

Does employer brand fuel job satisfaction? The role of intrinsic motivation

Da li brend poslodavca podstiče zadovoljstvo poslom? Uloga intrinzične motivacije

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Abstract

The employer brand strategically positions companies as attractive workplaces to secure and retain top talent. Elements within the reward system, known as dimensions of the employer brand, are crafted to create unique working conditions fostering job satisfaction and employee motivation. This study is conducted in the Republic of Serbia with 195 participants. Results indicate a statistically significant and positive impact of the employer brand on job satisfaction and intrinsic motivation. Furthermore, the research explores the mediating role of intrinsic motivation, revealing its significant influence in enhancing the positive correlation between the employer brand and job satisfaction. This underscores the crucial role of intrinsic motivational factors in shaping employee satisfaction within the employer brand framework, highlighting the intricate relationship between these variables.

Keywords: employer brand, job satisfaction, intrinsic motivation, HRM

Sažetak

Brend poslodavca predstavlja napor kompanije da se izdvoji kao poželjno i jedinstveno mesto za rad, kako bi se privukli, angažovali i sačuvali najbolji zaposleni. Kako bi se to ostvarilo, kompanije često definišu različite elemente sistema nagrađivanja, poznate kao dimenzije brenda poslodavca, koje imaju za zadatak da kreiraju jedinstvene radne uslove, koji će delovati stimulatивно na zadovoljstvo poslom i motivaciju zaposlenih. S obzirom na navedeno, cilj rada je ispitati uticaj brenda poslodavca na zadovoljstvo poslom i intrinzičnu motivaciju, kao i ispitati medijatorski uticaj intrinzične motivacije u uticaju brenda poslodavca na zadovoljstvo poslom. Istraživanje je sprovedeno u Republici Srbiji nad 195 ispitanika, primenom konfirmativne faktorske analize. Rezultati su pokazali statistički značajan i pozitivan uticaj brenda poslodavca na zadovoljstvo poslom i intrinzičnu motivaciju, kao i značajan medijatorski uticaj intrinzične motivacije na pozitivan odnos brenda poslodavca i zadovoljstva poslom.

Ključne reči: brend poslodavca, zadovoljstvo poslom, intrinzična motivacija, HRM

1. Introduction

While the demand for human capital and specific employee competencies has traditionally been associated with advanced economies, this phenomenon is now a global trend observed across nearly all countries. It is marked by a shortage of individuals possessing unique and valuable skills (Nithithanatchinnapat & Joshi, 2019). Although the predominant skills gap is evident in the IT sector, it is crucial to recognize that modern business environments necessitate continuous learning, teamwork, analytical abilities, and other essential skills. Owing to the scarcity of such talents, companies are actively involved in attracting and retaining qualified individuals, leading to

the development of strategic initiatives commonly referred to as the "War for talent" (Wojcik, 2017; Reis et al., 2021). Despite specific efforts to attract and recruit talent, organizations still grapple with retention issues, underscoring the strategic significance of human resources management (Schuler et al., 2011). The holistic approach of human resources management demands integration and collaboration across all organizational functions, particularly human resource management and marketing. The ultimate goal is to establish the company as the premier and distinctive workplace, essentially building an employer brand.

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While the concept of branding originates from marketing literature, the integration of internal marketing over time, treating employees as the company's primary customers, has allowed the application of branding in employee management. Similar to marketing, employer branding in human resource management involves creating a unique image, market position, value, and competitive advantage (Cascio & Graham, 2016). Consequently, the employer brand can be seen as the organization's market positioning as a distinctive and recognizable workplace, aiming to differentiate working conditions and attract qualified talents (Rajkumar et al., 2015). In essence, the employer brand distinguishes the company as a desirable place to work, leading to the attraction, retention, and engagement of top-tier employees through effective human resource management (Aggarwal, 2015). To achieve this, human resource managers design unique working conditions that offer various opportunities, including attractive wages, career advancement, skill development, recognition, praise, and work-life balance (Pavlović & Slavković, 2018; Berthon et al., 2005).

