

THE IMPACT OF RECRUITMENT SOURCES ON BRAND IMAGE PERCEPTIONS AND
ORGANIZATIONAL ATTRACTION: LEVERAGING ORGANIZATIONAL BRAND
IMAGE PERCEPTIONS TO ENHANCE RECRUITMENT ATTRACTION

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ABSTRACT

In today's competitive labor markets, successfully recruiting a large pool of skilled and qualified job applicants is a prime concern of many organizations. In Study 1, I focused on how organizations can successfully employ four traditional recruitment practices (sponsorships, job fair activities, word-of mouth endorsements and corporate advertisements) simultaneously to disseminate information about their positive recruitment brand images to job seekers to enhance organizational attraction. The results which supported all my hypotheses indicated that, communication of an organization's brand images to job seekers through the simultaneous use of these four traditional recruitment practices can indeed influence job seekers' positive perceptions of an organization and result in enhanced organizational attraction.

In Study 2, which was built on findings in Study1, I theorized that social media may have become a prominent source of information for job seekers. In this study, I predicted that job seekers' use of four social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, You Tube and LinkedIn) in job search will explain incremental variance in organizational attraction over the use of traditional recruitment methods. I also predicted that job seekers' utilization of social media in job search will be positively related to organizational attraction through enhanced perceptions of instrumental and symbolic attributes. Surveys for both studies were posted on and data collected from Amazon Mechanical Turk.

Results from the second study were mixed; but the results confirm findings from prior research, which showed that the instrumental-symbolic framework can be used to predict potential job seekers' perceptions of organizational attractiveness. Overall, results in the two studies reveal that organizations can better enhance recruitment by using a combination of social media and traditional recruitment methods to attract potential job seekers.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Study 1

Due to the war for talent, organizations that are able to attract larger pools of quality applicants and be more selective in their hiring decisions will increase the effectiveness of their overall staffing systems (Boudreau & Rynes, 1985; Murphy, 1986) and achieve competitive advantage over their rivals (Michaels et al., 2001). Research that examines the independent and dependent variable at the organization level of analysis is likely to generate better prescriptive advice (Rynes & Barber, 1990; Taylor & Collins, 2000). Therefore, to assist HR executives and other hiring managers understand how to enhance organizational attractiveness in the eyes of job seekers and gain competitive in the labor market, it is crucial that researchers identify how different management actions at the organization level can affect organizational attractiveness before job seekers.

Recruitment researchers have argued that organizational factors such as corporate advertising (Cable et al., 2000; Rynes, 1991) and firm reputation (Belt & Paolillo, 1982; Gatewood, Gowan, & Lautenschlager, 1993) are likely to affect job seekers' perceptions of an organization. However, recruitment researchers have often failed to simultaneously examine the effects of multiple factors even though organizations tend to take various actions to increase the likelihood of building applicant pools (Rynes, 1991). In this study, I examine multiple recruitment strategies that firms can undertake simultaneously to enhance organizational attraction. Although related topics of this research had previously been studied, these studies are older than fifteen years and were done with out-dated technology. This study was carried out in 2018 in the age of social media with a new generation of job seekers and new and different

research methods which had not been available before were employed, which allowed me to collect and analyse data more accurately thanks to many innovations of modern technology.

The question being answered by this research is: How can organizations leverage their brand images to increase organizational attraction and enhance the recruitment of talent? I am motivated to undertake this research and highlight how HR professionals and other hiring managers will be able to gain coherent insights into the many approaches and factors organizations can use to disseminate their brand images to prospective job seekers and increase organizational attraction on the part of many qualified job seekers. This research is also thought necessary to make firms cognizant of what constitutes organizational brand images and make them aware of the importance of positive brand images in recruitment and to provide incentives to firms to build positive brand images to enhance recruitment outcomes. By providing understanding to HR professionals of how organizational positive brand images influences job seekers' interest, this study should help organizations identify the ideal image to portray in the recruitment process. Insights from my study should help HR professionals attract and recruit from a large pool of job seekers, to ensure that their organizations are fully staffed with talent at all times to be able to pursue organizational goals and objectives. Due to predicted shortages of skilled workers in the U.S. in the next decade (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, May 2015), this research should help firms uncover how they can better leverage their brand images to enhance recruitment outcomes and forestall against the possibility of future labor shortages and gain competitive advantage over rivals in the war for talent recruitment. This empirical study provides useful information to job-seekers of what constitutes organizational brand images and how they can best evaluate organizational brand images and align themselves with the best employers to enhance their resumes for future job opportunities. Results of this research contributes to theory

by defining and measuring recruitment in the interdisciplinary perspectives of HRM, marketing, and organizational management and integrating the literature and highlighting the critical links between these bodies of studies. Findings herein integrate the recruitment and brand image literature and provide theoretical rationale as to why job seekers may react differently to the recruitment practices of different firms and provides managerial insights into how organizations can simultaneously employ multiple recruitment strategies to enhance recruitment outcomes. Finally, my study contributes to the literature by adding new knowledge to the academic literature on how organizations can utilize brand images to improve recruitment outcomes.

The rest of this paper is structured as follows: I first review prior literature and identify how recruitment is defined and discussed in context with organizational brand image. Next, I present the theoretical framework behind the proposed research; I draw on theories from HRM, marketing and organizational management to define and measure recruitment in these disciplines, before developing hypotheses based on the literature. Thereafter, I develop a conceptual model depicting and explaining how the antecedents identified by our hypotheses link to my construct. I then describe my research methods and strategies and how I evaluated and tested my four hypotheses for support. This is followed by discussion of my research results, highlighting limitations for the research and proposing avenues for future research. I then outline important theoretical and practical implications of the study, followed by my conclusion.

