

## THE IMPACT: EMPLOYER BRAND, CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY, AND ORGANIZATIONAL REPUTATION IN JOB APPLICATION INTENTIONS

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### ABSTRACT

*Creating a competitive advantage is essential for companies as it serves as leverage to attract competent job seekers needed for the sustainability of the business. This research aims to examine the direct role of employer brand attractiveness and corporate social responsibility as dependent variables in influencing intention to apply, as well as the indirect influence of organizational reputation mediating the relationship between employer brand attractiveness and corporate social responsibility on intention to apply as independent variables. Data were collected through a self-administered questionnaire distributed to a total of 315 respondents. The respondents were final-year students and fresh graduates who had not yet entered the workforce and were part of Generation Z in Indonesia. The questionnaire utilized a 7-point Likert scale, and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was employed to analyze and elucidate the relationships among the variables used in this study. The results indicate that employer brand attractiveness and corporate social responsibility significantly and positively influence intention to apply. Meanwhile, organizational reputation influences the relationship between employer brand attractiveness and corporate social responsibility with the intention to apply through positive mediation. Based on this research, companies can learn how to shape a reputation that serves as a competitive advantage in enhancing employer brand attractiveness and corporate social responsibility among Generation Z as a potential new workforce entering the job market.*

### KEYWORDS

*Employer brand attractiveness, Corporate social responsibility, Organizational reputation, Intention to apply*



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## INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary landscape of business operations, human resources stand as a pivotal aspect that drives organizational functionality towards achieving strategic objectives, vision, and mission as emphasized by Soeling *et al.* (2022) human resources play a crucial role as the primary asset in facilitating operational activities, thus contributing to the attainment of organizational goals. However, the demand for human resources has sparked intense competition among companies, leading to a race for talent and skills in pursuit of organizational objectives. Bharadwaj (2023) highlights that every company strives rigorously to achieve success and sustain a competitive advantage in an increasingly intense and ever-changing market.

Sustainable competitive advantage, as delineated by Bharadwaj (2023), embodies characteristics that cannot be replicated by competitors, even with their utmost efforts. It is imperative for companies to discern the competitiveness they possess in creating a competitive advantage, subsequently becoming characteristics that cannot be imitated or eliminated by competing firms in the endeavor to attract the right talents and skills required by the company (Bharadwaj, 2023). Furthermore, the emergence of Generation Z presents a new face in the workforce, bringing forth a fresh set of challenges for organizations in selecting suitable candidates tailored to the labor market's needs. Generation Z individuals, born between 1995 and 2010, have grown up in an era characterized by the World Wide Web phenomenon (Racolta-Paina & Irini, 2021). Their dynamic, transparent, creative, innovative, socially responsible, emotionally accountable, knowledgeable, and individualistic traits necessitate organizations to adapt to workplace environments (Racolta-Paina & Irini, 2021).

Understanding the distinct expectations, aspirations, values, and behaviors of Generation Z in the workplace, as asserted by Putra (2017), becomes imperative. Generation Z constitutes the primary workforce target newly entering the career-building phase. Unlike preceding generations experiencing technological transitions, Generation Z was born into a fully available technological landscape, fostering a tech-savvy, flexible, intelligent, and culturally tolerant disposition (Nurqamar *et al.*, 2022). Consequently, their outlook on job requirements and ideal companies differs from previous generations due to their exposure to easily accessible information and technology (Putra, 2017).

Against this limitations, the preference for an ideal workplace among Generation Z individuals comes into focus. The Employer Brand Index 2022, a syndicated research by MarkPlus involving 1,150 Generation Z respondents aged 18 to 25, sheds light on their perceptions of an ideal workplace in Indonesia (MarkPlus, 2022). Government institutions/ministries and the banking sector emerge as prime choices for Generation Z, offering competitive salaries (Katadata, 2022). Infrastructure, resources, utilities, technology-based companies, and fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) rank high on Generation Z's workplace preferences, indicating a diverse range of industries attracting their interest.

Employer branding plays a crucial role in shaping perceptions of ideal workplaces, emphasizing career progression, attractive benefits, and a balanced work-life culture (MarkPlus, 2022). Prospective candidates value factors beyond mere salary, seeking benefits that add value to their professional experience (Silva & Dias,

2022). Corporate social responsibility (CSR) emerges as a key component in bolstering a company's reputation as an ideal destination for Generation Z. Tien *et al.* (2023) that CSR practices positively influence organizational reputation, subsequently impacting Generation Z's intention to apply for jobs.

Given the significance of employer branding and CSR in shaping organizational attractiveness and reputation, understanding their interplay becomes paramount. This study aims to delve deeper into the influence of employer branding and CSR on Generation Z's intention to apply for jobs, examining how organizational reputation mediates this relationship. By synthesizing insights from previous research (Soeling *et al.*, 2022; Silva & Dias, 2022; Tien *et al.*, 2023), this study seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of how employer branding and CSR contribute to organizational attractiveness and ultimately influence Generation Z's career decisions.

