

Employer Branding and Career Development Effects on Generation Z Employee Retention in Banking

Ipa Hafsiyah Yakin^{1*} , Carlos Perez² 

¹Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Sebelas April, Indonesia

²Faculty of Economics and Business, Ilearning Institute, Colombia

¹ipa.feb@unsap.ac.id, ²carloszz11@ilearning.co

*Corresponding Author

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ABSTRACT

Employee retention among Generation Z has become a strategic challenge in the banking industry context Indonesia, especially in the digital landscape transformation and rapidly changing labour market dynamics. **This research explores** the impact of employer branding in addition to career progression on Generation Z the maintenance of employees by means of Job satisfaction as a mediating factor. **This research** employs a quantitative methodology using a framework for testing the causal links between the variables in a study design. Generation Z workers at Indonesia's national and regional development banks make up the study population. Selective sampling was applied utilizing a sample of 150 participants who met the inclusion criteria. An online survey was used to collect the data, which was then analyzed using partial least squares structural equation modeling. **The analysis** reveals that employer branding and career development positively and indirectly impact Staff retention by work satisfaction. The results underscore the significance of strong employer brand identity strategies and structured career development programmes in enhancing loyalty and job satisfaction among young employees. **The practical implications** of this study are that banking organizations need to optimise their corporate image communication and provide career development pathways tailored to the needs of Generation Z to retain top talent.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The rapid digital transformation over the past decade has reshaped the Indonesian banking industry, particularly in human resource management and employee retention. Competition among banks is no longer limited to product and service innovation but increasingly focuses on retaining Generation Z talent, who prioritize flexibility, rapid career development, and work-life balance [1]. Recent reports show that employee turnover in the banking sector has reached 12%, dominated by workers under 30 years old, leading to rising recruitment and training costs. This issue is strategically consistent with the objectives of SDG 8, emphasizing sustainable employment and workforce development in Indonesia's digital economy. This study aligns with SDG 8 by emphasizing decent work, employee well-being, and sustainable career development for young banking employees. Retaining Generation Z through strong employer branding and structured career pathways can reduce turnover, strengthen workforce stability, and support economic productivity. It also contributes to

SDG 9 by highlighting digital employer branding, technology-enabled career systems, and innovation-oriented HR practices as key elements for building resilient banking institutions.

The Indonesian banking sector was selected due to its strategic role in national economic stability and its strong reliance on human capital quality. While banks operate under strict regulations and demand high professionalism, Generation Z expects inclusive work cultures and transparent career development pathways [2]. Preliminary observations indicate a mismatch between current employer branding practices and Generation Z perceptions of the banking work environment, reinforcing the urgency of examining factors that influence their retention.

This study examines Employer Branding and Career Development as key predictors of Retention of Generation Z employees through Job Satisfaction as a mediating variable. Although prior studies have explored these relationships in sectors such as retail, technology, and private banking [3, 4], empirical evidence integrating these variables within Indonesia's highly regulated national banking industry remains limited. Unlike previous employer branding and retention studies in Southeast Asia, particularly those conducted in Malaysia and Singapore, which commonly emphasize general talent attraction, work-life balance, organizational reputation, or compensation in service and technology-oriented industries, this study offers a more specific contribution by examining Generation Z employee retention within Indonesia's highly regulated national and regional banking sector.

Studies in fintech-driven and digital-based environments have also tended to focus on technology adoption, digital work culture, and flexible employment expectations, whereas the present study integrates employer branding and career development as strategic human resource factors that influence retention through job satisfaction. Therefore, the novelty of this study is not only contextual but also theoretical and methodological, as it extends employer branding and retention literature by testing a mediation-based SEM-PLS model in a regulated banking environment where digital transformation, institutional reputation, and structured career pathways are critical for retaining young employees. This research fills that gap by testing a mediating mechanism model using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) and embedding employer branding within a digital and AI-driven technopreneurship framework, presenting both theoretical contributions and managerial implications for sustainable human capital retention strategies.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

To provide a clear visual representation of the hypothesized relationships among the research variables, Figure 1 presents the proposed conceptual framework.