These elements and dimensions of the employer brand are also recognized as determinants of job satisfaction and employee motivation (Tanwar & Prasad, 2016a; Slavković et al., 2018; Bakanauskiene et al., 2011; Kaur & Syal, 2017; Jain, 2013; Krugielka & Kostrzewa-Demczuk, 2021; Singh & Jain, 2013). Importantly, many elements and dimensions of the employer brand are intangible, standing out as determinants of intrinsic motivation, which refers to the satisfaction derived from the inherent fulfillment of a specific job. It is closely linked to various aspects of the employer brand (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Raza et al., 2015; Hartmann & Slapničar, 2012). Building upon these insights, this paper aims to investigate the impact of the employer brand on job satisfaction and intrinsic motivation of employees. Given the positive influence of intrinsic motivation on job satisfaction (Raza et al., 2015) and the intrinsic nature of many employer brand factors, an additional goal is to explore the mediating effect of intrinsic motivation in the relationship between the employer brand and job satisfaction.

2. Literature review

In marketing literature, brand equity signifies a collection of intangible resources that can increase a company's product and service value. This results in customers being willing to pay premium prices and remaining loyal to the brand. When applied to the employer brand, it represents the intellectual competence of the company to distinguish itself as an appealing workplace. This helps attract, engage, and foster loyalty among employees, encouraging them to "go above and beyond" in their efforts (Cascio & Graham, 2016). Similar to marketing, the employer brand can create value added and contribute to long-term success. The pivotal question is: What factors set a company apart from other employers? Ambler & Barrow (1996, p. 187), the original creators of the concept, assert that the employer brand represents a synergy of "functional, economic, and psychological benefits that the employee receives from the employer." Further analysis identifies employer brand dimensions, including a

positive work environment, good relations between employees and management, career development opportunities, autonomy, continuous learning, work-life balance, and corporate social responsibility (Tanwar & Prasad, 2016). In their well-known research developing the EmpAt scale for measuring the employer brand, Berthon et al (2005) identify five dimensions: social, development, interest, economic, and application value. Pavlović & Slavković (2018) emphasize the company's development potential, employer reputation, work-life balance, colleague relationships, and the quality of products and services as crucial elements of the employer brand. Building an employer brand necessitates providing attractive salaries, material rewards, and a sense of belonging for employees to feel appreciated and valued by the management (Ambler & Barrow, 1996). Hence, the employer brand is closely associated with strategic human resources management, requiring a holistic approach to employee management planning and carefully selected rewards to stimulate motivation and talent retention (Itam et al., 2020). Through the employee value proposition, human resource managers aim to define and deliver unique rewards to employees, ensuring the development of a sustainable competitive advantage (Barjaktarović et al., 2021).

The employer brand is oriented towards two groups: internal and external subjects (Ognjanović, 2020). The internal employer brand targets existing employees, aiming to engage, motivate, and retain them by communicating unique values. The external employer brand targets potential employees in the labor market or other companies, intending to attract the best talent by communicating unique working conditions (Itam et al., 2020; Barjaktarović et al., 2021). Positive word-of-mouth from satisfied and loyal employees acts as a powerful tool, turning them into brand ambassadors who attract qualified individuals to the company (Slavković & Mirić, 2023). Consequently, the employer brand is often instrumental in talent recruitment and selection (Aggarwal, 2015; Reis et al., 2021), leading to valuable human capital while saving time and resources in these processes (Rajkumar et al., 2015). Besides effective recruitment and selection, the employer brand is responsible for employees' discretionary efforts, productivity growth, and job satisfaction, crucial determinants of achieved performance (Samoliuk et al., 2022; Ognjanović, 2020; Tanwar & Prasad, 2016; Cascio & Graham, 2016).

The significant impact of the employer brand extends to job satisfaction and employee motivation. Job satisfaction, a crucial workplace attitude, encompasses positive emotional states resulting from employees' evaluation of their work (Dodanwala et al., 2023). Nemteanu et al. (2021) specify that overall job satisfaction arises from satisfaction with work tasks, managerial support, and opportunities for career advancement. Achieving a high level of job satisfaction is crucial for HR managers since satisfied employees demonstrate higher motivation, productivity, and loyalty, contributing to positive performance (Ali & Anwar, 2021). The employer brand development results in brand associations, encompassing factors associated with a company that make it appealing to work for. These dimensions include

good employee relations, stimulating and innovative tasks, attractive compensation, and reward systems that contribute to job satisfaction (Slavković et al., 2018). Kaur & Syal (2017) add organizational culture, recognition, praise, and employee freedom to express ideas as factors influencing job satisfaction. Tanwar & Prasad (2016a) emphasize intrinsic dimensions of the employer brand, such as work-life balance, reputation, diversification management, ethics, social responsibility, and learning and development, all positively affecting job satisfaction. Taking these considerations into account, along with the findings of Bakanauskiene et al. (2011), the following hypothesis can be formulated:

H1: Employer brand has a statistically significant and positive impact on job satisfaction.

