns such as the formalization of policies, bridging gaps between policy and practice, and ensuring that FWAs are not perceived as poor-quality options. Employers need to recognize the importance of offering employee-friendly policies to retain talent, especially in the face of economic uncertainties (Wheatley, 2017).

Also, the COVID-19 pandemic has indeed had a significant impact on remote work practices, especially in the Information Technology (IT) industry. Organizations were obligated to accelerate the adoption of remote work, and this brought both opportunities and challenges for organizations and employees. Understanding the psychological wellbeing of remote employees, addressing the lack of social interaction, and investing in training and technology are crucial aspects to consider in ensuring the success of remote work arrangements in the post-pandemic era (Prasad , Mangipudi, Vaidya, & Muralidhar, 2020).

This situation created in such a positive way a work-life balance in the life of the employees, that now, especially in the IT industry, needs to be address and maintained (Prasad , Mangipudi, Vaidya, & Muralidhar, 2020). Organizations offering flexible work arrangements like telework demonstrate their commitment to meeting the changing needs of the workforce and adapting to competitive economic conditions. Also, by providing support for teleworking,

organizations can enhance employee satisfaction, reduce turnover, and improve overall organizational commitment (Choi, 2020).

Flexible work arrangements, such as remote work, have been shown to offer various benefits to employees. Remote workers can experience advantages like reduced commuting time and costs, alleviation of job-related stresses, and increased job satisfaction and performance. Additionally, telework can lead to financial benefits for employees and organizations, ultimately enhancing overall organizational productivity and retention (Choi, 2020).

H3: Flexibility will moderate the mediation effect by communication in the relationship between Employer Branding and turnover intention.

2. Methodology

In this chapter, the main methodological options and the methods that were applied throughout the investigation are presented. The objectives of this study are to identify the key retention strategies currently being used by some IT organizations currently and how that may affect the turnover rates in that sector. In the end of the study along with the conclusions based on the results, there will be recommendations for Retention Strategies: To provide actionable insights and recommendations for IT organizations to improve employee retention through targeted strategies and policies.

2.1. Procedure

Data collection took place between June and August 2024. The sample consists of employees both inside and outside IT organizations, to compare the retention strategies used by IT organizations and organizations outside this area, and to understand the results and the level of turnover intention in each.

The response to the questionnaire was requested via email, through social networks like LinkedIn, and through internal communication channels of organizations where the author had previously worked. The questionnaires were accompanied by respective instructions, and no maximum response time was set.

2.2. Participants Details

The convenience sample consists of a total of 146 participants, who participated voluntarily and without any reward system. Of the total participants, 63 (45%) are female, 78 (53%) are male, 1 (1%) identified as Other, and the remaining 2 (1%) preferred not to say. Of the participants that make up the sample, 94 (64%) work in an IT organization, and the remaining 52 (36%) do not work in an IT organization.

In the questionnaire, the participants were from different generations, like X, Y and generation Z. From generation X, which covers people that were born between 1965 and 1981, we had a small response percentage of 6%. Almost half the sample (49%) was from generation Y, that covers people that were born between 1982 and 1996. 45% of the participants were from generation Z (born between 1997 and 2010).

Regarding highest educational level completed, participants reported varying levels of education. Most of the respondents, 78 (54%), held a master's degree, making it the most common educational qualification within the sample. Another significant portion, 59

participants (40%), had obtained a bachelor's degree, while 8 respondents (6%) had completed high school as their highest level of education. A smaller subset of participants, 1 (1%), held a PhD. This educational distribution reflects a well-educated sample, with most respondents having completed higher education.

The participants held various positions within their organizations, with seniority levels ranging from junior employees to executives. The largest group consisted of junior-level employees, with 38 respondents (26%) identifying in this category. Mid-level employees accounted for 33 respondents (23%), and senior level made up 32 participants (22%). Managers were represented by 24 respondents (16%), while 19 participants (13%) stated they did not have a seniority level defined within their organization. This distribution indicates that the sample is quite well distributed and representative of all professional levels of experience.

In terms of tenure within their current organization, participants had diverse lengths of service. A significant proportion of the sample, 51 participants (35%), had worked for their current company for more than 1 years but less than 2 years. Another group, 34 participants (23%), reported having been with their company for more than 2 but less than 5 years. Also 23% (33 participants), reported having been with their company for more than 5 but less than 10 years. Meanwhile, 26 participants (18%) had been with their company for less than a year. Those with tenure exceeding 10 years made up only 2 participants (1%), reflecting a very small group of long-term employees. This variation in tenure provides a range of perspectives, from new hires to long-standing employees.

Regarding parental status, the sample included participants both with and without children. A big majority of 117 respondents (80%) reported not having children, while the other 29 participants (20%) have children. This distinction provides an opportunity to explore how parental responsibilities may influence respondents' perspectives on the topics under investigation.

In summary, the sample is diverse across multiple dimensions, with a balanced gender distribution, a highly educated group of respondents, and a wide range of seniority levels and tenure within their current organizations. The sample also includes a mix of participants with and without children, which adds another layer of diversity to the analysis. This broad range of characteristics provides a solid foundation for exploring the factors of interest in this research study (check Table 1).

Table 1
Demographics

	n	%
Gender		
Male	78	53
Female	65	45
Other	1	1
Prefer not to say	2	1
Generation		
X	9	6
Y	72	49
Z	65	45
Education Level		
High school	8	6
Bachelor	59	40
Master	78	53
PhD	1	1
Seniority Level		
Junior	38	26
Mid	33	23
Senior	32	22
Manager	24	16
Not defined	19	13
Tenure		
<1 year	26	18
> 1 year and < 2 years	51	35
> 2 year and < 5 years	34	23
> 5 year and < 10 years	33	23
> 10 years	2	1
Dependents		
Yes	29	20
No	117	80
Working in IT		
Yes	94	64
No	52	36

2.3. Instrument for Study

With the aim of assessing the importance that various retention strategies have for individuals and which ones have been most adopted by organizations, the Retention Strategies at Work Questionnaire was developed based on 4 variables (Employer Branding, Communication, Flexibility and Turnover Intention), therefore, this is a quantitative study. The Retention Strategies at Work Questionnaire consists of 59 items, of which 54 are intended to analyze the different strategies of employer branding, communication, and work flexibility that are being

adopted by different organizations, as well as which ones are most valued. The remaining and final 5 items aim to analyze the turnover rate in each of the organizations (IT and non-IT) and to determine whether IT organizations indeed suffer from higher turnover rates, as mentioned previously.