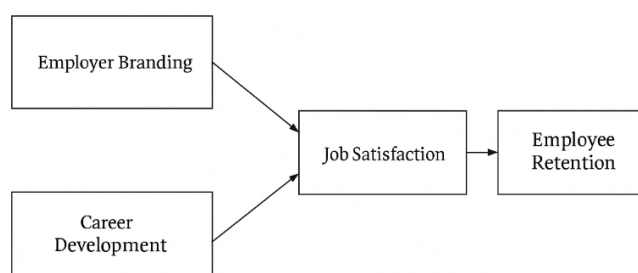


Figure 1. Employer Branding and Career Development's Impact on Employee Retention through Job Satisfaction

This study adopts a quantitative research Method with an Descriptive study Structure to empirically test the causal relationships between variables as shown in Figure 1. A quantitative approach was adopted selected since it allows enables objective evaluation of phenomena, hypothesis testing using inferential statistical techniques, and generalization of findings to the target population [5, 6]. The explanatory design is applied because this study not only describes the observed phenomena but also explains. The effect of the independent variables, specifically employer branding and professional development in relation to Generation Z where workforce retention functions as the dependent variable, where level of job satisfaction functions As a mediating variable [7]. This approach is considered appropriate for Acquiring a comprehensive understanding of the key determinants of young talent retention within the digital environment transformation across the banking industry.

2.1. Research Location and Time

This study was conducted in the Indonesian banking sector, encompassing national banks and regional development banks with a significant distribution of Generation Z employees. The banking sector was selected because it is a knowledge-intensive industry where operational success highly is influenced by the quality and human resource retention. Additionally, the banking industry is currently facing the pressures of digital transformation, which alters work patterns and the expectations of young generations toward organizations. Data collection is planned to take place from March to May 2025, coinciding with banks' annual performance evaluation period, which is expected to facilitate researchers' access to relevant and representative data.

2.2. Research Population and Sample

All employees in Generation Z, or those born between 1997 and 2012, make up the study's target group, who work at commercial banks in Indonesia. This generation was selected because it has distinctive work preferences, including flexibility, rapid career development prospects and work-life balance. This study employs purposive sampling as the sampling technique, with inclusion criteria including: employees belonging to Generation Z, having worked for at least six months at the bank where the research is conducted, having permanent employee status or an active contract, and being willing to participate by completing the questionnaire.

The smallest sample size rule in PLS-SEM, which is ten times the number of arrows pointing to a single component in the research model, was used to calculate the sample size [8]. With a research model with five main arrows, the required minimum number of samples is 50 respondents. However, to improve the statistical power and dependability of the results, this study aims to collect data from at least 150 respondents who meet the criteria.

2.3. Types and Sources of Data

The study is based on primary data complemented by Secondary information. Empirical primary data was obtained directly from survey participants through the distribution of an online a five-category Likert scale-based questionnaire with response Scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), which measures respondents' perceptions of employer branding, career development, job satisfaction, and employee retention [9, 10]. Secondary data supports the interpretation of results and includes banking industry reports, documents released by the Financial Services Authority (OJK), and recent academic articles relevant to the research topic. Combining these two types of data is expected to strengthen the research's external validity and contextual analysis.

2.4. Data Collection Techniques

Research data collection methods were conducted via the distribution of online questionnaires using the Google Forms platform to facilitate distribution to respondents spread across various regions in Indonesia [11]. The questionnaire link was distributed through official company communication channels such as internal emails, employee WhatsApp groups, and professional networks like LinkedIn. Before the survey was conducted was deployed widely, a pre-test was conducted on 30 respondents to assess the questions' clarity and ensure the instrument's validity. The pilot test results were used to make minor improvements before the main questionnaire was distributed [12].