In addition to job satisfaction, a pivotal factor influencing employee productivity and engagement is motivation. Recognizing its significance, various theorists and experts across different fields have extensively studied motivation over the decades, delineating distinctions between different motivational systems. One of the most prevalent classifications is extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. Extrinsic motivation involves behavior initiated by visible rewards or punishments, contingent on the completion or non-completion of a task. In contrast, intrinsic motivation is linked to the inherent and internal satisfaction derived from engaging in fulfilling work (Ryan & Deci, 2000). The employer brand is identified as a significant factor positively impacting employee motivation (Krugielka & Kostrzewa-Demczuk, 2021; Singh & Jain, 2013). However, it is crucial to underscore that certain dimensions of the employer brand play a key role in enhancing employee motivation. These dimensions include the company's image, engaging and interesting work, recognition, praise, favorable working conditions, opportunities for promotion, and the ability to acquire knowledge, among others (Jain, 2013). The aforementioned dimensions of the employer brand, along with autonomy, creativity, work-life balance, effective communication, a sense of achievement, and responsibility, are among the factors contributing to intrinsic motivation (Shafi et al., 2020; Raza et al., 2015; Hartman & Slapničar, 2012; Ryan & Deci, 2000). Considering the above, the following research hypothesis can be defined:

H2: Employer brand has a statistically significant and positive influence on intrinsic motivation.

Studies consistently demonstrate the positive impact of intrinsic motivation on employee job satisfaction (Charano & Harijanto, 2015; Singh, 2021; Ogundare, 2022; Raza et al., 2015; Ali & Anwar, 2021). Charano & Harijanto (2015) identify factors like the possibility of career advancement, job interestingness, opportunities for development and knowledge acquisition, employee relations, and work-life balance as intrinsic motivation elements influencing employee satisfaction. Ogundare (2022) expands on these by including factors such as the quality of the work environment, workplace atmosphere, feedback mechanisms, and employee involvement in

decision-making. Raza et al (2015) underscore intrinsic motivation factors like job security, employee achievement, and workplace responsibility. Notably, the factors contributing to intrinsic motivation align closely with the dimensions of the employer brand. In their analysis, Kaur & Syal (2017) emphasize employer brand dimensions such as a positive working environment, gaining additional experience, opportunities for career advancement, a sense of personal fulfillment, and other elements that can be identified as intrinsic motivation factors (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Given these findings and the overlap between factors of intrinsic motivation and specific dimensions of the employer brand, it can be reasonably assumed that intrinsic motivation serves as a mediating factor in the influence of the employer's brand on job satisfaction. Considering these insights, the following research hypotheses can be formulated:

H3: Intrinsic motivation has a statistically significant and positive impact on job satisfaction.

H4: Intrinsic motivation is a mediator of the relationship between employer brand and job satisfaction.

3. Methodology

To test the hypotheses and fulfill the objectives of this paper, research was conducted. The questionnaire, administered in January 2024, targeted respondents employed in companies in the Republic of Serbia, specifically in the Southern and Eastern regions. The preliminary sample involved 205 respondents. However, upon scrutinizing the completed surveys, it was observed that some participants omitted certain required information, leading to a final sample of 195 respondents, actively employed in various companies within the Republic of Serbia. Table 1 illustrates the characteristics of the sample. To gauge the employer brand, statements were formulated based on the research by Berthon et al (2005), Hanin et al (2013), Srivastava & Bhatnagar (2010), and Highhouse et al (2003). Specific statements from the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) (Weiss et al., 1967) were employed to measure intrinsic motivation, while the Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS) (Spector, 1985) was utilized for assessing job satisfaction. Respondents conveyed their opinions using a five-point Likert scale, where a score of 1 denoted complete disagreement, and a score of 5 indicated complete agreement with the expressed viewpoint.

The study's hypotheses underwent testing through the application of the partial least square approach to structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM). In accordance with Hair et al (2014) recommendation, the choice to employ a variance-based SEM was made, as it is deemed proficient in handling intricate models and non-normally distributed data. Following Anderson and Gerbing's two-step approach (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988), the validation of the measurement model and assessment of the structural model's quality were carried out based on preliminary results. The data preprocessing involved utilizing the SPSS v.25 package before transitioning to SmartPLS 4.0 software to consider the pertinent indicators of the reflective measurement model.