The Employer Branding (EB) strategies from each company were assessed with employer brand scale, from the "Employer brand scale development and validation: a second-order factor approach" study by Karnica Tanwar and Asha Prasad (2016). The 23-item scale was to be rated on a 5-point Likert scale, with respondents indicating their agreement or disagreement with each statement (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree). This scale was aiming to assess different variables inside EB in an organization, such as a healthy work atmosphere, training and development, work-life balance, ethics and corporate social responsibility, and compensation and benefits. The reliability of the instrument, $\alpha = 0.954$, indicates excellent internal consistency and a high level of reliability for the scale in this study (check Table 2).

The scale used in the Retention Strategies at Work Questionnaire, was meant to analyze the levels of satisfaction of the employee based on the communication within and in their organization. All items were neutrally worded and scored on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 ("extremely dissatisfied") to 7 ("extremely satisfied") and they were based on the "Measuring internal communication satisfaction: validating the internal communication satisfaction questionnaire" from Ana Tkalac Vercic and Dubravka Sincic Coric (2021). The 20-item dimensions that were tested in the Retention Strategies at Work Questionnaire were meant to assess (1) satisfaction with feedback (SwF), (2) satisfaction with communication with immediate superior (SwIS), (3) satisfaction with horizontal communication (SwHC), (4) satisfaction with information about the organization (SwIO) and (5) satisfaction with communication climate (SwCC). The scale also demonstrated high internal consistency, with an $\alpha = 0.969$, indicating excellent reliability for the instrument in this context.

The Flexible Work Options from each company were assessed with The Flexible Work Options Questionnaire (FWOQ). The 11-item scale was to be rated on a 5-point Likert scale, with respondents indicating their agreement or disagreement with each statement (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree). High scores indicated favorable attitudes towards the use of FWOs. Despite that, there were 6 items that were reverse scored, which can explain a lower $\alpha = 0.846$, though still a reliable measure. This scale was a reference from the "A Measure of Attitudes Towards Flexible Work Options" study from M. Albion (2004).

To conclude the Questionnaire, "The Effect of Item Content Overlap on Organizational Commitment Questionnaire-Turnover Cognitions Relationships" (Bozeman, D. & Perrewe, P,

2001) was the scale to assess Turnover Intention of the participants. Turnover cognitions were measured using a 5-item scale based on the work of Mowday et al. (1984) and Mobley, Horner, and Hollingsworth (1978). There are two negatively worded items and three positively worded items, where respondents indicated their agreement with each item on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The reliability of the instrument, $\alpha = 0.894$, indicates a great level of consistency and a high level of reliability for the scale in this study.

Table 2
Reliability Statistics

Variables	α
Employer Branding	0.954
Internal Communication	0.969
Flexibility	0.846
Turnover Intention	0.894

The following table (Table 3) provides descriptive statistics (minimum, maximum, mean, and standard deviation) for the four variables analyzed in this research: Employer Branding**,** Internal Communication**,** Flexibility**,** and Turnover Intention**.**

Healthy Work Atmosphere items from the employer branding scale have a mean of 4.045 and a standard deviation of 0.734, indicating that, on average, respondents had a relatively high level of agreement with statements about a healthy work atmosphere, with moderate variability among responses. Training and Development is the item, from the employer branding scale, with the lowest mean of 3.505 with a standard deviation of 1.250, showing a lower average satisfaction with training and development opportunities, as well as a relatively high variability in responses. With a mean of 3.797 and a standard deviation of 0.998, work-life balance is rated moderately, with responses showing slightly more variability than some other items. Ethics and social responsibility sub-scale has a mean of 3.878 with a standard deviation of 0.744, indicating that most participants positively viewed their company's ethical practices. Compensation and benefits had a mean response of 3.736 and a standard deviation of 0.903, suggesting relatively high but slightly varied responses regarding compensation and benefits.

In table 3, we also have represented the participants' satisfaction with various aspects of internal communication within the organization, like satisfaction with feedback, satisfaction with immediate superior, satisfaction with horizontal communication, satisfaction with information about the organization and satisfaction with communication climate, where

respondents generally expressed satisfaction, with horizontal communication and communication with immediate superiors receiving the highest satisfaction ratings.

The flexibility score shows a favorable view towards flexible work options, which could be positively impacting employees' overall satisfaction. The relatively low mean score for turnover intention suggests that employees are not actively considering leaving their organizations, which could be influenced by the generally positive scores in both employer branding and internal communication.

Table 3
Descriptive Statistics

	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Deviation
Employer Branding Variable	2.00	4.87	3.789	.814
Healthy work atmosphere	1.83	5.00	4.045	.734
Training and Development	1.00	5.00	3.505	1.250
Work life balance	1.00	5.00	3.797	.998
Ethics and social responsability	1.50	5.00	3.878	.744
Compensation and benefits	1.50	5.00	3.736	.903
Internal Communication Variable	2.20	7.00	5.291	1.063
Satisfaction with feedback	1.75	7.00	5.082	1.199
Satisfaction with communication with immediate superior	1.75	7.00	5.584	1.259
Satisfaction with horizontal communication	2.00	7.00	5.613	1.092
Satisfaction with communication about organization	2.25	7.00	5.048	1.237
Satisfaction with communication climate	1.00	7.00	5.127	1.353
Flexibility Variable	2.27	4.82	3.952	.663
Turnover Intention Variable	1.00	5.00	2.578	1.055

2.4. Correlation Analysis

After a reliability analysis, the next step was further analyzing if the variables had a strong correlation between them, facilitating the hypothesis testing later.

It was verified a strong negative correlation, $r = -0.654$ ($p < 0.01$), indicating that employees working in non-IT organizations perceive employer branding significantly less positively than employees working in IT organizations. This could reflect differences in the work culture, benefits, or communication strategies between non-IT organizations and IT organizations.