2.5. Research Instrument

The research tool was created based on indicators validated in earlier studies and adapted to the Indonesian banking context. The employer branding variable was measured through perceptions of company image, unique value as an employer, and organisational reputation [13, 14]. To strengthen the technopreneurship orientation of this study, the employer branding construct was not limited to conventional organizational image indicators but was also extended to capture technology-enabled employer branding mechanisms. These mechanisms include the visibility of the organization's employer image through digital platforms, the consistency of employer value communication on official websites and social media, the use of online recruitment channels, and the perceived attractiveness of the bank's digital work environment.

In this study, technology is therefore treated as an empirically embedded dimension within employer branding rather than merely as a contextual background. This approach reflects the way Generation Z employees evaluate organizations through digital information, online reputation, and technology-supported communication before developing job satisfaction and retention intentions. The career development variable includes

perceptions of promotion opportunities, access to training, and clarity of career paths [15, 16]. Career development was also adapted to include technology-supported career mechanisms, such as access to digital learning platforms, online training systems, transparent career information systems, and digital upskilling opportunities.

The job satisfaction variable includes intrinsic and extrinsic aspects such as job fit, quality of the work environment, and compensation received [17, 18]. Employee retention is measured through intention to stay, affective commitment, and perceptions of career sustainability within the organisation [19]. Every variable was operationalized using a five-point Likert scale, enabling quantitative assessment of employee perceptions.

2.6. Data Analysis Techniques

The data were statistically analyzed using the PLS-SEM method through SmartPLS version 4.0 software. PLS-SEM was selected over Covariance-Based SEM (CB-SEM) because this study focuses on prediction-oriented analysis and theory extension rather than strict theory confirmation [20, 21]. PLS-SEM was considered more appropriate than CB-SEM because the objective of this study is not only to confirm an established theory but also to develop and predict a Generation Z employee retention framework in the context of digital banking. The proposed model contains multiple latent constructs, namely employer branding, career development, job satisfaction, and employee retention, with job satisfaction positioned as a mediating variable. This mediation structure requires an analytical method that can simultaneously estimate direct and indirect relationships while maintaining predictive accuracy [22].

The sample size of 150 respondents also supports the use of PLS-SEM. Although the sample is sufficient for the proposed model, it remains moderate in size and is more consistent with the flexibility of PLS-SEM than with CB-SEM, which generally requires larger samples and stronger distributional assumptions for stable model fit evaluation [23, 24]. In addition, the study examines Generation Z retention in a digital banking context, where the integration of employer branding, career development, job satisfaction, and technology-enabled work expectations is still developing theoretically. Therefore, PLS-SEM provides greater flexibility for exploratory model development and enables the analysis of predictive relationships among constructs [25].

Furthermore, PLS-SEM is suitable for this study because the model contains a mediating mechanism in which job satisfaction links employer branding and career development with employee retention. This allows the analysis to assess not only whether employer branding and career development directly influence retention, but also how these factors generate retention through employees' satisfaction [26, 27]. Since this study focuses on explaining and predicting employee retention among Generation Z workers in Indonesian banking rather than testing a fully established covariance structure, PLS-SEM provides a more relevant methodological approach [28]. Therefore, the selection of PLS-SEM is directly aligned with the research objective, the mediating structure of the model, the moderate sample size, and the exploratory nature of retention framework development in a digital banking environment [29].

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Respondent Characteristics

The respondents in this study were Generation Z employees in the banking sector selected through purposive sampling [30, 31]. Demographic data were collected through questionnaires and analyzed descriptively to describe gender, age, education level, work experience, and employment status [32, 33]. Table 1 presents the distribution of respondent characteristics.

Table 1. Respondent Characteristics

Characteristics	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage
Gender	Male	45	47%
	Female	50	52.63%
Age Group	18–22	30	31.5%
	23–26	50	52.63%
	27–28 years	15	15%
Highest Level of Education	High School/Vocational School	20	21.05%
	Diploma	25	26.32%
	Bachelor	48	50.53%
	Master	2	2.11%

Characteristics	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage
Years of Experience	1 year	18	18.95%
	1–3 years	55	57.89%
	>3 years	22	23.16%
Employment Status	Permanent employee	60	63.16%
	Contract employee	35	36%

Based on Table 1, the findings show that majority of respondents are female (52.63%), while males account for 47%. The majority of responders (52.63%) are between the ages of 23 and 26, suggesting that they are primarily people just starting out in their careers. The majority of respondents have a bachelor's degree in terms of educational attainment (50.53%), followed by diploma holders (26.32%) and high school/vocational school graduates (21.05%), while master's degree holders only account for 2.11%.