## **Literature review**

### ***Employer brand attractiveness***

Sullivan (2004) defines employer branding as a strategic process aimed at managing organizational knowledge and employee perceptions to position the organization positively in the market as an attractive place to work. It is crucial for shaping a company's image deliberately, considering evolving perceptions over time. Berthon *et al.* (2005) introduced the concept of employer attractiveness, emphasizing the need for strategies to enhance organizational appeal. Strong employer branding yields benefits such as attracting qualified candidates, improving recruitment quality, and reducing costs. It fosters employee satisfaction, retention, and engagement, leading to lower turnover rates and a competitive edge (Mosley & Schmidt, 2017).

Berthon *et al.* (2005) expanded the model into five dimensions: value of interest, social value, economic value, value development, and application value. These dimensions assess factors influencing company attractiveness, including innovative work practices, a healthy work environment, above-average remuneration, recognition, career development, and opportunities for knowledge application and humanitarian activities (Silva & Dias, 2022)

### ***Corporate social responsibility***

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) involves aligning business values and behaviors with those of stakeholders, including employees, customers, suppliers, government, interest groups, and the wider community. While challenging, some companies excel in considering the diverse needs of stakeholders (Mallin, 2009). CSR has evolved from various theories, encompassing corporate philanthropy, governance principles, and business ethics (Camilleri, 2017). Duarte *et al.* (2014) suggest that CSR enhances a company's competitive advantage in recruiting by appealing to job seekers interested in the organization's societal contributions (Tien *et al.*, 2023). The CSR framework includes corporate social performance, business ethics, stakeholder theory, strategic CSR, and corporate sustainability and responsibility (Camilleri, 2017).

CSR reflects a commitment to shared social responsibility values among stakeholders, signaling a company's dedication to responsible social values (Camilleri, 2017). Stakeholder engagement is crucial for defining appropriate corporate social behavior standards (Camilleri, 2017). According to Benn *et al.* (2014), CSR transforms businesses into sustainable entities, adding value to society and the environment (Camilleri, 2017). Active involvement in social activities enhances reputation and trust, shaping a company's image positively (Thanh *et al.*, 2023), aligning with the notion that organizations can build favorable reputations through philanthropic efforts (Yoon & Chung, 2018).

### ***Organizational reputation***

Corporate reputation, as defined by Gotsi & Wilson (2001), represents stakeholders' overall evaluation of an organization based on their experiences, available information, and comparisons with competitors (Ngoc *et al.*, 2022). Building reputation is challenging as it takes years but can be destroyed quickly if the company engages in illegal or unethical behavior, highlighting the importance of trust (Soeling *et al.*, 2022).

Corporate reputation, seen as the organization's image, is intangible and influences financial performance, organizational assessments, and perceptions of consumers, suppliers, employees, and partners (Soeling *et al.*, 2022). Barnett *et al.* (2006) categorize organizational reputation into three types: active, evaluation, and perception, emphasizing stakeholders' views (Silva & Dias, 2022). The importance of corporate reputation lies in fostering trust-based relationships with customers, employees, and stakeholders, ensuring that the organization acts in their best interests (Silva & Dias, 2022).

### ***Intention to apply***

Intention to apply, originating from Barbel & Roehling (1993) as cited in Gomes & Neves (2011), denotes the action stemming from a company's recruitment appeal (Bharadwaj, 2023). Gomes and Neves' model, based on "theory of planned behavior," highlights how intention can forecast actual actions, especially in job applications (Bharadwaj, 2023). This suggests that one's intention to apply for a job can predict their actual behavior in doing so (Soeling *et al.*, 2022). Intention to apply often correlates with personal interest in the company. Cable & Judge (1994) cited in Roberson *et al.* (2005) identify three types of intentions: (1) intention to apply for a job; (2) intention to pursue a job; and (3) intention to accept a job. The latter two are particularly relevant in the selection process (Silva & Dias, 2022). Additionally, Highhouse *et al.* (2003) cited in Silva & Dias (2022) suggest that intention mediates the effects of attractiveness and prestige in organizational selection. Ultimately, Highhouse *et al.*'s (2003) notion of intention to apply clearly indicates future steps in the job application process. Thus, the desire to act beyond mere thoughts about a company's appeal reflects the decision to actually apply for a job (Soeling *et al.*, 2022).

### ***Generation Z***

Generation Z, spanning from 1995 to 2010, includes two groups: the "Big Z," born between 1995 and 2002, and the "Little Z," born between 2003 and 2010 (Grace & Seemiller, 2019). Their distinctiveness makes them discerning in job selection, posing new challenges for HR practices (Nurqamar *et al.*, 2022). Also termed the iGeneration or internet generation, Generation Z displays unique traits. They exhibit varied communication patterns and are avid users of social media, heavily influenced by technological advancements. Open to diverse views, they multitask proficiently, shaped by their global upbringing in a dynamic environment (Putra, 2017).

Being the first internet-dependent generation, Generation Z is noted for its tech-savvy nature, flexibility, intelligence, and cultural tolerance (Nurqamar *et al.*, 2022). Technology is central to their lives, shaping their values, perspectives, and aspirations (Putra., 2017). Understanding Generation Z's work preferences is crucial for creating supportive work environments. Their digital communication preference underscores the need for workplaces that accommodate digital technology (Nurqamar *et al.*, 2022).