Table 1. Sample characteristics

	Frequency (N = 195)	
	N	%
<i>Sex</i>		
Female	89	45.64
Male	106	54.35
<i>Age</i>		
<30	98	50.25
31 – 40	45	23.07
41 – 50	39	20
51 – 60	13	6.66
<i>Education</i>		
High School	78	40
College	29	14.87
Bachelor	88	45.13
<i>Activity</i>		
Production	51	26.15
Services	103	52.82
Trade	41	21.03
<i>Number of employees in company</i>		
2 - 9	49	25.12
10 – 49	46	23.58
50 - 249	48	24.61
>250	52	26.69
<i>Company capital</i>		
Domestic private capital	93	47.69
State-owned capital	37	18.97
Foreign private capital	65	33.33
<i>Change in number of employees</i>		
Without change	55	28.21
Increased	102	52.31
Reduced by 10%	32	16.41
Reduced by more then 20%	6	3.07

Source: Authors

The sample is characterized by a predominant representation of female respondents, with an average age of under 30 years. In terms of education, an equal number of participants hold high school and university degrees. An analysis of the companies in the sample indicates a prevalence of entities in the service sector, predominantly funded by domestic private capital. The distribution of companies by size adheres to a well-balanced pattern, ensuring an optimal mix of micro, small, medium, and large companies in the sample. Notably, a significant portion of the companies in the analyzed sample reported an increase in the number of employees over the past three years, suggesting favorable business results and growth. This underscores their suitability for inclusion in the research.

4. Results and analysis

4.1. Measurement model assesment

A confirmatory factor analysis was implemented to assess the reliability and validity of the proposed constructs. Table 2 presents the outcomes of both internal consistency reliability and convergent validity analyses for the model. Composite reliability (CR), with a suggested limit of 0.7 by Hair et al (2017), and it was found to be above this threshold for each construct in our study. These findings indicate good internal consistency within the measurement model. Convergent validity, measured through Average Variance Extracted (AVE), is considered satisfactory when surpassing 0.5, signifying that a construct represents over 50% of the variance in its items (Chin, 2010). In our study, AVE values ranged from 0.562 to 0.699 for all constructs, meeting the requisite criteria.

Table 2. Measurement model and constructs

Construct and items	Loadings	VIF	Composite reliability	α	AVE
EB: Employer brand			0.851	0.844	0.562
EB01	0.763	1.647			
EB02	0.709	1.651			
EB03	0.801	1.938			
EB04	0.727	1.583			
EB05	0.748	2.047			
EB06	0.746	2.073			

Table 2. (continued)

Construct and items		Loadings	VIF	Composite reliability	α	AVE
IM: Intrinsic motivation				0.869	0.867	0.604
	IM01	0.657	1.494			
	IM02	0.814	2.108			
	IM03	0.782	2.132			
	IM04	0.748	1.689			
	IM05	0.804	2.105			
JS: Job satisfaction	IM06	0.844	2.440	0.860	0.857	0.699
	JS01	0.807	1.669			
	JS02	0.829	2.097			
	JS03	0.846	2.154			
	JS04	0.862	2.346			

Source: Authors

The collinearity statistics, as assessed by the variance inflation factor (VIF), exhibit values exceeding 5 for all items. This suggests that there is no issue of multicollinearity in the measurement model. Discriminant validity was confirmed using the heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT0.85) method, and the corresponding results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Discriminant validity

Discriminant validity (HTMT _{0.90} criterion)			
Constructs	1	2	3
1. EB: Employer brand	—		
2. IM: Intrinsic motivation	0.738	—	
3. JS: Job satisfaction	0.895	0.820	—

Source: Authors

Discriminant validity was assessed using the heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT0.90) criterion introduced by Henseler et al (2015). The findings, detailed in Table 3, indicate that the observed values fall below the 0.90 threshold established as the maximum value. This affirms that our measurement model successfully demonstrates discriminant validity.

4.2. Structural model assesment

The evaluation of the structural model commenced with the blindfolding option within PLS-SEM. The cross-validated redundancy index (Stone-Geisser Q^2) was computed for the endogenous latent variable to gauge predictive relevance. The calculated Q^2 values for intrinsic motivation and job satisfaction were 0.401, and 0.582, respectively. Positive Q^2 values, deemed acceptable, signify the structural model's high quality

(Stone, 1974). The coefficient of determination (R^2) was then analyzed for the observed constructs. The obtained R^2 values indicate that 41,5%, and 67,7% of the variance in intrinsic motivation and job satisfaction, respectively, contribute significantly to the model's explanatory power. To prevent model misspecification, the standardized root means square residual (SRMR) proposed by Henseler et al (2014) was employed, yielding a value of 0.086, which is slightly above 0.08, as a stricter criterion and significantly below 0.1, as a less strict criterion (Hu & Bentler, 1998). The goodness-of-fit (GOF) for all dependent and intermediate variables was manually calculated as the square root of the product of communality and R^2 . The values reported in Table 4 demonstrate that the NFI value is below 0.9, affirming a satisfactory model fit.