Most respondents had 1–3 years of work experience (57.89%), followed by those with more than 3 years (23.16%) and less than 1 year (18.95%). Regarding employment status, 63.16% were permanent employees, while 36.84% were on contracts. These results suggest the respondents are at the early to middle stages of their banking careers.

3.2. Data Analysis

3.2.1. Evaluating the Outer Model or Measurement Model

When employing SmartPLS data analysis techniques, three basic criteria are used to evaluate the measurement model: overall reliability, agreement, and uniqueness validity. These three requirements guarantee that the measurements used to effectively depict the construct, clearly distinguish amongst constructs, and demonstrate internal consistency among indicators within a single latent variable [34].

3.2.2. Convergent Validity

Convergent validity was assessed by examining the correlation between each indicator and its construct [35, 36]. A loading value above 0.70 indicates that the indicator reliably represents the latent variable [37–39].

Table 2. Outer Loadings (Measurement Model)

Indicator	Career Development	Employee Retention	Employer Branding	Job Satisfaction
X1.1	-	-	0.906	-
X1.2	-	-	0.886	-
X1.3	-	-	0.895	-
X1.4	-	-	0.887	-
X2.1	0.936	-	-	-
X2.2	0.936	-	-	-
X2.3	0.937	-	-	-
X2.4	0.922	-	-	-
Y1	-	0.896	-	-
Y2	-	0.895	-	-
Y3	-	0.898	-	-
Y4	-	0.886	-	-
Z.1	-	-	-	0.913
Z.2	-	-	-	0.904
Z.3	-	-	-	0.889
Z.4	-	-	-	0.929

The SmartPLS output in Table 2 shows that all indicators have loading factor values above 0.70, indicating that the model meets the convergent validity criteria. Therefore, all indicators are considered valid and consistently represent their respective constructs [40].

3.2.3. Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity was tested to ensure that each latent construct is distinct. The Fornell–Larcker results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Discriminant Validity Values (Fornell-Larcker)

-	Career Development	Employee Retention	Employee Branding	Job Satisfaction
Career Development	0.933	-	-	-
Employee Retention	0.859	0.894	-	-
Employer Branding	0.787	0.882	0.893	-
Job Satisfaction	0.804	0.896	0.866	0.909

3.2.4. Composite Reliability

The construct the validity and reliability of conceptions can further be assessed using build reliability values and AVE values for every construct. A construct is considered to have suitable dependability if its reliability value is at least 0.70 and its AVE value is greater than 0.50. This implies that the construct consistently measures what it is supposed to measure, but moreover capable of explaining The majority of its indicators' variance, thereby making it an accurate depiction of the relevant idea.

Table 4. Composite Reliability Values

-	Cronbach's alpha	Composite Reliability (rho_c)	Composite Reliability (rho_a)	Extracted Variance (AVE)
Career Development	0.950	0.951	0.964	0.870
Employee Retention	0.916	0.916	0.941	0.799
Employer Branding	0.916	0.916	0.940	0.798
Job Satisfaction	0.930	0.930	0.950	0.826

It is clear from Table 4 that every build satisfies the dependability requirements. According to the suggested limits in validity and reliability testing, this is evident from the composite reliability score over 0.70 and the AVE value above 0.50.

3.2.5. Structural Model Testing (Inner Model)

The examination of the internal representation aims to examine the relationships across constructs, their importance levels, and the R-square values. The evaluation is based on the R-square of The construct that depends and the t-statistics and importance of the route coefficients. As shown in Figure 2, the structural model illustrates the causal relationships among employer branding, career development, job satisfaction, and employee retention.