### **Research hypothesis**

#### ***Employer brand attractiveness and organizational reputation***

Employer attractiveness, as defined by Ehrhart & Ziegert (2005), refers to the advantage a company offers in attracting potential job applicants who view it as a favorable place to work (Silva & Dias, 2022). Employer brand encompasses a spectrum of perceptions and feelings associated with an organization, forming its reputation based on others' perceptions (Mosley, 2005). According to Cable and Turban (2001), both employer brand and organizational reputation are crucial for job seekers, with organizational reputation serving as an external representation of job opportunities (Soeling *et al.*, 2022).

H1: Employer Brand Attractiveness positively influences Organizational Reputation

#### ***Employer Brand Attractiveness dan Intention to Apply***

The stronger the positive beliefs job seekers hold about an organization, the more likely they are to be interested in joining it, and the more prepared applicants are to submit job applications (Cable & Turban, 2001). This is linked to the concept of employer brand attractiveness defined by Berthon *et al.* (2005) as an advantage for prospective applicants. When a company has a strong brand, it facilitates attracting talent that fits the company's needs. Therefore, establishing a strong branding is crucial for companies to enhance their attractiveness to potential applicants with the required skills and knowledge. Thus, employer brand attractiveness becomes one of the competitive advantages for companies (Soeling *et al.*, 2022). The positive and significant relationship between employer branding and intention to apply, as found by Soeling *et al.* (2022), indicates that job seekers tend to choose the values offered by companies. This suggests that companies need to seriously consider the attractiveness, social, economic, developmental, and application values of their organization and align them with the desired values preferences of job seekers (Silva & Dias, 2022).

H2: Employer Brand Attractiveness positively influences Intention to Apply

***Corporate Social Responsibility dan Organizational Reputation***

Corporate reputation plays a vital role in influencing job seekers' decisions to apply for positions within a specific organization. Sharma & Prasad (2018) highlight that companies with a good reputation are more likely to attract potential employees, especially in competitive labor markets. Therefore, companies focus on enhancing their reputation strategically to attract potential talent (Silva & Dias, 2022). For instance, Babikova & Bucek (2019) found that job seekers' decisions to apply to an organization are influenced by their positive evaluations of the organization's reputation (Thanh *et al.*, 2023). Rynes (1991) suggests that job candidates are willing to apply or continue the application process if they perceive their prospective employer to have a good reputation (Carlini *et al.*, 2019).

H3: Corporate Social Responsibility positively influences Organizational Reputation

***Corporate Social Responsibility dan Intention to Apply***

Organizations can use Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) strategically to enhance their reputation, attracting top talent during recruitment. Job seekers often consider CSR performance when deciding to apply to specific companies (Thanh *et al.*, 2023). Fulfilling CSR commitments signals ethical operations, drawing exceptional candidates (Thanh *et al.*, 2023). Studies vary in their findings on the link between CSR and job application intentions. While some, like Story *et al.* (2016), found no direct relationship, others, like Kim & Park (2011), highlight a positive association. Overall, organizations with strong CSR tend to attract more applicants (Tarigan *et al.*, 2020).

H4: CSR positively impacts Intention to Apply

***Organizational Reputation dan Intention to Apply***

Organizations with positive corporate reputations tend to attract candidates more effectively, influencing their decisions to apply for jobs due to the perceived image of the company (Silva & Dias, 2022). Research indicates that the stronger a company's reputation in the job market, the greater the intention to apply for positions (Silva & Dias, 2022). In essence, a better organizational reputation correlates with higher motivation among candidates to work there. Turban *et al.* (1998) demonstrated the strong influence of organizational reputation in attracting potential candidates (Soeling *et al.*, 2022). Additionally, Saini *et al.* (2014) found that organizations with better market images have higher levels of job application intention. Similarly, Subbarao *et al.* (2020) noted that when organizations implement formal management strategies to enhance their reputation, such as through social media, the likelihood of job applicants increases (Soeling *et al.*, 2022).

H5: Organizational Reputation positively influences the Intention to Apply

***Employer Brand Attractiveness, Organizational Reputation, dan Intention to Apply***

Turban *et al.* (1998) found that a positive perception of an organization enhances its attractiveness to candidates, highlighting the significant impact of organizational reputation on candidate attraction. Saini *et al.* (2014) emphasized the role of organizational attractiveness and brand image in shaping job application intentions. Sivertzen *et al.* (2013) identified specific organizational attributes like innovation and psychological value as predictors of company reputation, influencing candidate attraction. Similarly, Sivertzen *et al.* (2013) stressed the importance of brand image in enhancing workplace attractiveness and job application intentions, outlining five dimensions of brand image. Collins & Han (2004) discovered a relationship between organizational reputation and its ability to attract applicants.