We can also conclude from the participants' responses to the questionnaire that there is a strong positive correlation, $r = 0.746$ ($p < 0.01$), between two of our main variables: Employer Branding and Internal Communication. This indicates that better communication within the organization is strongly associated with a more positive perception of employer branding. This suggests that organizations that excel in internal communication tend to have stronger employer brands, as employees value clear and effective communication as a key part of the brand

experience and an internal communication could also give greater visibility to the employer branding strategies being implemented in an organization. Improving communication could thus enhance the overall perception of the company as an employer. Between Flexibility and Communication there is a high correlation of 0.621 ($p < 0.01$), which means there's a moderate to strong positive correlation, suggesting that better communication within the organization is also linked to greater perceptions of job flexibility. Employees likely feel that clear communication about policies, expectations, and work arrangements enhances their sense of flexibility in the workplace.

It was also verified a strong positive correlation, $r = 0.706$ ($p < 0.01$), between Flexibility and Employer Branding, indicating that employees who perceive more flexibility in their jobs also tend to view the employer branding more positively. It highlights that workplace flexibility is a significant factor contributing to a strong employer brand. Companies that prioritize flexibility are likely to enhance their brand reputation in the eyes of employees.

As for the Turnover Intention variable, it was analyzed a moderate negative correlation, $r = -0.378$ ($p < 0.01$), suggesting that better communication within the organization is associated with lower turnover intentions. While not a very strong relationship, it indicates that poor communication can contribute to higher turnover, and improving communication may reduce turnover intentions. Even so, as mentioned previously, Communication could impact the perception employees have on the employer's brand, therefore, decreasing TI (Table 4).

Table 4
Correlation Analysis

	Gender	Generation	Education	Seniority	Tenure	Kids / No Kids	IT / Non-IT Organization	TOT_EB	TOT__C	TOT_Flex	TOT_TI	EB Healthy work atmosphere	EB Training and Development	EB WLB	EB Ethics and social responsability	EB Compensation and benefits	Satisfaction with feedback	S. w/communication with immediate superior	S. w/ horizontal communication	S. w/ communication about organization	S. w/ communication climate
Gender	1																				
Generation	0,058	1																			
Education	-0,095	0,045	1																		
Seniority	0,073	-.571**	0,001	1																	
Tenure	-0,044	-.585**	0,079	.556**	1																
Kids / No Kids	-0,102	.490**	0,149	-.269*	-.243**	1															
Organization	.389**	-0,142	-0,132	.281**	0,074	-.383**	1														
TOT_EB	-.209*	.380**	0,152	-.368**	-,168	.446**	-.654**	1													
TOT__C	-.165*	.324**	0,157	-.275**	-0,094	.409**	-.523**	.746**	1												
TOT_Flex	-.182*	.325**	0,119	-.307**	-.219*	.427**	-.649**	.706**	.621**	1											
TOT_TI	-0,093	-0,089	0,106	0,033	0,097	0,052	0,062	-.231**	-.378**	-0,130	1										
EB Healthy work atmosphere	-.222**	.273**	0,040	-.277**	-0,097	.379**	-.600**	.867**	.731**	.666**	-.322**	1									
EB Training and Development	-.170*	.415**	.177*	-.365**	-,185*	.425**	-.592**	.953**	.718**	.647**	-0,162	.781**	1								
EB WLB	-.256**	.303**	.184*	-.358**	-.164*	.428**	-.634**	.799**	.629**	.656**	-.259**	.701**	.708**	1							
EB Ethics and social responsability	-.167*	.340**	0,049	-.296**	-0,143	.416**	-.558**	.878**	.622**	.642**	-.223**	.717**	.776**	.657**	1						
EB Compensation and benefits	-0,113	.244**	.180*	-.274**	-0,115	.274**	-.441**	.763**	.454**	.430**	-0,071	.482**	.683**	.449**	.698**	1					
Satisfaction with feedback	-0,107	.245**	0,111	-.248**	-0,074	.358**	-.563**	.710**	.881**	.579**	-.346**	.641**	.663**	.614**	.617**	.504**	1				
S. w/communication with immediate	-.191*	.273**	.167*	-.255**	-0,119	.416**	-.471**	.607**	.867**	.586**	-.355**	.635**	.544**	.616**	.512**	.312**	.698**	1			
S. w/ horizontal communication	-0,147	.261**	0,011	-.207*	-0,055	.253**	-.412**	.581**	.801**	.583**	-.347**	.673**	.560**	.487**	.445**	.260**	.610**	.674**	1		
S. w/communication about organization	-0,099	.339**	0,137	-.247**	-0,154	.388**	-.371**	.615**	.860**	.450**	-.236**	.527**	.646**	.428**	.530**	.414**	.710**	.641**	.593**	1	
S. w/communication climate	-.166*	.281**	.230**	-.229**	-0,008	.343**	-.444**	.707**	.909**	.501**	-.352**	.687**	.686**	.568**	.576**	.460**	.783**	.726**	.629**	.758**	1

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Codification for demographic variables:
Gender – Male - 1, Female - 2, Other - 3, Prefer not to say - 4; **Generation** – X- 1, Y- 2, Z- 3; **Education** – High School - 1, Bachelor - 2, Master - 3, PhD - 4; **Seniority** – Junior - 1, Mid - 2; Senior - 3, Manager - 4, Not defined - 5; **Tenure** - < 1 year - 1, [1,2[years - 2, [2,5[years - 3, [5,10[years - 4, >10 years - 5; **Kids** – Yes - 1, No - 2; **Organization** – IT - 1, Non IT - 2.

2.5. Hypothesis Tests

H1: Employer Branding Strategies will have a direct effect on Turnover Intention.

To support this hypothesis a regression analysis was made. A negative beta coefficient ($\beta = -0.300$) was identified, suggesting a negative relationship between Employer Branding and Turnover Intention. This means that as perceptions of Employer Branding increase, Turnover Intention decreases. The value of -0.300 suggests a moderate negative effect, meaning that Employer Branding has a meaningful impact on reducing Turnover Intention.

5.3% variance in Turnover Intention is explained by Employer Branding ($R^2 = 0.053$). This is relatively low, indicating that while Employer Branding has a statistically significant impact, it only explains a small portion of why employees intend to leave the organization.