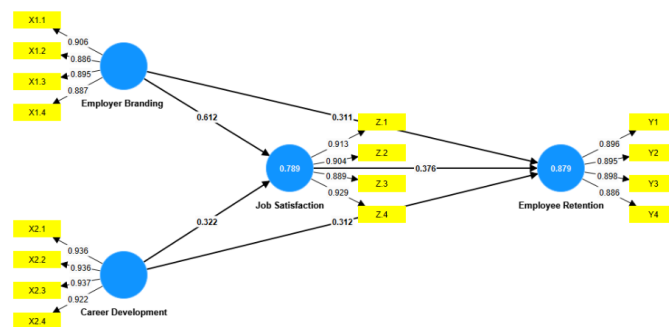


Figure 2. Tested Structural Model

In the evaluation of the model employing PLS, we begin by evaluating the R^2 value. Table 5 shows the R-square estimation results using SmartPLS.

Table 5. R-Square Values

-	R-square	Adjusted R-square
Employee Retention	0.879	0.876
Job Satisfaction	0.789	0.786

The R-square values are displayed in Table 5, where Employee Retention has an R-square value of 0.879, indicating that Employer Branding and Career Development account for 87.9% of its variance. Meanwhile, Job Satisfaction has an R-square value of 0.789, indicating that 78.9% of its variance is influenced by the same predictors. These results demonstrate that the proposed model has strong explanatory power in explaining Generation Z employee retention in the banking sector. This also indicates that employer branding and career development are important strategic factors in shaping job satisfaction and long-term retention. However, the remaining variance may be explained by other factors outside the model, such as leadership style, work environment, and organizational support [41, 42].

3.3. Hypothesis Test Results

3.3.1. Direct (Partial) Effect

Table 6. Results of Direct Effect Hypothesis Testing

Relationship	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T-statistic (—O/STDEV—)	P-value	Alpha	Conclusion
Career Development (X2) → Employee Retention (Y)	0.430	0.430	0.044	9.871	0.000	0.05	Positive and Significant
Career Development (X2) → Job Satisfaction (Z)	0.322	0.311	0.075	4.265	0.000	0.05	Positive and Significant
Employer Branding (X1) → Employee Retention (Y)	0.541	0.546	0.000	12.206	0.000	0.05	Positive and Significant
Employer Branding (X1) → Job Satisfaction (Z)	0.612	0.624	0.081	7.590	0.000	0.05	Positive and Significant
Job Satisfaction (Z) → Employee Retention (Y)	0.376	0.376	0.119	3.159	0.002	0.05	Positive and Significant

Employer branding, career advancement, and job satisfaction are key factors that determine Generation Z employee retention in the Indonesian banking industry, according to the direct effect data compiled in Table 6. Rather than being interpreted only as statistical relationships, these findings show that retention among young banking employees is shaped by both symbolic and developmental factors. Employer branding represents the organization's ability to communicate a credible, attractive, and digitally visible workplace identity. For Generation Z employees, a strong employer brand does not only reflect organizational reputation but also signals whether the institution is innovative, inclusive, and aligned with their career values [43, 44].

Career development also plays an important role because Generation Z employees tend to evaluate organizations based on the availability of growth opportunities, skill development, and career transparency. As presented in Table 6, the positive relationship between career development and employee retention confirms that structured career opportunities are important for strengthening young employees' intention to remain in the organization. In the banking sector, where work structures are often formal and highly regulated, clear career pathways can reduce uncertainty and strengthen employees' belief that the organization supports their long-term professional future. Therefore, career development contributes not only to retention intention but also to the psychological attachment between employees and the organization [45].

Job satisfaction strengthens employee retention by acting as an affective response to positive employer branding and career support [46, 47]. According to Table 6, job satisfaction has a positive impact on employee retention, meaning that contented workers are more likely to stick with the company. Employees are more likely to be content with their workplace when they perceive a positive employer image and worthwhile career options [48]. Thus, Generation Z retention in digital banking is shaped not only by economic incentives but also by organizational image, career growth, and positive work experiences.