Literature Review

There are many definitions used to describe recruitment (e.g., Breaugh, 1992; Breaugh & Starke, 2000; Rynes, 1991; Saks, 2005; Taylor & Collins, 2000). Sims (2002) defined recruitment as the process of discovering, developing, seeking and attracting individuals to fill actual and/or anticipated job vacancies; it has three general purposes: to fill job vacancies to

acquire new skills; and to allow organizational growth. Sims (2002) further emphasized that there are several factors which influence the recruitment process namely: organizational image and reputation, attractiveness of the job, costs of recruiting, recruiting goals and recruiting philosophy. Recruitment brand image is defined as, the image or reputation of an organization as a great place to work in the minds of current employees and key stakeholders in the external market, active and passive job candidates, clients, customers and other key stakeholders (Minchington, 2004). The art and science of employer branding is therefore concerned with the attraction, engagement and retention initiatives targeted at enhancing a company's employer brand (Minchington, 2004). Recruitment brand image refers to people's perceptions of what is distinctive, central, and enduring about the organization (Dutton et al. 1994). Job seekers seem to be more attracted to organizations with a more favorable image (Gatewood, Gowan, & Lautenschlager, 1993; Highhouse et al., 1999; Turban & Greening, 1997) and to employers whose image corresponds to their own self-image (Tom, 1971). Recruitment brand image describes an organization's reputation as an employer, and its value proposition to its current or future employees, as opposed to its more general corporate brand reputation and value proposition to customers. The success or failure of an organization may be dependent on the skills and caliber of its employees, therefore it is crucial for every firm to be able to communicate its unique positive brand images to the public in order to increase organizational attraction on the part of job seekers to apply for employment and enhance recruitment outcomes.

In today's competitive environment, brand equity has been one of the core issues in most marketing research since it has been found to create value for both the firm and the customer (Aaker, 1991). Ambler and Barrow (1996) were among the first ones to bring together the domains of Human Resources Management and Brand Marketing into a single conceptual area

by coining the term employer brand. Employer branding is a specific form of managing corporate identities and it does so by creating both, within and outside the firm, an image of the organization in two forms - first, as a distinct and desirable employer (Ambler & Barrow, 1996; Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004) and second, as a good place to work (Bergeron, 2001). Employer image consists of individuals' perception of what is distinctive, central, and enduring about the organization as a place to work (Highhouse et al. 2009). The employer brand is the package of psychological, economic, and functional benefits provided by employment and identified with an employer (Thorne, 2004). The employer brand puts forth an image showing the organization as a good place to work (Sullivan, 2004). The employer brand establishes the identity of the firm as an employer; it encompasses the firm's value system, policies and behaviors toward the objectives of attracting, motivating and retaining the firm's current and potential employees (Schneider, 2003). In the face of negative perceptions of new employment reality, firms use employer branding to advertise the benefits they still offer, including training, career opportunities, personal growth and development. In general, firms have been perceived to fail to deliver some of these offerings (Newell & Dopson, 1996; Hendry & Jenkins, 1997) so employer branding campaigns can be designed to change perceptions of the firm. Employer branding differentiates a given employer from other rivals in the market and is a key indicator of the relationship status between the employee and the organization (Backhaus et.al., 2004; Fernandez-Lores, 2012; Kimpakorn and Tocquer, 2009; Love et. al., 2011). Employer brand requires an employer to identify what is unique and distinct about the organization relative to its competitors, marketing it to the target population and ensuring that job applicants have a clear idea of the employment value proposition (Bergeron, 2001). As consumers do with products and services, job seekers form beliefs about potential employers; these beliefs can provide the basis

for decisions about whether to pursue or accept employment offers (Barber, 1998). The brand image concept certainly applies to job seekers; daily, job seekers, in their job application decisions, do confront issues similar to those faced by consumers when evaluating products and services. Perceptions of a job opportunity with a firm may be related to the employer's brand image in the same way that consumers do in their evaluation of product brands and make purchasing decisions.

I identified the following factors from the review of literature as the key factors in attracting employees to an employer of choice; employer attractiveness as the degree to which an individual would feel a level of identification within a given organization (Ambler et al., 1996; Moroko and Uncles, 2009), prestigious employer (Ambler et. al., 1996), an employer that can reflect self-image (Aaker, 1997), a good working place (Woodruffe, 2006), organizational corporate social responsibility practices (Turban and Cable, 2003), organizational image (Belt and Paolilo, 1982; Gatewood, Gown and Lautenschlager, 1993; ; Knox and Freeman, 2006; Martin and Hetrick, 2006; Tom, 1971; Turban & Greening, 1997), dynamic business process, organization cares about the well-being of employees, task variety, clear opportunities for long-term career progression (Terjesen, Vinnicombe & Freeman, 2007), personality fits within a given organization brand (Byrne & Neuman, 1992; Cable & Judge, 1996), positive reputation and profitability (Cable & Turban, 2003; Pretson & O'Bannon, 1997), the type of industry or sector of operation (Burman, Schaefer & Maloney, 2008), work – life balance and compensation benefits (EBI'S branding global research), industrial health and safety programs (Watson, 2010), organizational rewards packages (Bretz, Ash & Dreher, 1989), training and development opportunities as well as global assignment opportunities (Jain, 2015), fulfilling promises and obligations towards employees (Barrow & Mosley, 2007), organizational ability to differentiate

itself from competitors (Backhaus et. al., 2004; Erlenkaemper, Hinzdrof, Priemuth and Thaden, 2003), attractiveness and comprehensiveness of the company's website (Sarabdeen, El-Rakhawy and Khan, 2011), the interaction between existing employees and the general public in the form of the word of mouth especially if the existing employees interact regularly with a social group of friends and relatives (Dowling, 2001). Another view addressed by (Kucherov & Zavyalova, 2012) looked at employer brand attributes from four perspectives; economic factors (such as: high salary, fair rewards and bonus system, and appropriate work schedule), psychological factors (such as: strong supportive corporate culture, favorable relationship among employees, teamwork, objective evaluation of the work itself), functional factors (such as: training, career growth, career development and utilization of employees' knowledge and skills), and organizational factors (such as: market leadership, scope of international operations, products brand reputation, management style and reputation of top management). Positive perceptions of an employer and the work environment should lead job seekers to view firms with strong brand image (such as an organization reputed for, organizational justice, family values, flexible work hours, excellent compensation, diversity practices or providing career advancement training) as desirable places to build powerful resumes. Employers must be aware that qualified job seekers, especially recent college graduates are usually selective in their employment choices, because they are careful not to work for a mediocre organization with negative image. Organizations interested in enhancing recruiting talented employees must be aware of the motivations of talented job seekers and build positive brand images and take the steps necessary to communicate same to job seekers to be able to increase organizational attraction on the part of many qualified job seekers.