This suggests that there are likely other factors besides Employer Branding that influence Turnover Intention. The F-statistic of 8.139 and a p-value of 0.005 ($p < 0{,}05$) indicate that the regression model is statistically significant at the 0.05 level (see Table 5).

The overall significance of the model was proven, which means that Employer Branding significantly predicts the dependent variable, Turnover Intention. Therefore, the hypothesis "Employer Branding Strategies will have a direct effect on Turnover Intention" has been corroborated.

Table 5
Regression Analysis - ANOVA[a]

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	8,629	1	8,629	8,139	,005 [b]
Residual	152,661	144	1,06		
Total	161,29	145			

a. Dependent Variable: TOT_TI (Turnover Intention)
b. Predictors: (Constant), TOT_EB (Employer Branding

H2: Internal Communication will mediate the relationship between Employer Branding and turnover intention.

After testing and supporting the previous hypothesis, the model can be improved by adding other relevant predictors (e.g., job satisfaction, communication quality, work-life balance) to better explain Turnover Intention. After guaranteeing that Employer Branding significantly predicts Turnover Intention, it was analyzed if this relation was mediated by the variable Internal Communication.

To do so, a mediation analysis was conducted (performed by the PROCESS SPSS macro, Hayes, 2022), and the "Internal Communication will mediate the relationship between Employer Branding and turnover intention" hypothesis was supported.

As we can see in Table 6, Employer Branding was positively associated with Communication (a = 0.976), and Communication was positively associated with Turnover Intention. A bootstrap confidence interval for the indirect effect (ab = -0.448) based on 5000 bootstrap resamples was entirely below zero (-0.829 to -0.171), suggesting that Communication (TOT_C) mediates the association between Employer Branding (TOT_EB) and Turnover Intention (TOT_TI). The negative indirect effect means that the more positive the Employer Branding, the better the Communication, and this results in lower Turnover Intention.

It was also verified that once Communication is accounted for, Employer Branding no longer directly affects Turnover Intention. This suggests that the relationship between Employer Branding and Turnover Intention operates through Communication. The confidence interval ($LLCI = -0.149$, $ULCI = 0.446$) includes zero, confirming the non-significance of the direct effect (see Table 6).

In summary, Communication fully mediates the relationship between Employer Branding and Turnover Intention. This implies that organizations can reduce turnover intentions by enhancing their communication practices, which in turn will strengthen the impact of Employer Branding.

Table 6
Results of Mediation Analysis

Antecedent		M (TOT_C)				Y (TOT_TI)		
		B	*SE*	*p*		*B*	*SE*	*p*
X (TOT_EB)	**a**	0.976	0.072	0.000	**c'**	0.149	0.150	0.325
M (TOT_C)		-	-	-	**b**	-0.460	0.115	0.000
		$R^2 = 0.557$				$R^2 = 0.149$		
		$F = 181.225, p < 0.005$				$F = 12.478, p < 0.005$		

H3: Flexibility will moderate the mediation effect by communication in the relationship between Employer Branding and turnover intention.

Since Hypothesis 2 (Internal Communication will mediate the relationship between Employer Branding and turnover intention) was considered significant to the study, it was also analyzed if Flexibility could in any way moderate the mediation effect by Communication in the relationship between Employer Branding and Turnover Intention – Model 5, from A. Hayes.

When analyzing the interaction effect (EB*Flexibility) it was perceived lack of significance (p = 0.313), meaning Flexibility (W) does not significantly moderate the relationship between Employer Branding (X) and Turnover Intention (Y). In other words, the effect of Employer Branding on Turnover Intention does not significantly change depending on the level of Flexibility. Also, the small R^2 change (0.006) indicates that adding Flexibility as a moderator explains very little additional variance in Turnover Intention. Thus, Flexibility doesn't meaningfully change how Employer Branding influences Turnover Intention in this model (Check Table 7).

Since the interaction is not significant, the focus of the study will be on the mediation effect of Communication (M) between Employer Branding and Turnover Intention, without considering the moderation effect of Flexibility.

Table 7

Multiplicator Effect

	R2-change	F	p
X*W	-0.300	1.025	0.313

At low, moderate, and high levels of Flexibility, the direct effect of Employer Branding on Turnover Intention is not statistically significant because all the p-values are higher than 0.05, and the 95% confidence intervals include zero. This means that Flexibility does not significantly alter the direct relationship between Employer Branding and Turnover Intention. In other words, regardless of whether employees experience high or low flexibility, Employer Branding does not have a significant direct effect on their Turnover Intention (see Table 8).

As mentioned previously, the indirect effect of Employer Branding on Turnover Intention through Communication is significant because the confidence interval ([-0.892, -0.220]) does not include zero (see Table 8).

Table 8

Direct and Indirect Effect of EB on TI, with Moderate Level of Flexibility (3.9521)

	Effect	p	LLCI	ULCI
Direct effect of X on Y	0.072	0.679	-0.270	0.413
(TOT_C) Indirect effect(s) of X on Y	-0.494	0.172	-0.892	-0.220

To conclude, this moderated mediation model (Hayes Model 5), Flexibility does not moderate the direct effect of Employer Branding on Turnover Intention. However, Communication (TOT_C) plays a crucial mediating role: better Employer Branding leads to

improved Communication, which significantly reduces Turnover Intention. Improving communication is a key strategy for leveraging employer branding to decrease employee turnover.

3. Discussion

The regression analysis results, confirm that Employer Branding Strategies significantly predict Turnover Intention. The hypothesis Employer Branding Strategies will have a direct negative effect on Turnover Intention has been corroborated, meaning that organizations with stronger employer branding experience lower turnover intention among their employees.