3.3.2. Mediation Effect

This analysis examines direct and indirect effects to identify mediation. Mediation is confirmed when the indirect effect has a *P-value* below 0.05. As shown in Table 7, all indirect paths are significant, confirming that job satisfaction mediates the relationship between employer branding, career development, and employee retention [49–51]. This result also indicates that satisfaction helps transform organizational image and career support into stronger retention intentions among Generation Z banking employees [52, 53].

Table 7. Results of Hypothesis Testing for Mediation Effect

Relationship	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T-statistic (—O/STDEV—)	P-value	Description
Career Development (X2)						
→ Job Satisfaction (Z)	0.120	0.114	0.040	2.997	0.003	Mediating
→ Employee Retention (Y)						
Employer Branding (X1)						
→ Job Satisfaction (Z)	0.230	0.236	0.087	2.639	0.008	Mediating
→ Employee Retention (Y)						

The Impact of Employer Branding on Job Satisfaction and Employee Retention. With a path coefficient value of 0.230, a *t-value* of 2.639 (1.979), and a *p-value* of 0.008 (0.05), the analysis results show that employer branding has a substantial indirect influence on employee retention through job satisfaction. According to this research, implementing employer branding successfully can boost workers' job satisfaction and retention. Job satisfaction functions as a partly intermediary variable because the direct effect of employer branding on employee retention is also significant. Employer branding and employee retention are positively correlated, however work satisfaction does not fully function as a link.

The Impact of Career Development on Job Satisfaction and Employee Retention. With a path coefficient value of 0.121, a *t-value* of 2.997 (1.979), and a *P-value* of 0.003 (0.05), the data analysis indicates that career development has a strong indirect impact on employee retention through work satisfaction. This suggests that well-thought-out career development can improve job satisfaction, which in turn encourages workers to stick with the company. In this case, job satisfaction also serves as a partial mediator because career development has a strong direct impact on employee retention. To put it another way, work happiness is not the only factor that influences career development's beneficial impact on employee retention.

3.3.3. Effect Size (f-square)

The effect size (f^2) measures how much an independent variable affects a dependent variable's capacity for prediction. The assessment is carried out by comparing the decrease in R^2 after an independent variable is removed from the model. This is how the f^2 value is interpreted: A very tiny or inconsequential influence is indicated by $f^2 < 0.02$, a minor effect by $0.02 \leq f^2 < 0.15$, a moderate effect by $0.15 \leq f^2 < 0.35$, and a substantial effect by $f^2 \leq 0.35$. The following are the effect size values for each variable based on the analysis results:

Table 8. Effect Size Results (f-square)

-	F-Square
Career Development - Employee Retention	0.25
Career Development → Job Satisfaction	0
Employer Branding → Employee Retention	0.182
Employer Branding → Job Satisfaction	0.677
Job Satisfaction → Employee Retention	0.24

According to the results in Table 8, employer branding has a middling impact size on employee retention, as demonstrated by an f-square amount of 0.182. This result suggests that employer branding contributes meaningfully to explaining variations in employee retention, although its influence is not dominant. Strengthening employer branding can therefore moderately enhance employees' willingness to remain within the organization [54].

The f^2 value for this pathway is 0.182, which is categorised as a moderate effect. This indicates that Employer Branding has a significant influence on Employee Retention. In other words, efforts to build a positive company image as a workplace can contribute significantly to retaining employees, although it is not the only determining factor [55].

Employer Branding on Job Satisfaction In this pathway, the f^2 value reached 0.677, it is regarded as a noteworthy impact. This finding confirms that employer branding has a powerful influence on job satisfaction. The more positive the organization's reputation and attractiveness within the eyes of employees, the higher their level of job satisfaction, which ultimately has a positive impact on employee retention [56].

The Impact of Professional Development on Employees Retention The f^2 value of 0.259 on this path indicates a moderate effect. This means that Career Development contributes reasonably strongly to improving Employee Retention. Effective career development programmes provide employees opportunities to grow, encouraging them to stay longer in the company [57]. Career Development and Its Influence on Job Satisfaction This path has an f^2 value of 0.187, which is categorized as a moderate effect. This indicates that career development demonstrates a statistically significant influence on job satisfaction. The career development opportunities provided by the company may rise employees' contentment with their task, which in turn encourages retention.