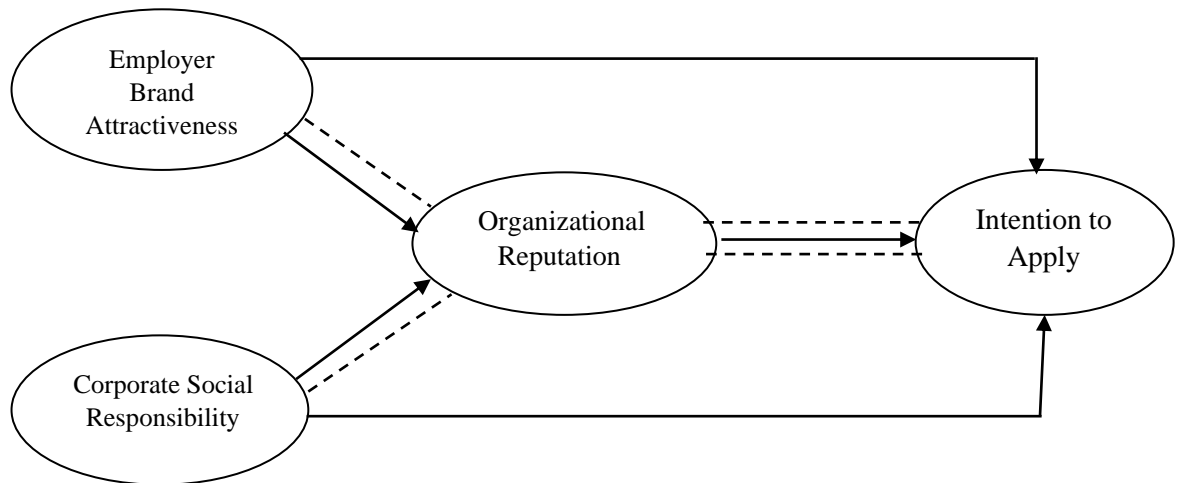
H6: Employer Brand Attractiveness positively influences Intention to Apply

#### ***Corporate Social Responsibility, Organizational Reputation, dan Intention to Apply***

Mediation analysis involves a three-variable system where the initial independent variable influences the mediator, which in turn affects the dependent variable. Previous research has examined the role of organizational reputation as a mediator for the effects of CSR on organizational outcomes and performance (Bahta *et al.*, 2021). Some studies have found that positive CSR can enhance employees' perceptions of the organization as a desirable workplace in the future, or directly and indirectly increase intentions to apply through the mediating role of organizational reputation (Wang, 2023). Studies like Story *et al.* (2016) in Tsai *et al.* (2015) have shown that organizational reputation serves as a link between CSR and job application intentions (Thanh *et al.*, 2023).

H7: Corporate Social Responsibility positively influences Intention to Apply

Referring to Soeling *et al.* (2022), companies with high employee brand attractiveness positively impact organizational reputation and attract talent. Recommendations include focusing on interest value within employee brand attractiveness to enhance reputation and intention to apply. Research by Thanh *et al.* (2023) highlights how CSR practices can enhance a company's reputation, crucial for attracting young talent. Emphasizing CSR practices, particularly external CSR, can enhance CSR practices within organizations. These insights significantly influence Generation Z's perspectives, particularly undergraduate and fresh graduate candidates, in selecting desirable companies to apply to.



Source: Adapted from Soeling *et al.* (2022) and Silva & Dias (2022), with modifications from Thanh *et al.* (2023).

The difference in the significance of the mediating variable found in Soeling *et al.* (2022), where organizational reputation doesn't significantly mediate employer brand attractiveness, contrasts with Silva & Dias (2022) found showing a positive significance in organizational reputation's mediation of employer brand attractiveness. This discrepancy makes further research intriguing. Moreover, the topic of corporate social responsibility in the context of SDG enforcement will offer varying perspectives from Generation Z as they enter the workforce, particularly from undergraduates and fresh graduates, in determining their ideal companies to apply to based on these variables.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a quantitative data collection technique, specifically utilizing primary data collected through a self-administered questionnaire survey method. Pre-testing involved distributing questionnaires to 35 individuals to assess the validity and reliability of each variable item before the main test. The questionnaire employed Likert scale responses ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). The research adopted a deductive quantitative approach, starting with relevant theories to formulate hypotheses, which are then empirically tested. The study focused on Generation Z undergraduates and fresh graduates in Indonesia, employing purposive sampling to select respondents based on specific criteria. Based on (Bentler & Chou, 1987), sampling is limited to Generation Z individuals in Indonesia to assess the interests of new entrants into the workforce and understand differences in perspectives among final-year undergraduates or recent graduates.

Based on the SEM method, a minimum of 195 respondents is required due to the 39 indicator questions in the questionnaire. To achieve this, online questionnaires will be distributed via platforms such as Whatsapp, X, and Instagram, utilizing Google Form for data collection. This approach leverages technology and social media for efficient data collection. Quantitative data analysis in this study will



utilize SPSS and LISREL applications to process numerical data related to employer brand attractiveness, corporate social responsibility, organizational reputation, and intention to apply. SPSS will be used to analyze the distribution and correlation among variables. Meanwhile, LISREL will facilitate deeper path analysis, modeling relationships between variables and measuring direct and indirect effects. This process includes instrument validation, path measurement, bootstrapping analysis, and model evaluation using metrics such as R-squared (Haryono & Wardoyo, 2013). The analysis aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the impact of employer brand attractiveness, corporate social responsibility, and organizational reputation on intention to apply in the context of this research.