These results are consistent with previous research on how employer branding affects employee retention. One of the most important ways for businesses to stand out in the highly competitive job market is through employer branding. According to Swamantak and Joshi (2022), employer branding entails developing a compelling offer to attract and retain workers. Employee loyalty and commitment are increased, and their desire to quit decreases when they believe their company provides worthwhile non-monetary rewards, such as a positive work environment, growth opportunities, and a solid organizational culture (Swamantak & Joshi, 2022). Research by Gilani and Cunningham (2017) also supports this result, emphasizing that employer branding enhances employee attraction and retention by aligning organizational practices with employee expectations. The positive perception of employer branding, as indicated by the statistically significant relationship in the current study, implies that when organizations invest in their employer brand, they are more likely to reduce turnover. Additionally, employer branding strategies are not merely about external perceptions but also internal communication and practices that foster a positive work experience (Gilani & Cunningham, 2017). Bryant and Allen (2013) noted that compensation alone does not suffice to retain talent in the IT industry, and organizations need to focus on creating a work environment that encourages long-term engagement (Bryant & Allen, 2013).

The role of employer branding in creating a sense of belonging and career satisfaction, as noted by Love and Singh (2011), is critical in reducing turnover intention, since employees are less likely to consider leaving when aligned with their company's values and when seeing opportunities for development and recognition (Gilani & Cunningham, 2017).

The statistical significance of employer branding in predicting turnover intention has practical implications for organizations. As Das and Baruah (2013) pointed out, companies must invest in retention strategies that go beyond monetary compensation to attract and, most importantly, retain the shortage of skilled professionals, particularly in high-demand industries like IT. Employer branding offers a cost-effective way to enhance employee satisfaction and loyalty, as it focuses on internal motivators such as company culture, work-life balance, and professional advancement. (Das & Baruah, 2013).

In conclusion, the findings from the regression analysis are consistent with the body of literature highlighting the importance of Employer Branding Strategies in reducing Turnover Intention. By creating and maintaining a strong employer brand, organizations can directly influence their employees' desire to stay, particularly in competitive sectors like IT, where retention is key to maintaining a skilled workforce. Investing in employer branding not only enhances the external perception of the company but also strengthens internal engagement, reducing the likelihood of turnover and contributing to the organization's long-term success. This study's results reaffirm the vital role that employer branding plays in shaping turnover intentions, providing empirical support for the strategic focus on branding as a tool for employee retention. Swamantak and Joshi (2022) also emphasized that strong internal communication of the employer brand reinforces the organizational identity among employees, further enhancing retention. When employees internalize the employer brand, they are more likely to act as ambassadors of the company and are less inclined to leave, as supported by the significant negative relationship between employer branding and turnover intention in the current analysis (Swamantak & Joshi, 2022).

As mentioned in the analysis of the previous chapter, Internal Communication fully mediates the relationship between Employer Branding and Turnover Intention. This suggests that Employer Branding's influences the reduction of turnover intention, through its effect on improving internal communication within the organization.

Once Internal Communication is introduced into the model, Employer Branding no longer directly affects Turnover Intention, indicating that communication explains employer branding impacts turnover. This suggests that Internal Communication is critical for converting the positive aspects of Employer Branding into reduced turnover intentions. As mentioned in the literature, Rana (2013) emphasizes the importance of communication in fostering inclusivity and employee engagement (Rana, 2013). Similarly, Erickson (2015) highlights that communication, particularly when open and transparent, builds trust between employees and management, which reduces turnover intention (Erickson, 2015). When communication is strong and effective, employees are more likely to feel engaged and valued, which reduces their desire to leave (Bryant & Allen, 2013).

The indirect effect of Employer Branding on Turnover Intention through Internal Communication is significant and negative. This means that as Employer Branding improves, Internal Communication also improves, which in turn reduces turnover intention. This finding aligns with Erickson's (2015) statement, which emphasizes that clear, consistent

communication helps employees feel more connected to the organization's goals and values, thereby reducing turnover intention. (Erickson, 2015).

The significant indirect effect suggests that employees who perceive that their organization communicates effectively are more likely to feel secure, informed, and appreciated, which strengthens their commitment to the organization. As Sadri and Tran (2001) noted, fostering open communication helps reduce misunderstandings and creates a supportive environment that reduces turnover (Sadri & Tran, 2001).

The results of this study emphasize the importance of Internal Communication as a mediator between Employer Branding and Turnover Intention. Organizations that seek to reduce turnover must invest not only in building a strong employer brand but also in improving their internal communication strategies. As Erickson (2015) points out, internal communication that promotes transparency and trust is essential for retaining employees. Also, without effective communication, the impact of Employer Branding may be diminished, as employees might not fully understand or appreciate the brand's values (Erickson, 2015).

This finding is especially relevant for organizations in the IT sector, where turnover is historically high. By strengthening internal communication, organizations can better leverage their employer branding efforts to reduce turnover intention. In practice, organizations should prioritize regular, clear communication between leadership and employees, ensure feedback mechanisms are in place, and create opportunities for open dialogue.

On the contrary to what our third hypothesis states, Flexibility cannot be a moderator included in the previous model. Based on the statistical analysis, Flexibility does not significantly moderate the mediation effect by communication in the relationship between Employer Branding and Turnover Intention.

The non-significant interaction effect between Employer Branding and Flexibility implies that Flexibility does not meaningfully alter the impact of Employer Branding on Turnover Intention. This finding might seem counterintuitive, especially in contemporary discussions where flexibility is often regarded as a key factor in job satisfaction and retention. However, these results can be understood through the lens of the Border Theory (Clark, 2000). The Border Theory suggests that flexible work arrangements (FWAs) can blur the boundaries between work and personal life, leading to increased work-family conflict (Clark, 2000). For instance, while flextime or working from home may offer autonomy, they can also result in employees struggling to separate their professional and personal roles, creating stress and reducing job satisfaction (Kossek & Michel, 2011). Studies have shown that employees who experience higher levels of work-family conflict due to blurred boundaries are more likely to

consider leaving their organization, regardless of the perceived benefits of Flexibility (Allen, Johnson, Kiburz, & Shockley, 2013). Thus, while Flexibility might provide some immediate advantages, it may not always alleviate the deeper stresses related to balancing work and family life, which likely weakens its moderating effect on Employer Branding and Turnover Intention.

Additionally, different forms of FWA, such as flex-time or working from home, have varying impacts on employees. For instance, flex-leave, which provides temporary breaks for personal matters, has been found to reduce work-family conflicts more effectively than other forms of Flexibility (Kossek & Michel, 2011). However, working from home or flex-time can increase the likelihood of work-family conflict by creating permeable boundaries between the two domains (Onken-Menke, Nuesch, & Kroll, 2018). This variability helps explain why Flexibility, in general, does not significantly change the relationship between Employer Branding and Turnover Intention because the beneficial effects of flexibility are often counterbalanced by its potential to increase stress.