Gatewood et al. (1993) found that subjects' ratings of corporate image were strongly related to the reported probability of applying for a position with the firm. Furthermore, firms with greater corporate social performance (i.e., firms that engage in more socially responsible activities) were perceived as more attractive employers than firms with lower corporate social performance (Bauer & Aiman-Smith, 1996; Turban & Greening, 1997). Although corporate social performance is not identical to overall reputation, such results nevertheless suggest that firms with more positive reputations will be perceived favorably as employers. Social identity theory suggests that individuals classify themselves into social categories based on group membership (such as the organization they work for), and that these social categories influence individuals' self-concepts (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Dutton, Dukerich, & Harquail, 1994; Tajfel & Turner, 1985). Perceived organizational prestige results from many information sources, including reference groups' opinions, words-of-mouth, public relations, external controlled information, and internal communication regarding outsiders' perception about the company (Smidts et al. 2001). Applicants' perceptions about the prestige of the company have symbolic benefits (Backhaus & Tikoo 2004). According to social identity theory, an individual has several self-identities depending upon his/her association with the corresponding groups and perceived organizational prestige is the social value assigned by employees to their identity with the employer (Tajfel & Turner 1986). The higher the reputation of a company, job seekers more favorably perceive the job attributes and feel a sense of pride in working for the company (Edwards 2010). Because corporate reputation reflects an organization's social status and provides information about how well the organization is perceived relative to its competitors, organizational affiliation reflects social status on members of the organization as well as potential members (i.e., job applicants) (Dutton & Dukerich, 1991). Characteristics of a company

that are central, distinctive, and enduring, such as HR programs, are key components to evaluations of the organization's status and prestige, which is a determinant of a firm's ability to recruit new talent (Cable & Turban, 2003; Gatewood, Gowon, & Lautenschlager, 1993; Rynes, 1991). Drawing on propositions from social identity theory, we expect that firms that are more environmentally friendly and engage in more social responsible activities for example, would have greater reputation and more positive reputations will make the organization appear more attractive to job seekers and simultaneously attract the interest and application intentions of more applicants than firms with less positive reputations. An organization can project a positive image to the public and market itself (such as, being environmentally friendly or engaging in socially responsibility activities or investing in community development projects) and such should make the organization more attractive to job seekers as well as engender the interest and application intentions of many job applicants. Since individuals take pleasure and pride in working for reputable organizations because they believe their associations with such organizations enhance their self-image before their families, friends and the public at large, prestigious organizations with positive images are more likely to be attracted to more job seekers.

Initial application decisions are heavily based on the general impression of the attractiveness of the organization (Rynes, 1991). Any information that job seekers view builds their impressions of the employer organization and can become cues for what it would be like to work for it (Turban *et al.*, 1998). Therefore, organizations have to make extra efforts to maintain their image before prospective applicants as an attractive employer (Bergeron, 2001). When a firm reaches a higher level of external recognition by developing an employer brand, it becomes much easier for it to attract new talent (Bouchikhi & Kimberly, 2008). Perceived organizational prestige results from many information sources, including reference groups' opinions, words-of-

mouth, public relations, external controlled information, and internal communication regarding outsiders' perception about the company (Smidts *et al.* 2001). Signaling theory suggests that because applicants do not have complete information about an organization, they interpret available information as signals about the organization's working conditions (Breugh, 1992; Rynes, 1991). It is very difficult for job seekers to acquire substantial information about many aspects of jobs prior to working in the organization (Rynes, 1991; Schwab, Rynes, & Aldag, 1987; Spence, 1974), particularly in the earliest stages of recruitment when job seekers must decide which jobs to apply for and which jobs to remove from consideration. If current and former employees and others outside the firm propagate the brand image of the organization to others, such as, excellent pay, positive organizational culture, family friendly, practicing organizational justice, valuing diversity, or providing career advancement opportunities, at the organization, such may be signals to job seekers about favorable working conditions and such may increase job seekers' interest and heighten their attraction to such organization.

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) which is an important example of employer branding, includes company's actions that benefit society beyond its own interests (McWilliams & Siegel, 2001). CSR involves a company's commitment to ethical behavior, economic development, improvement in quality of life for employees, and the local community (Moir, 2001). Engaging in CSR activities not only fulfils a company's external obligations, such as, regulatory compliance and demands of various stakeholders, but also serves other interests, such as, competitive edge and favorable stock market performance (Klein & Dawar, 2004). CSR practices mold attitudes of surrounding communities towards the company, enhance corporate reputation, and attract job seekers (Albinger & Freeman 1996; Marin and Ruiz 2007; Turban and Greening 1997). CSR thus, represent important recruitment brand image that would likely

increase organization attractiveness for job seekers and employees may perceive greater congruence between themselves and an organization that is highly involved in CSR activities. Hence job seekers may be more attracted to CSR active companies and avoid working for organizations that harm society.

Lievens and Highhouse (2003) introduced the instrumental-symbolic framework as an integrative theoretical framework in marketing for delineating the main components of organizations' image as an employer. According to this framework, images consist of both instrumental and symbolic dimensions (Lievens & Highhouse, 2003). Applied to a recruitment context, the instrumental-symbolic framework proposes that job seekers' attraction to organizations can be explained by their perceptions of both instrumental attributes and symbolic traits as key components of organizations' image as an employer (Lievens, 2007). Instrumental image dimensions describe the organization in terms of objective, concrete, and factual attributes that are inherent in the organization, such as pay and advancement opportunities (Lievens, 2007). Job seekers are attracted to these instrumental attributes on the basis of their utilitarian need to maximize benefits and minimize costs (Katz, 1960). Furthermore, the instrumental-symbolic framework postulates that job seekers are also attracted to organizations because of the symbolic meanings that they associate with them (Lievens & Highhouse, 2003). These symbolic image dimensions describe the organization in terms of subjective, abstract, and intangible traits, and are similar to what other researchers have labeled organizational personality perceptions (Slaughter, Zickar, Highhouse, & Mohr, 2004). In other words, symbolic meanings accrue from how people perceive the organization and make inferences about it rather than what they think an organization involves (Lievens et al., 2005). Job seekers are attracted to these symbolic traits, such as, prestige, or sincerity, because they enable them to maintain their self-identity, to

enhance their self-image, or to express themselves (Dutton et al. 1994; Shavitt, 1990). In other words, people do not only buy expensive goods for what they can do for them but also for what they mean to them personally and to other people. In the same way, many quality job seekers seek to work for prestigious organizations that offer instrumental attributes such as, good compensation and advancement opportunities, but also organizations with symbolic attributes such as, with good reputation, because they desire to be well compensated as well as self-respect and personal prestige. Since individuals take pride in membership with highly reputed employers, firms with quality instrumental and symbolic attributes are likely to be more attractive to job seekers. Quality job applicants are rational actors; they aspire to work for highly esteemed employers because they believe their choice of employers symbolize who they are and what they believe in and they want family, friends and close associates to respect them and hold them in high esteem. Most quality job-seekers are therefore likely to be willing to be attracted to and align themselves with organizations with positive brand images.