Table 4. Structural model fit indices

Construct	Stoner-Geisser Q^2	R^2	GOF
Intrinsic motivation	0.401	0.415	0.407
Job satisfaction	0.582	0.677	0.627
SRMR	0.086		
NFI	0.789		

Source: Authors

The standard bootstrapping procedure in PLS-SEM was initiated to assess the significance and magnitude of the path coefficients. This involved calculating two-sided bias-corrected 95 percent confidence intervals (CIs) for each relation specified in the hypotheses and evaluating indirect effects. The results of the structural model, along with the lower and upper CIs, and hypotheses testing for direct effects, are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Results of testing the hypothesis: direct effects

Relationship	Path coefficient	t-Value	95% CIs (bias corrected)	Hypothesis	Results
EB → IM	0.644***	13.700	[0.538, 0.726]	H2	Supported
EB → JS	0.522***	10.231	[0.422, 0.620]	H1	Supported
IM → JS	0.383***	6.704	[0.269, 0.493]	H3	Supported

Notes: EB, employer brand; IM, intrinsic motivation; JS, job satisfaction. * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$

Source: Authors

The statistical analysis revealed a positive relationship between employer brand (EB) and intrinsic motivation (IM) ($\beta = 0.644$, $p < 0.001$), supporting hypothesis H1. In the continuation of the analysis, it was revealed that the employer brand (EB) has a positive impact on job satisfaction (JS) ($\beta = 0.522$, $p < 0.001$), supporting hypothesis H2. Intrinsic motivation (IM) has statistically

significant and positive impact on job satisfaction (JS) ($\beta = 0.383$, $p < 0.001$), supporting hypothesis H3. To examine the mediating role of intrinsic motivation in the model, we adhered to the procedure outlined by Zhao et al (2010). The bootstrap results, illustrating the indirect effects, are outlined in Table 6.

Table 6. Results of testing the hypothesis: indirect effects

Relationship	Path coefficient	t-Value	95% CIs (bias corrected)	Hypothesis	Results
EB → IM → JS	0.246***	6.008	[0.169, 0.330]	H4	Supported

Notes: EB, employer brand; IM, intrinsic motivation; JS, job satisfaction. * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$

Source: Authors

6. Discussion

In alignment with the initial objective of the paper, the research aimed to investigate the influence of the employer brand on intrinsic motivation and job satisfaction, as well as explore the mediating effect of intrinsic motivation on the relationship between the employer brand and job satisfaction. Consistent with findings from other studies (Ali & Anwar, 2021; Slavković et al., 2018; Kaur & Syal, 2017; Tanwar & Prasad, 2016a; Bakanauskiene et al., 2011), the research initially established a positive impact of the employer brand on job satisfaction. Considered as one of the most crucial attitudes that employees can develop, job satisfaction is a result of an overall positive evaluation of work, working conditions, and a set of positive emotional attitudes towards work. Human resource managers play a pivotal role in shaping job satisfaction by creating conducive working conditions, implementing effective human resource management practices, and devising reward systems that stimulate desired emotions and behaviors among employees. Achieving job satisfaction requires more than just financial rewards; it necessitates an appropriate blend of various tangible and intangible rewards. Notably, working conditions, the employer's reputation in the market, the work-life balance, opportunities for advancement and training, and the acquisition of additional knowledge for enhancing human capital are particularly significant factors positively influencing the employer brand. These dimensions of the employer brand align with Herzberg's motivational factors, contributing to the growth of employee satisfaction within companies. Moreover, the employer brand fosters job satisfaction through additional dimensions that may not be directly linked to work tasks. Factors such as the quality of products and services, the company's market image, its social responsibility, and ethical business practices create a positive perception of the organization in the minds of employees. This, in turn, leads to the development of a sense of pride among employees due to their association with these companies.