For organizations, the results suggest that efforts to reduce Turnover Intention should prioritize enhancing internal communication rather than focusing primarily on Flexibility initiatives. This does not imply that Flexibility is unimportant, but rather that in the context of Employer Branding, communication serves as a more powerful tool for reinforcing an organization's culture and values, thereby reducing the likelihood of turnover.

Furthermore, organizations should be mindful of how they frame flexibility policies. While flexibility might not directly reduce turnover, it could still play an important role in overall employee satisfaction, potentially affecting other areas such as performance and engagement. A comprehensive strategy that combines effective branding communication with thoughtful implementation of flexibility policies may yield the best results.

4. Conclusion

This chapter presents the main conclusions and reflections drawn from the research, which is divided into two parts: practical implications and study limitations, as well as future research.

The findings from this study offer clear insights into how IT organizations can enhance their retention strategies to retain skilled professionals effectively.

The study confirms that employer branding has a direct and significant impact on employee turnover intention. IT organizations should invest in creating a strong employer brand that reflects the company's values, culture, and commitment to employee growth and well-being. A compelling employer brand helps differentiate an organization in the competitive IT market, making it more attractive to both current employees and potential recruits. This includes offering non-monetary incentives such as career development opportunities, a healthy work environment, and work-life balance initiatives. By building a brand that resonates with employees' values, IT companies can foster loyalty and reduce the likelihood of turnover.

How does employer branding impact employee turnover intention in IT organizations? Employer branding impacts turnover by shaping employees' perception of the company. A positive employer brand communicates that the organization is invested in its employees, offering a supportive and growth-oriented environment. When employees feel aligned with the company's values and see opportunities for development, they are less likely to seek other opportunities, reducing turnover intention.

Internal communication plays a pivotal role in mediating the relationship between employer branding and turnover intention, as highlighted in the study. This means that an effective internal communication is one of the positive effects when employer branding strategies are implemented within the organization, thereby reducing the intention to turnover from employees. Also, IT organizations should focus on establishing open and transparent communication channels, ensuring that employees are regularly informed about company developments, goals, and opportunities for personal growth. Additionally, clear communication of the organization's employer branding efforts internally strengthens employees' engagement, trust in leadership, and alignment with organizational values.

What role does internal communication play in mediating the relationship between employer branding and turnover intention? When employees have regular, open communication with leadership, they are more likely to feel valued and connected to the organization. The study shows that employer branding alone may not directly impact turnover intention unless effective internal communication exists to foster employee engagement. By

improving communication, IT organizations can enhance the effectiveness of their employer branding strategies in reducing turnover.

Although the study found that flexibility does not significantly moderate the relationship between employer branding and turnover intention, flexible work arrangements still play a critical role in employee satisfaction and retention. IT organizations should continue offering flexible work options, such as remote work or flexible hours, which are especially valued in the post-pandemic work environment. However, the key is to implement these policies in a way that avoids creating work-family conflicts, as flexibility can blur the lines between work and personal life. Clear guidelines on work expectations and boundaries can help mitigate potential stress associated with flexible arrangements.

While flexibility may not directly reduce turnover intention, it enhances overall job satisfaction and can contribute to a positive employer brand. However, flexibility needs to be thoughtfully implemented, with clear communication about expectations and boundaries to avoid any negative impact, such as work-family conflicts. In practice, organizations that offer well-structured flexibility can still boost retention by responding to employees' needs for autonomy and work-life balance.

As for the study limitations, for future research there should be a larger sample size for more robust mediation analyses. A larger sample would improve the statistical power of the study, enabling more accurate tests of complex mediation effects. This would provide further insight into how flexibility might interact with communication in the relationship between employer branding and turnover intention. Since this study used an English-only questionnaire, participants who were not proficient in English were excluded, potentially biasing the results. Future research should offer multilingual questionnaires to capture a more diverse and representative sample, especially in global industries like IT. This would ensure the inclusion of participants from various linguistic backgrounds, providing more generalizable results.

While this study focused on employer branding, flexibility, and communication as retention strategies, future research should explore a wider range of factors that contribute to employee retention in the IT sector. These could include compensation packages, career development opportunities, work-life balance, company culture, and leadership quality. Incorporating these variables would provide a more holistic understanding of the factors influencing turnover in the IT industry.

Future studies should consider adding a specific question in the questionnaire that directly asks participants whether they are IT professionals, rather than only determining if they work in an IT organization. This would allow for a more precise analysis of turnover intention among

IT professionals specifically, who typically have higher turnover rates. Segmenting the data in this way could provide more targeted insights into how retention strategies impact this specific subgroup within IT organizations.

In conclusion, the study confirms that Internal Communication fully mediates the relationship between Employer Branding and Turnover Intention. This finding highlights the critical role that communication plays in ensuring that the benefits of a strong employer brand are fully realized in the context of employee retention. Organizations that invest in both employer branding and internal communication are more likely to see significant reductions in turnover intention, leading to a more stable and committed workforce. For organizations in the IT sector, where turnover is historically high, this finding is especially relevant. By strengthening internal communication, organizations can better leverage their employer branding efforts to reduce turnover intention. In practice, this means that organizations should prioritize regular, clear communication between leadership and employees

Also, in line with the study's findings, IT organizations should adopt a holistic approach to retention that extends beyond compensation. While salary remains an important factor, retention strategies should focus on creating a positive work environment, fostering professional growth, and providing clear communication and support. Additionally, IT companies should regularly assess their employees' needs through feedback mechanisms and adapt their strategies accordingly. By understanding the unique demands of IT professionals, who are often faced with high turnover rates, organizations can implement targeted retention strategies that address both intrinsic and extrinsic motivations.

By focusing on these areas, IT organizations can create a more engaged and satisfied workforce, reducing turnover intention and ensuring the retention of skilled professionals in a highly competitive sector.