Gomes and Neves (2011) suggest that intention to apply for a position in an organization is an important outcome of attraction and generating intentions is a main result of the attraction stage of a recruitment process. Gomes and Neves (2011) identified three types of intentions commonly used in research on factors that determine applicant intentions, these factors are: (1) intentions to apply to a job vacancy, (2) intentions to pursue a job, and (3) intentions to accept a job. The authors focus their research on the attraction stage of the recruitment process and the first factor (intentions to apply for a job vacancy), though they argue that intentions to pursue and accept a job both represent important outcomes of a selection process (Gomes & Neves, 2011). Thus, once a firm succeeds in communicating its positive brands images to job seekers, the chances of creating organizational attraction on the part of job seekers becomes greater.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

TABLE 1 Measures Of The Construct: - RECRUITMENT BRAND IMAGE -

<p>Recruitment brand image in Human Resource Management/Psychology</p>	<p>Recruitment is the process of identifying qualified candidates and getting them to apply for jobs within an organization; the process includes developing job announcements, placing ads, defining key qualifications for applicants, and screening out unqualified applicants.</p> <p>Recruitment includes those practices and activities carried on by an organization with the primary purpose of identifying and attracting potential employees.</p> <p>Recruitment brand image is the package of functional, economic and psychological benefits provided by employment, and identified with the employing company.</p>	<p>A comprehensive and qualitative study conducted searching databases in psychology (PsycINFO, January 1967 to July 2002), using 26 recruitment-related terms (e.g., applicant attraction, applicant reactions, job choice, job applicants, organizational attractiveness, recruiter behavior, and recruiting).</p> <p>Questionnaires were completed by 135 HR professionals in Macau in 2008, about the respondents' perceptions of the importance of skill and attributes as employment criteria based on a five point Likert scale: 5 = <i>Extremely Important</i>, 4 = <i>Very Important</i>, 3 = <i>Important</i>, 2 = <i>Slightly Important</i>, and 1 = <i>Not Important</i>. Most respondents considered applicant resume as the most important criteria in initial screening and 92 % of respondents considered the initial screening as the most important stage in the recruitment and selection process.</p>	<p>Zottoli & Wanous (2000)</p> <p>Barber (1998)</p> <p>Ambler & Barrow (1996)</p> <p>Chapman et al. (2005)</p> <p>Chan & Kuok (2011)</p>
<p>Recruitment brand image in Marketing</p>	<p>Employee recruitment involves those organizational activities that (1) influence the number and/or types of applicants who apply for a position and/or (2) affect whether a job offer is accepted.</p> <p>Recruitment branding is a targeted, long-term strategy to manage the awareness and perceptions of employees, potential employees, and related stakeholders with regards to an organization.</p>	<p>A total of 105 questionnaires based on a Likert 5-point scale were completed by final year postgraduate management students enrolled in two universities in India in 2009. Respondents were asked to think of firms they would interested in working for and were asked to rate a number attributes of the organization based on how they perceive them. As high as 54% of respondents chose organizational image as the leading attribute that would influence their application decisions.</p>	<p>Breaugh (1992)</p> <p>Sullivan (2004)</p> <p>Srivastava & Bhatnagar (2010)</p>
<p>Recruitment brand image in Organizational Management</p>	<p>Recruitment includes analyzing the requirements of a job, attracting employees to that job, screening, selecting, and integrating the new employees into the organization.</p> <p>Recruitment brand image is used to describe an organization's reputation as an employer, and its value proposition to future and current employees, as opposed to its more general corporate brand reputation and value proposition to customers.</p>	<p>Participants were 38 final-year management from one college in the U.S. in 2002. Researchers developed job postings directly from real job postings online that included factors such as, management training, corporate image, salary, etc. Questionnaires were based on a 5-point Likert-scale ranging from 1 (<i>strongly disagree</i>) to 5 (<i>strongly agree</i>) to answer the questions. The factor rated highest was corporate image with 49% of respondents strongly agreeing that would form the basis of their application decisions.</p> <p>Questionnaires were completed by 133 graduating engineering students from three universities in the U.S. as part of a longitudinal study examining the impact of recruiting practices on the job choices from April 1988 to April 1989.</p>	<p>Gold (2007)</p> <p>Backhaus et al. (2004)</p> <p>Cable & Turban (2003)</p> <p>Collins & Stevens (2002)</p>

The recruitment of competent, reliable, and motivated employees has been the cornerstone of any successful organization. In this paper and in our research, I theorize that a firm's reputation is analogous to a brand, therefore we utilize the brand-image perspective from marketing to extend the recruitment literature.

Recruitment Brand Image

Recruitment brand image is examined in terms of how it is defined and measured from the interdisciplinary perspectives of human resource management, marketing, and organizational management. Review of previous research on recruitment in these interdisciplinary disciplines provide some interesting and differing insights. As shown in Table 1 above, various related definitions of recruitment and recruitment brand image are provided by these interdisciplinary bodies of studies.

Recruitment Brand Image In Human Resource Administration

As shown in Table 1, recruitment is defined and measured in human resource administration. Recruitment brand image is defined in HRM, as the package of functional, economic and psychological benefits provided by employment, and identified with the employing company (Ambler & Barrow 2005). Recruitment is the process of identifying qualified candidates and getting them to apply for jobs within an organization; the process includes developing job announcements, placing ads, defining key qualifications for applicants, and screening out unqualified applicants" (Zottoli & Wanous 2000). As shown in Table 1, in a research conducted in Macau in 2008, questionnaires were completed by 135 HR professionals. The questionnaires consisted of 16 questions about the respondents' perceptions of the importance of skill and attributes as employment criteria. Questionnaire was based on a five-point Likert scale: 5 = *Extremely Important*, 4 = *Very Important*, 3 = *Important*, 2 = *Slightly*

Important, and *1 = Not Important*. The results showed that the six top recruitment criteria considered most important in order of importance from highest to lowest by the HR professionals were: 1. Resume; 2. Reference; 3. Cover letter; 4. College/University attended; 5. GPA, major; 6. GPA, overall. The results showed that most respondents consider the resume as the most important criteria in initial screening. References were more important than the applicant's academic background. The cover letter was ranked third. The reputation of the institution from where the applicant graduated was less important than the resume itself, while the overall GPA was the least important. In the study, 92% of the 135 HR professionals consider the initial interview as the most important stage in the recruitment process. Since recruitment of talent is viewed as a primary competitive enabler of an organization, it is imperative for HR departments in every organization to adopt appropriate recruitment strategies that can effectively communicate organizations' brand images to many job seekers to increase their attraction to the organization.