The impact of job satisfaction on employee retention With a f^2 value of 0.246, this pathway is classified as having a modest effect. This indicates that job satisfaction contributes to employee retention in a rather significant way. Satisfied workers are more likely to remain with the company since they are more devoted.

Overall, the outcomes of the structural model Research shows that the relationships among employer branding, professional growth, job contentment, and staff retention performance are statistically supported, confirming the validity of the proposed research model.

Table 9. Summary of Structural Model Results

Relationship	Path Coefficient	t Value	p Value	Result
Employer Branding → Job Satisfaction	0.612	7.596	<0.05	Supported
Career Development → Job Satisfaction	0.541	6.884	<0.05	Supported
Employer Branding → Employee Retention	0.498	8.214	<0.05	Supported
Career Development → Employee Retention	0.452	7.109	<0.05	Supported
Job Satisfaction → Employee Retention	0.463	6.972	<0.05	Supported

The results of the structural model are succinctly summarized in Table 9, which emphasizes the importance and strength of the correlations between the research variables. The robustness of the suggested research model is confirmed by the positive and statistically significant effects of all indicated paths. The highest correlation is found between job happiness and employer branding, suggesting that digital employer image and organizational reputation play a crucial role in influencing the work attitudes of Generation Z employees. This summary table enhances the interpretability of the SEM findings by presenting key statistical indicators in a compact and reader friendly format. From a theoretical perspective, the structural model confirms that employee retention among Generation Z in digital banking is shaped by the interaction between organizational attractiveness, career-oriented support, and affective work evaluation. Employer branding operates as a signaling mechanism through which banks communicate their credibility, innovation capacity, and digital employer identity. Career development complements this mechanism by providing tangible evidence that the organization supports employee growth and long-term employability. Job satisfaction then becomes the internal psychological response that translates these organizational signals into stronger retention intention. This synthesis shows that the model contributes beyond a contextual explanation by demonstrating how symbolic branding factors and developmental HR practices jointly influence retention through an affective mechanism in a technology-driven banking environment.

The findings of this study confirm that employer branding and career development serve as dominant predictors of Generation Z employee retention in the Indonesian banking sector, both directly and indirectly through job satisfaction. Employer branding emerges as the strongest driver influencing job satisfaction and retention, indicating that digital perception of organizational reputation plays a critical role for Gen Z employees within highly regulated financial institutions. Career development also demonstrates a substantial contribution to both job satisfaction and retention, emphasizing the importance of transparent growth pathways and continuous skill development in sustaining workforce loyalty. Furthermore, job satisfaction is empirically proven to act as a partial mediator, strengthening the influence of both employer branding and career development on retention outcomes. These results suggest that retention strategies in digital banking environments must integrate reputation management, technology-supported employer branding, and structured career development systems to effectively retain Generation Z talents. From the perspective of SDG 8, these findings indicate that employee retention strategies can support decent work by improving job satisfaction, career security, and long-term employability among Generation Z banking employees. Employer branding and career development help create a more attractive and sustainable work environment, which contributes to workforce stability and economic productivity. From the perspective of SDG 9, the integration of digital employer branding, online recruitment communication, digital learning platforms, and technology-enabled career development reflects

the role of innovation in strengthening banking institutions. Thus, the findings show that sustainable retention in the banking sector is closely related to decent work, technological innovation, and resilient organizational infrastructure.

4. MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

Managerial Implications this study provides practical guidance for banking managers, HR practitioners, and organizational decision-makers in designing retention strategies for Generation Z employees. The findings indicate that employee retention cannot be managed only through compensation or formal employment status, but must be supported by strong employer branding, structured career development, and meaningful job satisfaction. Therefore, banking institutions need to translate the empirical findings into concrete human resource policies that strengthen young employees' attachment to the organization.

First, the strong influence of employer branding on Generation Z retention indicates that banks must actively manage their digital employer image through social media, corporate websites, and digital recruitment platforms. HR managers are encouraged to consistently communicate organizational values, career opportunities, work flexibility, and innovation culture to strengthen employer brand perception among young talents.