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Appendices

Appendix A - Questionnaire

2. Thinking about the conditions in your current organization, select your level of agreement with each statement.

The levels are Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neutral (3), Agree (4), Strongly Agree (5). *

	1	2	3	4	5
My organization provides autonomy to its employees to take decisions.	○	○	○	○	○
My organization offers opportunities to enjoy a group atmosphere.	○	○	○	○	○
I have friends at work who are ready to share my responsability at work in my absence.	○	○	○	○	○
My organization recognises me when I do good work.	○	○	○	○	○
My organization offers a relatively stress-free work environment.	○	○	○	○	○
My organization offers opportunity to work in teams.	○	○	○	○	○
My organization provides us online training courses.	○	○	○	○	○
My organization organizes various conferences, workshops and training programmes on regular basis.	○	○	○	○	○
My organization offers opportunities to work on foreign projects.	○	○	○	○	○
My organization invests heavily in training and development of its employees.	○	○	○	○	○
Skill development is a continuous process in my organization.	○	○	○	○	○
My organization communicates clear advancement path for its employees.	○	○	○	○	○

3. Thinking about the conditions in your current organization, select your level of agreement with each statement.

The levels are Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neutral (3), Agree (4), Strongly Agree (5). *

	1	2	3	4	5
My organization provides flexible-working hours;	○	○	○	○	○
My organization offers opportunity to work from home.	○	○	○	○	○
My organization provides on-site sports facility.	○	○	○	○	○
My organization has fair attitude towards employees.	○	○	○	○	○
Employees are expected to follow all rules and regulations.	○	○	○	○	○
Humanitarian organization gives back to the society.	○	○	○	○	○
There is a confidential procedure to report misconduct at work.	○	○	○	○	○
In general, the salary offered by my organization is high.	○	○	○	○	○
My organization provides overtime pay.	○	○	○	○	○
My organization provides good health benefits.	○	○	○	○	○
My organization provides insurance coverage for employees and dependents.	○	○	○	○	○

Anterior   Seguinte

4. Thinking about the conditions in your current organization, select your level of agreement with each statement.

The levels of agreement range from 1 ("extremely dissatisfied") to 7 ("extremely satisfied").
*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Information on the consequences of doing my job poorly.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Information on how much I contribute to the organization's success.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Information on how much my job is appreciated within the organization.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Feedback on how well I do my job.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Availability of my immediate superior.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
How well my immediate superior is informed about the problems that I may encounter at work.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
How well my immediate superior understands my problems.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Recognition of my potential by my immediate superior.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Availability of my colleagues.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
How successfully I am able to communicate with the members of my team.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
The outcomes of communicating with colleagues.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The outcomes of communicating with colleagues.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Readiness of my colleagues to accept critical feedback.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Information on work protocols.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Information on revenues, profit and the financial status of the organization.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Information on changes in the organization.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Information on legal regulations that affect the organization's operations.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
How much communication within the organization helps me to feel I am an important part of the organization.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
How much communication within the organization helps me to identify with the organization.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
How much communication within the organization promotes organizational values.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
How much communication within the organization encourages me to accomplish the organization's goals.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

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5. Thinking about the conditions in your current organization, select your level of agreement with each statement.

The levels are Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neutral (3), Agree (4), Strongly Agree (5).
*

	1	2	3	4	5
Flexible working arrangements help me balance life commitments.	○	○	○	○	○
I cannot afford the loss of pay associated with most flexible work options.	○	○	○	○	○
Flexible work options do not suit me because they tend to make me feel disconnected from the workplace.	○	○	○	○	○
Working shorter hours would negatively impact on my career progress within the organization.	○	○	○	○	○
Working more flexible hours is essential for me in order to attend to family responsibilities.	○	○	○	○	○
Flexible working arrangements are essential for me to participate in family and social events.	○	○	○	○	○
Flexible working arrangements enable me to focus more on the job when I am at the workplace.	○	○	○	○	○
People at my workplace react negatively to people using flexible working arrangements.	○	○	○	○	○
People using flexible working arrangements usually have less commitment to their work role.	○	○	○	○	○
People using flexible working arrangements often miss important work events or communications, such as staff meetings, training sessions, important notices, etc.	○	○	○	○	○
I would not be able to do paid work at all, if I could not use flexible work arrangements.	○	○	○	○	○

6. Thinking about the conditions in your current organization, select your level of agreement with each statement.

The levels are Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neutral (3), Agree (4), Strongly Agree (5). *

	Strongly Disagree (1)	2	3	4	Strongly Agree (5)
I will probably look for a new job in the near future.	○	○	○	○	○
At the present time, I am actively searching for another job in a different organization.	○	○	○	○	○
I do not intend to quit my job.	○	○	○	○	○
It is unlikely that I will actively look for a different organization to work for in the next year.	○	○	○	○	○
I am not thinking about quitting my job at the present time.	○	○	○	○	○

Anterior   Seguinte

Demographics

Please answer the following questions, so we can gather some demographic information for the study.

7. Do you currently work in an IT organization? *

○ Yes

○ No

8. Gender *

○ Female

○ Male

○ Other

○ Prefer not to say

9. Birthday *

Introduza a data de entrada (dd/MM/yyyy)	🔲

10. What is the highest level of education you have completed? *

○ High School or Equivalent

○ Bachelor's Degree

○ Master's Degree

○ PhD

11. What is your current job level? *

○ Junior Level

○ Mid Level

○ Senior Level

○ Manager

○ Executive

○ Not defined

12. How long have you been working in your current organization? *

○ Less than 1 year

○ More than 1 and less than 2 years

○ More than 2 and less than 5 years

○ More than 5 and less than 10 years

○ More than 10 years

13. Do you currently have dependents under the age of 18? *

○ Yes

○ No

Anterior	Submeter

Appendix B - H1 SPSS Output

Variáveis Inseridas/Removidas[a]

Modelo	Variáveis inseridas	Variáveis removidas	Método
1	TOT_EB[b]	.	Inserir

a. Variável Dependente: TOT_TI
b. Todas as variáveis solicitadas inseridas.