Signaling theory (Rynes, 1991; Spence, 1973) is commonly used to explain how applicant attraction to a recruiting organization may, in part, can be influenced by information, or signals, about an organization's characteristics revealed during recruitment activities. It is recognized that applicants construe many recruitment-related activities and information as signals of unknown organizational characteristics (Collins and Stevens, 2002; Turban and Cable, 2003), and recruiter characteristics and/or behavior (Rynes, 1991; Turban et al., 1998). Research by Highhouse et al. (2005) suggests that the signaling process is not only dependent upon the signals sent via the recruitment activity, but is also dependent upon the inferences drawn by the applicants receiving those signals, "prospective job seekers draw inferences about instrumental and symbolic features from signals in the marketplace (word-of-mouth, corporate rankings,

experience as consumers, etc.)” (Highhouse et al., 2005, p.18). Based on the psychology literature, signals from recruiting organizations may be conceptualized from individual-level and organizational-level perspectives and may play significant roles in organizational attraction as well as job seekers’ application intentions. Job seekers may receive positive signals of a firm, such as, organizational culture, from narrations by customers, current employees, or from recruiters during initial interviews, and such may form the basis of job applicants’ decisions. Therefore, literature from signaling theory may provide insights into the cognitive and/or affective processes that may not only influence the type of messages that job seekers perceive from recruitment activities as signals of the organization’s characteristics, but may also influence how applicants come to perceive those signals to reflect positively and/or negatively upon the firm as an ideal employer; signaling theory may therefore an important role in organizational attraction.

Recruitment Brand Image In Marketing

As shown in Table 1 above, Breugh (1992) states “employee recruitment involves those organizational activities that (1) influence the number and/or types of applicants who apply for a position and/or (2) affect whether a job offer is accepted. With regards to the definition of recruitment branding image in marketing, Sullivan (2004) opines that recruitment branding is a targeted, long-term strategy to manage the awareness and perceptions of employees, potential employees, and related stakeholders with regards to an organization. As shown in Table 1, in a 2009 study conducted in India, a total of 105 questionnaires based on a Likert 5-point scale were completed by final year postgraduate management students enrolled in two universities. Respondents were asked to think of firms they would be interested in working for and were asked to rate a number attributes of the organization based on how they perceive them. As high

as 54% of respondents chose organizational image as the leading attribute that would influence their application decisions. Once activated as part of a decision set, consumers use brand images to make comparisons and discriminate among similar products or services (Keller, 1993). Brand images reflect associations in memory based on exposure to advertising. Brand image, which forms the basis for consumers' decisions, resides in the memories of individual consumers and forms a major basis of job seekers search decisions. Therefore, the greater firms can expose their brand image to many job seekers through advertising and other marketing activities, the greater the number of potential of enhancing organizational attraction on the part of many job applicants to enhance recruitment outcomes.

Recruitment Brand Image In Organizational Management

Finally, as shown in Table 1, recruitment and recruitment brand image are defined and measured in organizational management. Recruitment includes analyzing the requirements of a job, attracting employees to that job, screening, selecting, and integrating the new employees into the organization Gold, (2007). According, to Backhaus et al. (2004), recruitment brand image is used to describe an organization's reputation as an employer, and its value proposition to future and current employees, as opposed to its more general corporate brand reputation and value proposition to customers. In a 2002 study in the U.S., researchers developed job postings from real job postings on the internet, that included factors such as, management training, corporate image, salary, etc. Questionnaires were based on a 5-point Likert-scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*) to answer the questions. The factor rated highest was corporate image with 49% of respondents strongly agreeing that would form the basis of their job application decisions. This shows that organizational positive attributes, such as corporate image, can be major determining factors in job seekers application decisions.

Therefore, organizations seeking to increase organizational attraction and ultimately enhance recruitment outcomes would be better positioned to achieve so if efforts are taken to disseminate information about organizational brand images to many job seekers.

Effects Of Sponsorship Activities On Recruitment Outcomes

Following the trends in product marketing, many corporations have begun expanding their recruitment efforts to include sponsorships of campus activities to build awareness of employment opportunities (Poe, 2000). For example, companies sponsor scholarships, donate money for naming rights, and so forth to create awareness and to communicate general, positive signals without requiring active search on the part of job-seekers (Poe, 2000). Marketing researchers have found that sponsorship is effective because consumers develop positive, general feelings towards the sponsoring company based on their experiences during the sponsored event or activity (Johar & Pham, 1999). Collins and Stevens (2002) found that recruitment sponsorship activities positively affected application decisions by increasing student job seekers' general attitudes toward an organization. As with advertising and trade promotion, corporate sponsorship activities have been used primarily to increase consumers' brand awareness (Aaker, 1996). Corporate sponsorships can improve both brand and corporate images by fostering positive effects among individuals who attend sponsored events or become aware of the sponsorship (Johar & Pham, 1999). For example, several telecommunications firms have donated money for scholarships and equipment to the Electrical and Computer Engineering Department at Virginia Tech (Behr, 1997), whereas other companies have sponsored tailgate parties at campus sporting events or concerts (Munk, 1998). Firms seeking to enhance recruitment outcomes can actively sponsor activities to disseminate brand images to job seekers. When job seekers are provided with positive images of an organization at sponsorship events, they quite

invariably begin to perceive that the organization indeed has some positive brand and they begin to envision the organization as a desirable employer. I therefore expect organizational sponsorship activities to positively influence organizational attraction on the part of many job seekers through organizational brand image perceptions. Job applicants are likely to have positive perceptions of organizational brand image through sponsorship activities, which would in turn increase organizational attraction on the part of many job seekers. Thus, I predict job applicants' perception of brand images will mediate the effect of organizational sponsorship activities on job seekers' organizational attraction. These discussions lead to my first hypothesis:

- **HYPOTHESIS 1:** The extent of a company's sponsorship practices will positively influence job seekers' organizational attraction through positive organizational brand image perceptions.