Table 1. Variables, definitions and indicators

Variable	Definition	Indicators
Employe brand attrac- tiveness	a set of benefits expected by potential 25 items of Attractiveness employees to work in an organization indicator (Berthon <i>et al.</i> , 2005)	25 items of indicator
Corporate social respon- sibility	CSR was measured using five items related to community well-being, environment, sustainable development, social activities and overall social responsibility (Story <i>et al.</i> , 2016).	5 items of indicator
Organizational reputa- tion	The corporate reputation scale, It included four items (e.g. "I have heard a lot of good things about this organisation") (Turban <i>et al.</i> , 1998)	4 items off indicator
Intention to apply	the applicant's thought about a company that 4 items of explicitly implies further action to apply to a indicator company (Highhouse <i>et al.</i> , 2003)	5 items of indicator

The interplay between corporate social responsibility (CSR) and employer brand attractiveness serves as crucial mediators shaping organizational reputation and subsequently influencing the intention to apply. Employee brand attractiveness is assessed through a comprehensive set of 25 indicators, capturing the perceived benefits potential employees expect from an organization. Concurrently, CSR practices are evaluated using five indicators encompassing community well-being, environmental stewardship, sustainable development, social activities, and overall social responsibility. Organizational reputation, acting as a mediating variable, reflects perceptions of the company based on four items such as positive word-of-mouth and public perception. Ultimately, these factors collectively impact the

intention to apply, as applicants are likely to be influenced by the organization's reputation, CSR initiatives, and perceived attractiveness as an employer when considering employment opportunities.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Respondents profile

Table 2 shows demographic distribution of respondents in the study reveals key insights into the sample composition. The majority of respondents were females (70.0%), with males comprising the remaining 30.0%. Regarding age, the highest proportion fell within the range of 19-22 years (54.4%), followed by 23-27 years (43.6%), with a small percentage in the 15-18 years and over 27 years categories. In terms of educational level, most respondents were fresh graduates (69.6%), while the rest were undergraduates (30.4%). The top three universities represented were University Indonesia, IPB University, and Diponegoro University. This demographic breakdown provides valuable insights into the study's sample composition, highlighting the predominance of young, recently graduated individuals, particularly from certain top universities in Indonesia.

Table 2. Respondents profile

Demographic	Category	N	%
Gender	Male	100	31,7
	Female	215	68,3
Age	15-18	3	1,0
	19-22	188	59,7
	23-27	122	38,7
	>27	2	0,6
Educational level	Final-year students	77	24,4
	Fresh graduates	238	75,6
Universities	Universitas Gadjah Mada	22	7,0
	Universitas Indonesia	59	18,7
	Institut Teknologi Bandung	10	3,2
	Universitas Brawijaya	19	6,0
	Universitas Airlangga	12	3,8
	IPB University	39	12,4
	Universitas Padjadjaran	16	5,1
	UNS Surakarta	2	0,6
	Universitas Diponegoro	26	8,3
	Institut Teknologi Sepuluh November	16	5,1

	Universitas Hasanud- din	10	3,2
	Lainnya	84	26,6
Total		315	100,0

### Validity and reliability

Table 4 summarizes the validity and reliability tests for various constructs related to Employer Brand Attractiveness (EBA), Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Organizational Reputation, and Intention to Apply. The metrics include Standardized Loadings (SLF), Error terms, Composite Reliability (CR), and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). For EBA, divided into Interest, Social, Economic, Development, and Application Values, the CR ranges from 0.798 to 0.910 and AVE from 0.443 to 0.601, indicating strong reliability and validity. CSR shows a CR of 0.851 and an AVE of 0.538, while Organizational Reputation has a CR of 0.721 and an AVE of 0.411, suggesting acceptable but potentially improvable measures. Intention to Apply demonstrates a CR of 0.786 and an AVE of 0.431, indicating acceptable reliability and validity. Overall, the constructs exhibit satisfactory validity and reliability, with most metrics meeting or exceeding acceptable thresholds.

Table 4. Indicator's validity test

Variable	Item	SLF	Error	CR	AVE	Conclusion
Employer Brand Attractiveness (Interest Value)	EBA1	0,79	0,37	0,880	0,601	Valid and Reliable
	EBA2	0,71	0,5			
	EBA3	0,85	0,28			
	EBA4	0,72	0,49			
	EBA5	0,80	0,36			
Employer Brand Attractiveness (Social Value)	EBA6	0,71	0,49	0,856	0,545	Valid and Reliable
	EBA7	0,62	0,61			
	EBA8	0,77	0,41			
	EBA9	0,75	0,43			
Employer Brand Attractiveness (Economic Value)	EBA10	0,82	0,33	0,882	0,601	Valid and Reliable
	EBA11	0,74	0,45			
	EBA12	0,69	0,52			
	EBA13	0,83	0,31			
Employer Brand Attractiveness (Development Value)	EBA14	0,77	0,4	0,798	0,443	Valid and Reliable
	EBA15	0,83	0,31			
	EBA16	0,67	0,55			
	EBA17	0,61	0,63			
Employer Brand Attractiveness	EBA18	0,74	0,45	0,834	0,503	Valid and Reliable
	EBA19	0,56	0,68			
	EBA20	0,73	0,47			
	EBA21	0,73	0,47			
Employer Brand Attractiveness	EBA22	0,64	0,59	0,834	0,503	Valid and Reliable
	EBA23	0,69	0,53			
	EBA24	0,70	0,51			