Resumo do modelo

Modelo	R	R quadrado	R quadrado ajustado	Erro padrão da estimativa
1	,231[a]	,053	,047	1,02963

a. Preditores: (Constante), TOT_EB

ANOVA[a]

Modelo		Soma dos Quadrados	df	Quadrado Médio	Z	Sig.
1	Regressão	8,629	1	8,629	8,139	,005[b]
	Resíduo	152,661	144	1,060		
	Total	161,290	145			

a. Variável Dependente: TOT_TI
b. Preditores: (Constante), TOT_EB

Coeficientes[a]

Modelo		Coeficientes não padronizados B	Erro Erro	Coeficientes padronizados Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constante)	3,714	,407		9,123	<,001
	TOT_EB	-,300	,105	-,231	-2,853	,005

a. Variável Dependente: TOT_TI

Appendix C - H2 SPSS Output

```
Run MATRIX procedure:

****************** PROCESS Procedure for SPSS Version 4.2 *****************

          Written by Andrew F. Hayes, Ph.D.          www.afhayes.com
     Documentation available in Hayes (2022). www.guilford.com/p/hayes3

*************************************************************************
Model  : 4
    Y  : TOT_TI
    X  : TOT_EB
    M  : TOT_C

Sample
Size:  146

*************************************************************************
OUTCOME VARIABLE:
 TOT_C

Model Summary
          R          R-sq        MSE          F         df1        df2          p
      ,7465        ,5572       ,5039    181,2250     1,0000   144,0000       ,0000

Model
            coeff         se          t          p        LLCI        ULCI
constant   1,5964       ,2806      5,6881      ,0000      1,0416      2,1511
TOT_EB      ,9751       ,0724     13,4620      ,0000       ,8319      1,1182
```

```
***********************************************************************
OUTCOME VARIABLE:
 TOT_TI

Model Summary
          R       R-sq        MSE          F        df1        df2          p
       ,3855      ,1486      ,9603    12,4776     2,0000   143,0000      ,0000

Model
              coeff         se          t          p       LLCI       ULCI
constant      4,4476      ,4288    10,3733      ,0000     3,6001     5,2951
TOT_EB         ,1485      ,1503      ,9885      ,3246     -,1485      ,4456
TOT_C         -,4597      ,1150    -3,9962      ,0001     -,6871     -,2323

************************** TOTAL EFFECT MODEL ***************************
OUTCOME VARIABLE:
 TOT_TI

Model Summary
          R       R-sq        MSE          F        df1        df2          p
       ,2313      ,0535     1,0601     8,1393     1,0000   144,0000      ,0050

Model
              coeff         se          t          p       LLCI       ULCI
constant      3,7137      ,4071     9,1229      ,0000     2,9091     4,5183
TOT_EB        -,2997      ,1051    -2,8529      ,0050     -,5074     -,0921


*************** TOTAL, DIRECT, AND INDIRECT EFFECTS OF X ON Y **************


Total effect of X on Y
     Effect         se          t          p       LLCI       ULCI
      -,2997      ,1051    -2,8529      ,0050     -,5074     -,0921

Direct effect of X on Y
     Effect         se          t          p       LLCI       ULCI
       ,1485      ,1503      ,9885      ,3246     -,1485      ,4456

Indirect effect(s) of X on Y:
          Effect     BootSE   BootLLCI   BootULCI
TOT_C     -,4483      ,1662     -,8289     -,1709

*********************** ANALYSIS NOTES AND ERRORS ************************

Level of confidence for all confidence intervals in output:
  95,0000

Number of bootstrap samples for percentile bootstrap confidence intervals:
  5000

------ END MATRIX -----
```

Appendix D - H3 SPSS Output

```
Run MATRIX procedure:

***************** PROCESS Procedure for SPSS Version 4.2 ****************


         Written by Andrew F. Hayes, Ph.D.       www.afhayes.com
     Documentation available in Hayes (2022). www.guilford.com/p/hayes3


***********************************************************************
Model  : 5
    Y  : TOT_TI
    X  : TOT_EB
    M  : TOT_C
```

44

```
     W  : TOT_FLEX


Sample
Size:  146


***************************************************************************
OUTCOME VARIABLE:
 TOT_C


Model Summary
          R        R-sq         MSE           F         df1         df2           p
      ,7465       ,5572       ,5039    181,2250      1,0000    144,0000        ,0000


Model
            coeff          se           t           p        LLCI        ULCI
constant   1,5964       ,2806      5,6881       ,0000      1,0416      2,1511
TOT_EB      ,9751       ,0724     13,4620       ,0000       ,8319      1,1182


***************************************************************************
OUTCOME VARIABLE:
 TOT_TI


Model Summary
          R        R-sq         MSE           F         df1         df2           p
      ,4085       ,1669       ,9530      7,0624      4,0000    141,0000        ,0000


Model
            coeff          se           t           p        LLCI        ULCI
constant   6,2299      2,2119      2,8165       ,0056      1,8571     10,6027
TOT_EB     -,5902       ,6407      -,9211       ,3586     -1,8568       ,6764
TOT_C      -,5069       ,1177     -4,3061       ,0000      -,7396      -,2742
TOT_FLEX   -,3300       ,6033      -,5470       ,5852     -1,5228       ,8627
Int_1       ,1674       ,1654      1,0124       ,3131      -,1595       ,4944


Product terms key:
 Int_1    :          TOT_EB    x          TOT_FLEX


Test(s) of highest order unconditional interaction(s):
      R2-chng          F         df1         df2           p
X*W      ,0061      1,0249      1,0000    141,0000        ,3131



****************** DIRECT AND INDIRECT EFFECTS OF X ON Y *****************


Conditional direct effects of X on Y
   TOT_FLEX     Effect          se           t           p        LLCI        ULCI
     3,2895     -,0394       ,1845      -,2134       ,8313      -,4040       ,3253
     3,9521      ,0716       ,1727       ,4144       ,6792      -,2699       ,4131
     4,6146      ,1825       ,2228       ,8190       ,4141      -,2580       ,6231


Indirect effect(s) of X on Y:
          Effect      BootSE    BootLLCI    BootULCI
TOT_C     -,4943       ,1719      -,8924      -,2200

********************** ANALYSIS NOTES AND ERRORS ***********************


Level of confidence for all confidence intervals in output:
  95,0000


Number of bootstrap samples for percentile bootstrap confidence intervals:
  5000


------ END MATRIX -----
```