Effects Of Word-Of Mouth Endorsements On Recruitment Outcome

Word-of-mouth endorsements or conversations (e.g., current or former employees or family members of employers sharing details of their experience working for the organization) provide job-seekers with detailed insights on the company, jobs, career paths, and so forth (Collins, 2007). Word-of-mouth endorsements have a great impact on a consumer's beliefs about a product because it provides information and opinions that help to distinguish among brands (Keller, 1993). Because word-of-mouth endorsements are source of information that do not seem to come directly from the company itself and they are more credible by consumers (Cobb-Walgreen *et al.* 1995). Similarly, many organizations build relationships with faculty and other key university contacts in hopes that these contacts will pass on information and positive opinions about their company to students who are beginning their job search (Poe, 2000). Word-of-mouth endorsements typically have the greatest impact on consumer decisions when they are

positive and clearly distinguish among brands (Keller, 1993). An organization can increase word-of-mouth endorsements of its brand image to job seekers by actively encouraging current employees to do just that and by promising some monetary reward to employees whose word-of-mouth endorsements lead to the recruitment of quality talent. Since referrals provide effective recruitment outcomes, an organization may establish an employee referral program to enhance recruitment efforts. I believe if an organization establishes employee referral programs, and encourages word-of-mouth endorsements, a large pool of potential job-seekers are likely to have positive perceptions of the organization, resulting in increased organizational attraction on the part of many job seekers, and such can ultimately result in improved recruitment outcomes. For example, if word-of-mouth referrals spread word of the existence of positive images at an organization such as, career development training, innovative initiatives, organizational justice, employee empowerment, and employee engagement in decisions making, these positive images can provide powerful incentives to and have a mediated positive effect on organizational attraction on the part of many job applicants. My foregoing discussions give rise to the following hypothesis:

- **HYPOTHESIS 2:** Word of mouth endorsements will be positively associated with job seekers' organizational attraction through positive organizational brand image perceptions.

Effects Of Job Fair Activities On Recruitment Outcomes

Companies can also use organizational representatives to communicate directly with job seekers at events such as job fairs, information sessions, or other situations in which recruiters pass along detailed information and allow job seekers to probe for further details about job opportunities (Collins & Han, 2004). Trade shows are an important component of the marketing

mix for many industrial products (e.g. Kerin & Cron, 1987; Gopalakrishna & Williams, 1992; Dekimpe, Francois, Gopalakrishna, Lilien, & Van den Bulte, 1997). Because, trade shows blend elements of direct selling and advertising, they convey both personal and impersonal communication to satisfy potential buyers' needs for information in the buying process (Dekimpe *et al.* 1997). Job fairs, with the similar function of trade shows, continue to be an effective method among employers competing for college candidates (Roehling & Cavanaugh, 2000). Since job fairs provide face-to-face interactions and promote both personal and impersonal communications, I argue that job fairs will promote job applicants' awareness of positive perceptions in organizations who organize them, and these would in turn increase organizational attraction on the part of many job seekers. Use of organizational representatives at job fair events can therefore be effective to disseminate useful information about organizational positive brand images to potential job-seekers and increase job seekers' attraction to the organization. The foregoing discussions lead to the following hypothesis:

- **HYPOTHESIS 3:** The extent of an organization's practices in job fairs will be positively associated with job seekers' organizational attraction through positive organizational brand image perceptions.

Effects Of Corporate Advertising On Recruitment Outcomes

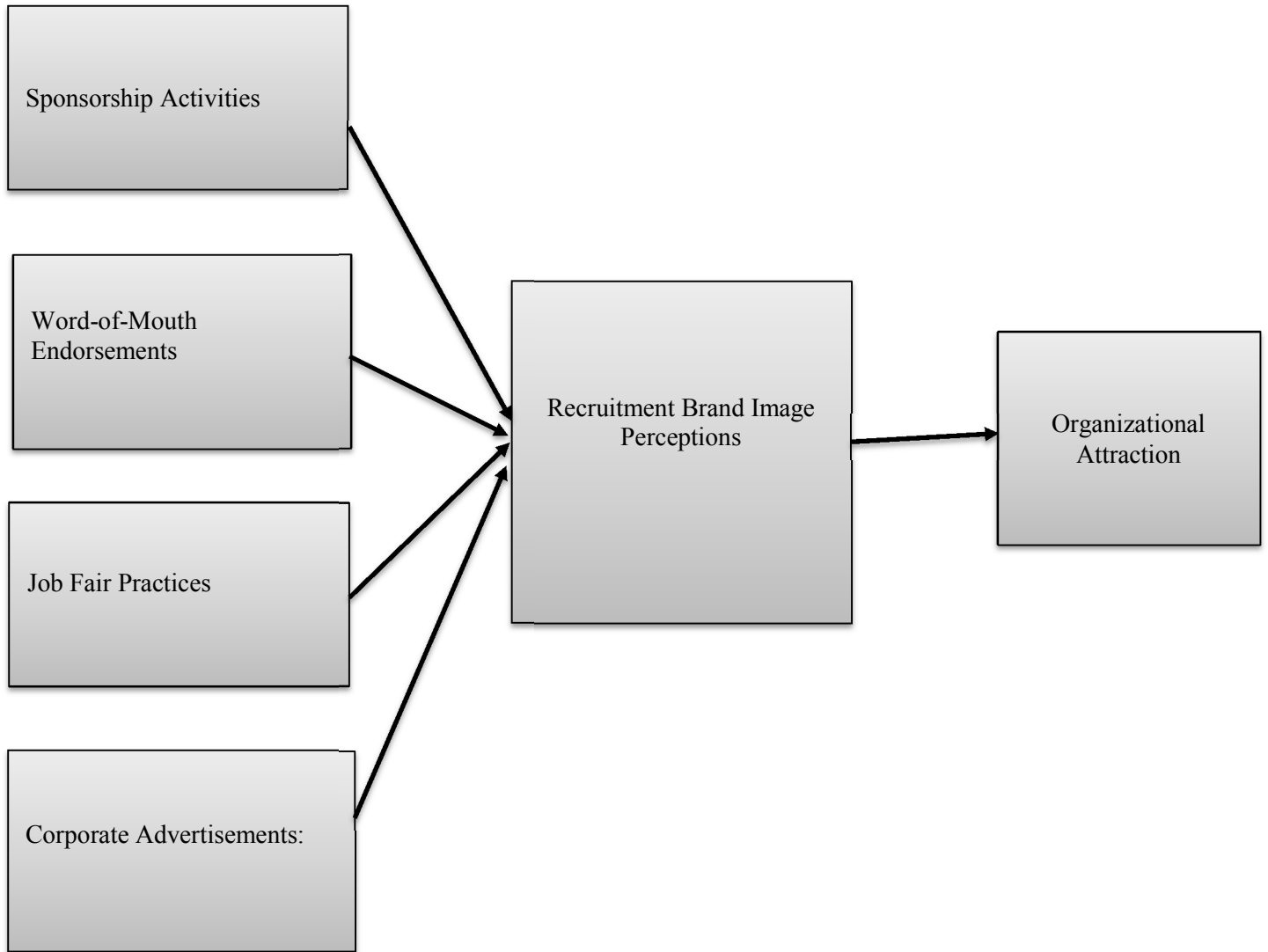
Corporate brand visibility, defined as the extent to which companies have created awareness of their name, symbol, or logo through marketing and advertising, plays an important role in influencing consumer purchase intentions and behaviors (Aaker, 1991; Keller, 1993). Corporate brand visibility may also have spillover effects on job seekers (Barber, 1998). Corporate advertising has been defined as paid messages communicated through different media outlets to influence consumers' perceptions of the company and its products and their intention