Table 4. Indicator’s validity test

Variable	Item	SLF	Error	CR	AVE	Conclusion
(Application Value)	EBA25	0,78	0,39			
Employer Brand Attractiveness	Interest Value	0,82	0,32	0,910	0,671	Valid and Reliable
	Social Value	0,92	0,16			
	Economic Value	0,88	0,23			
	Development Value	0,78	0,4			
	Application Value	0,68	0,54			
Corporate Social Responsibility	CSR1	0,74	0,45	0,851	0,538	Valid and Reliable
	CSR2	0,62	0,61			
	CSR3	0,81	0,35			
	CSR4	0,60	0,64			
	CSR5	0,86	0,26			
Organizational Reputation	OR1	0,61	0,63	0,721	0,411	Valid and Reliable
	OR2	0,67	0,55			
	OR3	0,51	0,74			
	OR4	0,71	0,5			
Intention to Apply	ITA1	0,78	0,38	0,786	0,431	Valid and Reliable
	ITA2	0,54	0,7			
	ITA3	0,78	0,39			
	ITA4	0,50	0,79			
	ITA5	0,64	0,6			

### Goodness of Fit Model

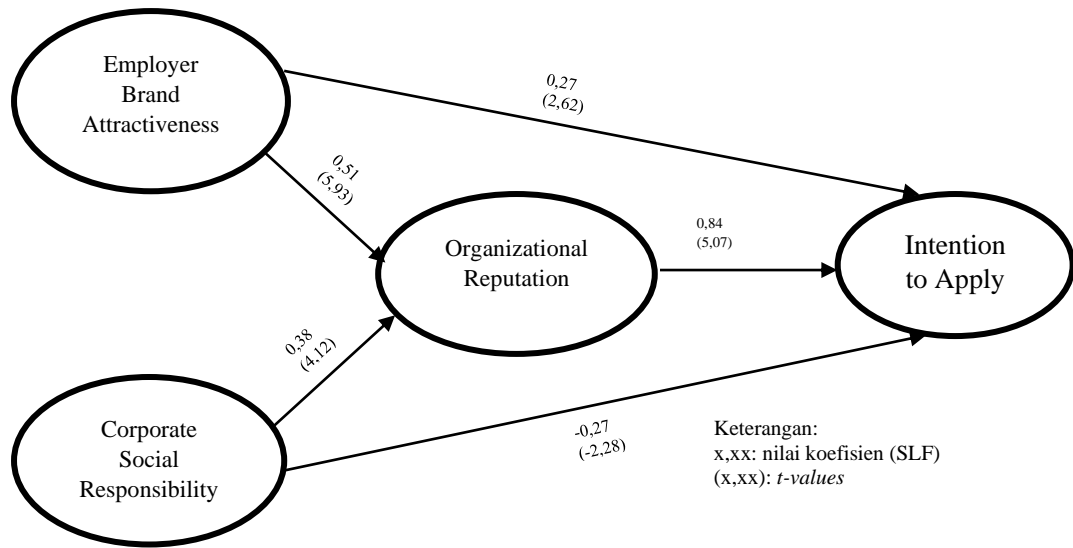
The Goodness of Fit of structural model results based on table 5 indicate a generally strong fit across multiple indices. The Absolute Fit Measures show a good fit with a Chi-Square statistic p-value of 0.0 (df=140) and a Normed Chi-Square value of 2.894, as well as an RMSEA of 0.079, while the Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI) is slightly below the ideal at 0.88. Incremental Fit Measures support a good fit with high values for the Non-Normed Fit Index (NNFI) at 0.97, Normed Fit Index (NFI) at 0.96, Relative Fit Index (RFI) at 0.96, Incremental Fit Index (IFI) at 0.98, and Comparative Fit Index (CFI) at 0.98, although the Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI) is slightly lower at 0.83. The Parsimonious Fit Measures further confirm a good fit with the Parsimony Normed Fit Index (PNFI) at 0.79 and Parsimony Goodness of Fit Index (PGFI) at 0.65. However, the Critical N (CN) value of 141.89 falls below the acceptable threshold of 200, indicating a poor fit in this specific measure. Overall, the model demonstrates satisfactory goodness of fit across most indices, despite a few areas needing improvement.

Table 5. The Structural Model's Goodness of Fit Result

Goodness of Fit Indicators	Goodness of Fit Standard	Goodness of Fit Result	Conclusion
<b>Absolute Fit Measures</b>			
Statistic Chi-Square	P-value $\geq$ 0,05	405,28 (P=0,0) df=140	Good Fit
Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI)	GFI $\geq$ 0,9	0,88	Marginal Fit
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)	RMSEA $\leq$ 0,08	0,079	Good Fit
Normed Chi-Square	1 - 5	2,894	Good Fit
<b>Incremental Fit Measures</b>			
Non-Normed Fit Index (NNFI)	NNFI $\geq$ 0,9	0,97	Good Fit
Normed Fit Index (NFI)	NFI $\geq$ 0,9	0,96	Good Fit
Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI)	AGFI $\geq$ 0,9	0,83	Good Fit
Relative Fit Index (RFI)	RFI $\geq$ 0,9	0,96	Good Fit
Incremental Fit Index (IFI)	IFI $\geq$ 0,9	0,98	Good Fit
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	CFI $\geq$ 0,9	0,98	Good Fit
<b>Parsimonious Fit Measures</b>			
Parsimony Normed Fit Index (PNFI)	$>$ 0,5	0,79	Good Fit
Parsimony Goodness of Fit Index (PGFI)	$>$ 0,5	0,65	Good Fit
<b>Other GOFI</b>			
Critical N (CN)	CN $\geq$ 200	141,89	Poor Fit