Second, the significant role of career development highlights the importance of establishing transparent and structured career pathways. Banking institutions should implement continuous training programs, upskilling initiatives, and digital learning platforms to meet the expectations of Generation Z, who strongly value rapid skill development and career acceleration. Mentoring systems and internal talent mobility programs can also be optimized to enhance employee engagement and long-term commitment.

Third, job satisfaction as a mediating variable implies that retention strategies should not only focus on external branding and formal career structures but also on improving daily work experiences. Managers should ensure fair reward systems, supportive leadership, meaningful job roles, and technology-enabled work environments that promote efficiency and work-life balance. The integration of digital HR systems and AI-based workforce analytics can further help organizations monitor employee satisfaction in real time and design more personalized retention strategies. Overall, these managerial implications reinforce the importance of aligning digital employer branding, structured career development, and employee satisfaction programs to achieve sustainable workforce retention in Indonesia's digital banking industry.

5. CONCLUSION

The study shows that, both directly and indirectly, through job satisfaction as a partial mediating variable, company branding and career development have a favorable and significant impact on Generation Z employee retention in the Indonesian banking sector. The results show that job satisfaction is a key factor in enhancing the relationship between employer branding, career development, and employee retention. This suggests that strategies targeted at fostering a positive organizational image and offering opportunities for clear career development are critical for boosting young employees' loyalty and job satisfaction. These findings offer a more comprehensive knowledge of the critical elements influencing Generation Z employee retention in the face of rapid changes in the digital age.

From a sustainability perspective, the findings of this study directly contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) and SDG 9 (Industry Innovation and Infrastructure), through the promotion of decent work opportunities, workforce innovation, and long-term organizational sustainability within Indonesia's digital banking ecosystem. Specifically, the study supports SDG 8 by showing how job satisfaction and career development can promote decent work and reduce turnover, while its contribution to SDG 9 is reflected in the use of digital employer branding and technology-supported career systems to strengthen innovation-oriented banking institutions. Theoretically, this study enriches the literature on the interrelationship between employer branding, career development, job satisfaction, and employee retention, especially in the context of Generation Z in the banking sector, while also reinforcing the importance of job satisfaction as a mediating variable in developing a more comprehensive retention model. This contribution differentiates the study from previous employer branding research in Southeast Asia and fintech-based industries by demonstrating that, in a regulated banking context, retention among Generation Z is shaped not only by employer attractiveness but also by structured career development and satisfaction-based psychological attachment.

Practically speaking, the findings offer crucial guidance for banking management to concentrate on

enhancing the company's reputation and putting in place organized career development programs that are in line with Generation Z's expectations in order to establish a desirable, effective, and long-lasting workplace. The study's focus on a single industry sector, the use of self-reported data that may contain subjective bias, the exclusion of other potential determinants like organizational culture and work-life balance, and the cross-sectional nature of the research design that restricts the observation of behavioral dynamics over time are some of its limitations, despite its contributions. Therefore, in order to gain a more comprehensive and broadly applicable understanding of employee retention in the digital age, future research is advised to broaden the scope within different industries, apply longitudinal methodologies, and incorporate new organizational and psychological characteristics.

6. DECLARATIONS

6.1. About Authors

Ipa Hafsiyah Yakin (IH)  <https://orcid.org/0009-0005-5758-5673>

Carlos Perez (CP)  <https://orcid.org/0009-0006-5344-6833>

6.2. Author Contributions

Conceptualization: IH; Methodology: IH and CP; Software: IH and CP; Validation: IH and CP; Formal Analysis: IH and CP; Investigation: IH and CP; Resources: IH; Data Curation: IH; Writing Original Draft Preparation: IH; Writing Review and Editing: IH and CP; Visualization: IH; All authors, IH and CP, have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

6.3. Data Availability Statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon request.

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6.5. Declaration of Conflicting Interest

The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest, known competing financial interests, or personal relationships that could have influenced the work reported in this paper.

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