to purchase the products (Aaker, 1996). Job seekers are more likely to be familiar with a company as an employer if that company has high visibility through well-known products or services (Barber, 1998). Job seekers may also begin to develop affective beliefs about the company as an employer through exposure to the company's product advertising (Cable, Aiman-Smith, Mulvey, & Edwards, 2000) or through direct exposure to the company's products or services (Barber, 1998). Specifically, product awareness may act to signal the quality and viability of the company as an employer, increasing job seekers' perceptions of employer reputation (Cable & Turban, 2001; Collins & Han, 2004). One strategy that companies can follow to influence job seekers' application behaviors is implementation of low-information recruitment practices such as general recruitment advertisements (e.g., recruiting posters, banner ads) that provide general positive cues and signals regarding the company as an employer (Collins & Han, 2004). Following the arguments in marketing (e.g., MacInnis & Jaworski, 1989; Petty & Cacioppo, 1986), job seekers will develop employer familiarity and positive beliefs regarding employer reputation through mere exposure to the positive cues contained in the photos, slogans, and positive associations contained in corporate advertising practices. Organizations spend a great deal of money on advertising to build strong, favorable images in the minds of consumers, and research has shown that these investments are significantly and positively related both to perceptions of the companies and their products (Cobb-Walgren et al. 1995) and to their sales and market shares (Sethuraman & Tellis, 1991). Cable and Turban (2001) have argued that job seekers' intentions to pursue a job opportunity at an organization may be similarly influenced if the firm creates a strong employment brand. Indeed, there is evidence to suggest that job seekers begin to develop awareness of the company as an employer through exposure to the company's advertising or general image or reputation (Gatewood et al. 1993). Awareness that is created through

advertising signals the quality of a brand and individuals tend to ascribe positive characteristics to brands to which they have had greater exposure (Aaker, 1996). Corporate advertising may affect job seekers by signaling the quality of the employment opportunities, particularly during the first phase of recruitment, when job seekers are likely to have little knowledge of a company as an employer (Cable & Turban, 2001). Organizations can use corporate advertising to create corporate brand image visibility to increase organizational attractiveness on the part of job seekers by increasing their awareness of the company as an employer and building surface brand associations of the company as an employer. If through corporate advertising an organization creates beliefs and positive perceptions in the minds of job seekers that the organization would be a good fit and an ideal employer, such would represent the creation of strong employment brands, and such should enhance organizational attraction on the part of many job seekers. I therefore argue that when job seekers become familiar with positive images of a firm through corporate advertisement, these individuals are likely to be more attracted to familiar organizations than with unfamiliar firms. Just as consumers may associate themselves with quality product brands, such as, luxury cars, to improve their self-esteem, quality job-seekers may equally endeavor to associate themselves with employers with positive brand images to improve their self-esteem and standing in society. These discussions lead me to the following hypothesis:

- **HYPOTHESIS 4:** Corporate advertisements will be positively associated with positive organizational brand image perceptions, which will turn result in job seekers' organizational attraction.

FIGURE 1: CONCEPTUAL MODEL - ANTECEDENTS AND CONSEQUENCE OF RECRUITMENT BRAND IMAGE -



The conceptual model in Figure 1 above, is based on the literature and the four hypotheses above. Based on the literature, and as depicted in Figure 1, organizations that engage in sponsorship activities, encourage word-of-mouth referrals, engage in job fair activities, and

use corporate advertisements, are likely to increase organizational brand image perceptions on the part of job seekers, thereby resulting in an increase organizational attraction on the part of many job seekers and improving recruitment outcomes. As depicted in Figure 1, job applicants are likely to react positively (with increased brand image perceptions) to the simultaneously use of multiple recruitment strategies and this should increase job seekers' attraction to the organization.

CHAPTER 3

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

My study was intended to test for support of my four hypotheses. I conducted an empirical study with a new generation of job seekers in the age of social media to test for support of the hypotheses. I investigated if organizational recruitment strategies of, sponsorships, word-of-mouth endorsements, job fairs activities and corporate advertisements, do result in positive organizational brand image perceptions and enhance job seekers' attraction to organizations.

Study Design And Methods

Participants were recruited from Amazon Mechanical Tuck (MTurk). To be eligible to participate, respondents were required to have recently graduated from college and currently engaged in the job search process or were college students actively seeking employment. In total, 325 individuals signed up to participate in this research. I was interested specifically in testing the effects of employer branding with a sample of job seekers, so I focused my research study on job seekers who are college graduates or college students in 2018, because I believed their attitudes and views on employer branding would closely resemble the real-world attitudes of today's job seekers.

To ensure rigor I first pre-tested our questionnaire by conducting a pilot study by handing the questionnaire to twelve college job seekers; eight were filled out and returned to me and the results of the pilot study guided me to some weaknesses with some of our questions which led to appropriate modification of the survey questionnaire.

The survey asked respondents to list one company they were or would be interested in interviewing with. The following four recruitment strategies were listed in the survey: sponsorships, word-of-mouth endorsements, job fair activities and corporate advertising.

Respondents were asked to describe if they are or were aware that the company they listed had used any of the four recruitment strategies above. This means, respondents were asked if they had been exposed to any of these four recruitment methods by the company they listed, as well as their attitudes about each employer, and perceptions of opening attributes. The survey also collected data for one mediating variable (recruitment brand image perceptions) and one outcome variable (organizational attraction).