### Hypothesis Testing

Following the completion of validity, reliability, and model fit tests, the subsequent step involves hypothesis testing to examine the causal relationships among the variables. A positive correlation between variables suggests a strong causal connection, indicating that one variable significantly impacts another if it yields a positive correlation value. The diagram illustrates the causal relationships between Employer Brand Attractiveness (EBA), Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Organizational Reputation (OR), and Intention to Apply (ITA). Employer Brand Attractiveness directly influences Corporate Social Responsibility with a standardized loading factor (SLF) of 0.27 and a t-value of 2.62. Additionally, EBA affects Organizational Reputation with an SLF of 0.24 and a t-value of 2.67. CSR also significantly impacts Organizational Reputation, as shown by an SLF of 0.34 and a t-value of 5.07. Both EBA and Organizational Reputation directly influence Intention to Apply, with SLFs of 0.37 (t-value of 4.78) and 0.27 (t-value of 2.58), respectively. This diagram highlights the interconnectedness of these variables, emphasizing the importance of a strong employer brand and a positive organizational reputation in enhancing applicants' intentions to apply.



The direct effect test results from Table 6 illustrate the varying impacts of different factors on organizational reputation and intention to apply. The highest standardized estimate and t-value in Table 6 are for the relationship between Organizational Reputation and Intention to Apply, with values of 0.84 and 5.07, respectively. The lowest standardized estimate and t-value are for the relationship between Corporate Social Responsibility and Intention to Apply, with values of -0.27 and -2.28, respectively.

Tabel 6 Direct Effect Test Result

Hyphothesis	Relationship	Standarized Estimate	t-value	Conclusion
1	Employer brand attractiveness → Organizational reputation	0,51	5,93	Supported
2	Employer brand attractiveness → Intention to apply	0,27	2,62	Supported
3	Corporate social responsibility → Organizational reputation	0,38	4,12	Supported
4	Corporate social responsibility → Intention to apply	-0,27	-2,28	Rejected
5	Organizational reputation → Intention to apply	0,84	5,07	Supported

On the other side, table 7 presents the results of the mediation tests, revealing the indirect effects of employer brand attractiveness and corporate social responsibility (CSR) on intention to apply, mediated through organizational reputation. For the relationship between employer brand attractiveness and intention to apply, the indirect effect is calculated as 0.4284, indicating partial complementary mediation, with a significant standardized estimate of 5.04. This suggests that while organizational reputation partially mediates the impact of employer brand attractiveness on intention to apply, there are other factors at play as well. Similarly, for the relationship between CSR and intention to apply, the indirect effect is determined as 0.3192, signifying partial competitive mediation, with a significant standardized estimate of 2.93. This implies that organizational reputation partially mediates the relationship between CSR and intention to apply, but there may be competing influences at play.

Tabel 7 The Result of Mediation Test

Hypothesis	Hypothesis	Indirect Effect		Jenis Medisi
		Standardized Estimate	t-value	
6	Employer brand attractiveness → Organizational reputation → Intention to apply	0,51x0,84=0,4284	5,04	Supported: Partial Complementary Mediation
7	Corporate social responsibility → Organizational reputation → Intention to apply	0,38x0,84=0,3192	2,93	Supported: Partial Competitive Mediation

**Discussion**

The competition for talent and the right skills is intensifying in an ever-evolving market. Companies strive for sustainable competitive advantage to maintain their market position. However, the emergence of Generation Z in the workforce presents new challenges for companies in understanding and attracting candidates that meet their expectations and needs. Generation Z is characterized as dynamic, transparent, and creative. They grew up in an era where technology and information are easily accessible, influencing their views on values, life goals, and work environment preferences. These changing characteristics demand that human resource management practices adapt to meet Generation Z's needs and expectations in the workplace. Research by MarkPlus highlights Generation Z's workplace preferences, with state-owned enterprises (BUMN) being a top choice, followed by the banking and technology sectors, emphasizing the need to understand Generation Z's preferences and expectations in the workforce.

In terms of employer brand attractiveness, social value scored the highest at 0.92, indicating that the attractiveness of a company is heavily influenced by a healthy work environment and good interpersonal relationships. This is supported

by an IDN Research Institute survey showing that 53% of Generation Z respondents seek a "supporting work environment and company culture." Generation Z places significant importance on a supportive work environment, positive company culture, and career advancement opportunities. They believe these aspects are crucial for job satisfaction and well-being, enabling personal and professional growth, and fostering an inclusive, collaborative atmosphere.