The research results indicated a positive influence of the employer brand on the intrinsic motivation of employees. This outcome aligns with the previously mentioned motivational factors that contribute to the development of employee satisfaction. Motivation, serving as the driving force for employees in the workplace, can be categorized as either extrinsic or intrinsic. Extrinsic motivation involves behavior driven by visible rewards or punishments, while intrinsic motivation stems from inherent satisfaction derived from engaging in work that employees find enjoyable or from specific working conditions and reward systems that meet their developmental needs. Elements such as work-life balance, opportunities for acquiring additional knowledge,

potential career advancement, recognition, and other intangible rewards, representing dimensions of the employer brand and identified as statistically relevant in this study, emerge as crucial factors fostering intrinsic motivation. By thoughtfully crafting working conditions, implementing effective human resource management practices, and establishing reward systems, companies can cultivate an employer brand that generates a unique sense of internal motivation. Employees experiencing such motivation are inclined to exert additional efforts at work, displaying higher levels of energy and commitment, leading to increased productivity and overall company performance. These findings are consistent with the results obtained in this research, indicating that intrinsic motivation positively impacts job satisfaction. This further confirms the notion that intrinsic factors, such as autonomy, opportunities for knowledge enhancement, company image, and social responsibility, have a favorable effect on the development of job satisfaction. The obtained result aligns with similar studies conducted globally (Charano & Harijanto, 2015; Singh, 2021; Ogundare, 2022; Raza et al, 2015; Ali & Anwar, 2021).

Given the positive impact of intrinsic motivation on job satisfaction and the identification of the employer brand as a factor influencing both variables, the paper hypothesized that intrinsic motivation could act as a mediating factor. This assumption was confirmed in the research. The result indicating that intrinsic motivation positively mediates the relationship between the employer brand and job satisfaction suggests that the internal drive and personal fulfillment derived from one's work play a crucial role in enhancing job satisfaction within the framework of the employer brand. In essence, individuals who perceive their employer positively are more likely to experience heightened intrinsic motivation, consequently leading to increased job satisfaction. This implies that organizations fostering a strong and positive employer brand may indirectly contribute to employee satisfaction by nurturing intrinsic motivational factors. It underscores the interconnectedness of organizational image, intrinsic motivation, and overall job satisfaction. The mediation finding gains depth when considering specific employer brand dimensions, such as work-life balance, autonomy, learning opportunities, growth, and career development. It suggests that these dimensions collectively contribute to employees' intrinsic motivation, forming a bridge between the perceived employer brand and enhanced job satisfaction. Consequently, employees experiencing this intrinsic motivation are more likely to derive satisfaction from their roles. This underscores the intricate interplay between employer brand dimensions, intrinsic motivation, and their combined impact on overall job satisfaction.

6. Conclusions

In alignment with the paper's objectives, the research explored the relationship between the employer brand, intrinsic motivation, and job satisfaction, delving into the mediating role of intrinsic motivation. Consistent with prior studies, the positive influence of the employer brand on intrinsic motivation and job satisfaction were identified. The mediating role of intrinsic motivation signifies that employees perceiving a positive employer brand are more likely to experience internal fulfillment, thereby enhancing job satisfaction. Importantly, specific employer brand dimensions, such as work-life balance and career development, intricately influence intrinsic motivation, demonstrating a nuanced interplay between these elements and their collective impact on overall job satisfaction. The research results carry both theoretical and practical implications. From a theoretical perspective, the findings contribute to the better scientific understanding of employer branding, intrinsic motivation, and job satisfaction. To the best of the author's knowledge, there are no previous works examining the mediating role of intrinsic motivation in the influence of the employer brand on job satisfaction. As a result, the research outcomes provide a valuable theoretical foundation for future investigations in this domain. On a practical level, the results offer insights for human resources managers. By strategically crafting an employer brand and establishing unique working conditions, HR managers can potentially enhance job satisfaction and intrinsic motivation among employees. The practical implications of this research can guide organizations in developing effective strategies to create a positive work environment that fosters motivation and satisfaction.

However, the study has certain limitations that could serve as avenues for future research. Increasing the sample size and conducting the research in other regions of the Republic of Serbia would contribute to more robust and generalizable results. The dominance of specific respondent and company groups in the current sample highlights the importance of ensuring a more balanced and representative sample in future studies. Comparisons with earlier studies in the country and abroad would provide insights into potential changes in the unique employee value proposition over time. Additionally, the focus on intrinsic motivation in analyzing the relationship with the employer brand acknowledges the intrinsic nature of many dimensions of the employer brand. However, it is essential not to overlook the significance of the extrinsic reward system and the fact that some dimensions of the employer brand are extrinsic. Therefore, future research should explore not only the impact of the employer brand on intrinsic motivation but also its influence on extrinsic motivation, providing a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics in the relationship between employer branding and employee motivation.

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