The highest indicator of social value, EBA10, with an SLF value of 0.82, states, "The company I will join has a happy work environment," aligning with findings from the IDN Research Institute (2024) that Generation Z values a supportive work environment. CXO Media (2023) describes Generation Z as the 'woke generation,' unafraid to voice their concerns about workplace issues, recognizing healthy environments despite their limited experience compared to previous generations. They seek assistance in personal development and well-being, often using social media platforms like TikTok, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn, and company career websites to research supportive work environments.

Conversely, the lowest dimension is development value at 0.78, with the lowest SLF indicator, EBA19, at 0.56, stating, "The company I will join will be a stepping stone for my future career." This indicates respondents' uncertainty about the company's ability to provide significant career development opportunities. This sentiment suggests concerns or uncertainties about achieving long-term career goals within the company. Many Generation Z respondents perceive their first job as a stepping stone and prioritize stability, often valuing work-life balance over high salaries, as found by detikfinance (2023).

Research by Thanh *et al.* (2023) highlights the importance of employee perceptions of career development opportunities in assessing employer attractiveness. To address this, companies should communicate clear career paths, offer training programs, and provide career mobility opportunities, thus enhancing their image as promising places for career growth.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) significantly impacts organizational reputation and intention to apply. The highest CSR indicator, "The company I will join pays attention to social activities," scores 0.86, while the lowest, CSR4, "The company I will join focuses on sustainable development issues," scores 0.60. This implies that attention to social activities is crucial in evaluating a company's social responsibility. Companies active in social activities tend to have better reputations, enhancing their attractiveness as employers. However, the focus on sustainable development appears less influential in attracting potential employees, supported by Ali *et al.* (2024), who found that job seekers' views on corporate ethics have minimal impact on their intention to apply. Individual preferences for skill development and safe working conditions are often more influential.

Further research by Thanh *et al.* (2023) found that CSR practices, such as community and environmental welfare, enhance organizational reputation. IDN Research Institute (2024) identified that Indonesian Generation Z prioritizes social issues like inequality, mental health, and social justice, viewing them as critical for addressing broader challenges like climate change. Organizational reputation significantly influences job applicants' intention to apply, with a coefficient of 0.84 and a t-value of 5.07, indicating it is a primary factor in their decision-making. This



is supported by Deloitte Global (2022), showing that Generation Z carefully examines a company's reputation online before applying. Despite an overall below-average organizational reputation, the statement OR4, "The company I will join has a good reputation," with an SLF value of 0.71, shows that respondents generally agree on the importance of a good reputation.

Gotsi & Wilson (2001) emphasize that organizational reputation involves stakeholders' overall evaluation, including direct experiences and available information. This aligns with the findings that job seekers, including Generation Z, research companies' reputations online before applying. Silva & Dias (2022) describe organizational reputation as an intangible asset influencing financial performance and stakeholder perceptions, reinforcing its role in attracting job applicants.

Intention to apply, with the highest SLF indicators ITA1 and ITA3, reflects Generation Z's readiness to accept job offers and attend interviews. This aligns with Gomes & Neves (2011) and Cable & Judge (1996), who describe intention to apply as a reflection of job seekers' willingness to take concrete actions toward applying for jobs. Soeling *et al.* (2022) found that Indonesian job seekers consider company values when choosing where to apply, aligning with Generation Z's confidence in accepting job offers from companies that align with their values. Thanh *et al.* (2023) also highlight the importance of corporate reputation in influencing application intentions.

## CONCLUSION

Employer brand attractiveness and corporate social responsibility (CSR) have a positive and significant impact on organizational reputation. Employer brand attractiveness also has a positive and significant effect on intention to apply, whereas CSR has a negative and significant effect on intention to apply, indicating that this hypothesis was rejected. Additionally, both employer brand attractiveness and CSR positively and significantly influence the intention to apply through organizational reputation as a mediating variable. The study found that organizational reputation mediates the relationship between employer brand attractiveness and intention to apply as partial complementary mediation and between CSR and intention to apply as partial competitive mediation.

This phenomenon indicates that Generation Z tends to consider more dynamic aspects when choosing a workplace, emphasizing flexibility, dynamic work styles, and alignment with personal values. This is reflected in the recent wave of layoffs and resignations among civil servants, highlighting a mismatch between traditional job expectations and Generation Z's preference for more adaptive and flexible work environments. In this context, management should adapt employer branding strategies to meet the needs and preferences of Generation Z. Emphasizing values such as innovation, flexibility, and clear social contributions in company branding can make the workplace more attractive to Generation Z. Additionally, organizations must communicate their CSR commitments in ways that resonate with Generation Z to enhance their organizational reputation as desirable employers.

Despite the overall organizational reputation being below average, the statement OR4, "The company I will join has a good reputation," with an SLF value of 0.71, indicates that respondents generally agree on the importance of a good reputation. This suggests a managerial implication that even if the overall reputation is below average, focusing on aspects related to this statement can effectively improve the company's image and reputation. Managers can emphasize factors such as product quality, sustainability, integrity, or customer satisfaction to enhance the company's image in the eyes of employees, customers, and other stakeholders.

Based on the findings of this research, it can be concluded that final year students or recent graduates are interested in applying to a company not only due to its strong employer branding attractiveness but also because they perceive the company's reputation positively regarding their job application intentions. However, a good CSR may not be the primary factor influencing the intention of fresh graduates and final year students to apply.

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