The first six questions in the survey asked participants about their gender, ethnicity, name of college they attended, graduation year, major and the name of the top company they were interested in interviewing with while in college. The remaining questions in the survey were assessed on a 5-point Likert scale, where higher values reflected stronger agreement (a 1-5 scale where, 1 = Strongly disagree and 5 = Strongly Agree). A full listing of the study questionnaire is presented in Appendix 1. Listed below are my seven variables for this research study:

Study Results

- Sponsorships: As shown in appendix 1, sponsorship activities as a recruitment strategy was measured using answers to three questions, adopted from Collins & Stevens (2002). The coefficient alpha reliability of the variable sponsorship as shown in the footnote of table 3, was .88. (A listing of the questionnaire containing questions for all six variables is presented in Appendix 1 and the coefficient alpha reliability for all variables are shown in the footnote of Table 2).
- Word of Mouth Endorsements: I formulated three questions whose answers were used to measure the recruitment strategy and variable word-of-mouth endorsements. These questions were adopted from Collins & Stevens, (2002). The coefficient alpha reliability for this variable was .78.

- Job Fair Practices: I used answers to three questions adopted from Collins & Han (2004) to measure this variable. The coefficient alpha reliability of this variable was .93.
- Corporate Advertisements: Answers to three questions adopted from Collins & Han (2004) were utilized to measure the dependent variable corporate advertisement. The coefficient alpha reliability of this variable was .78.
- Recruitment Brand Image Perceptions: I measured this variable with eight variables adopted from Collins & Stevens (2002). The alpha reliability of this variable was .78. Below are the eight organizational attributes I used in the survey to measure job seekers' impression of the brand image attributes of the company listed by the millennial job seekers: Company reputation; Job security; Training and development programs; Opportunity for rapid advancement; Flexible work schedule; Diversity policies; Valuing employee feedback; and Good salary and fringe benefits. The questions used to measure each attribute below are found in appendix 1.
- Organizational Attraction: This outcome variable was measured with three questions adopted from Aiman-Smith et al. (2001). The alpha reliability of this variable was .87.

Because recent college graduates and college students are unlikely to have vast knowledge of numerous employer attributes prior to applying for jobs with organizations, I reviewed the practitioner and research literature and identified the following eight organizational brand image attributes believed to be consistent with the four recruitment strategies referred to above for this study: company reputation, job security, training and development programs, opportunity for rapid advancement, flexible work schedule, diversity policies, valuing employee feedback, and good salary and fringe benefits. To measure job seekers' perceptions and attitudes towards the firm listed, there were questions in the survey assessing respondents' impression of

the company they listed. Respondents were asked which of the brand image attributes listed above they associate with the company they listed. A 5-point Likert scale questionnaire asked respondents how strongly they agree (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree) that the organization they identify and list possessed any of the eight attributes or brand image above. Below are the eight organizational attributes I used in the survey to measure job seekers' impression of the brand image attributes of the company listed by the millennial job seekers: Company reputation; Job security; Training and development programs; Opportunity for rapid advancement; Flexible work schedule; Diversity policies; Valuing employee feedback; and Good salary and fringe benefits. The questions used to measure each attribute are found in appendix 1.

I carried out this study by posting a survey questionnaire on Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk) to collect data. A total of 335 participants responded to our survey, out of this number only 189 participants responded to every question and only these survey answers (n = 189) were valid and could be used for the research. Each survey participant on Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk) was compensated with \$3.50 for participating.

- I performed multiple regression with mediation (Baron & Kenny, 1986) to test and analyze the hypotheses.
- I performed principal factors extraction using Promax rotation to confirm the 7-factor structure we hypothesized in the research. Cronbach alpha was used to test the internal consistency among items on each factor. Guided by the results, I formed composite scores by finding the average among items that loaded reliably on each factor yielded by the factor analysis. I performed multiple regression with mediation (Baron & Kenny, 1986) to test Hypotheses 1 through 4.

Respondents were predominately male (61% or 118 respondents), female (29% or 97 respondents); approximately 10% of respondents did not indicate their gender. With regards to ethnicity, Caucasian made up (56% or 109 respondents), followed by Asians (27% or 53 respondents), then by African-Americans (11% or 22 respondents), other ethnicity accounted for 2% (or 4 respondents), while approximately 4% of respondents declined to indicate their ethnicity. With respect to age brackets, respondents between the ages of 18 and 33 (made up 71%), over 33 years of age (29%), actively looking for employment (71%), and had graduated from college or expect to graduate from college between 2011 and 2020 (87%). Survey participants were not actively looking for employment were not allowed to complete the survey due to the presence of an elimination question in the outset. and participants who did not complete the survey were removed from the data set.

Mahalanobis (1936) distance score was used to identify 21 multivariate outliers, which indicated unusual combinations of all of the variables in the study. For example, if one considers the variables weight and height. Mahalanobis distance would be used to find unusual combinations of height and weight measures. A female participant may have a small Mahalanobis distance score (and thus would not be an outlier) if she was 6 feet tall and weighed 185 pounds, which is common. But in the rare event that one has another female participant who is 4 feet tall woman and weighed the same amount, she would have a much larger Mahalanobis distance score and thus be considered a statistical outlier. Twenty-one of the participants in this study (in unusual combinations of all of the variables) had significantly high Mahalanobis scores because they yielded predicted outcomes from the multivariate regression models that deviated significantly from the norm and thus were removed from subsequent analyses as outliers. I realize that decisions and methods of dealing with outliers are subjective in

nature and can be controversial, so I thoroughly investigated the nature of each outlier before deciding to remove all 21 from the data set. Going back to each participants' responses to the survey in Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk) to investigate each participant's completion time of the 35 survey questions, I observed that the average completion time of each of the 21 outliers was six minutes, while the average completion time of the remaining 168 participants of the survey was twelve minutes. I theorized that an average completion time of six minutes is hardly enough time to read through all 35 questions thoroughly and reasonably respond to each. I believe that the most likely causes for the outliers were participants' error, haste and lack of concentration and understanding. I therefore excluded all 21 outliers, because I believe it would be dishonest to keep the outliers in the dataset for conclusions from the dataset would in fact be incorrect if I included the outliers.

I performed principal factors extraction with Promax rotation using SPSS on 27 items from the survey for a sample of 168 valid participants. The analysis was used to determine whether the following 6 factors emerged as I hypothesized: sponsorships, word-of-mouth endorsements, job fair activities, corporate advertisements, recruitment brand image perceptions, and organizational attraction. As the factor loadings in Table 2 above show, 6 factors emerged.

The items in Table 2 (below) are ordered and grouped by size of the factor loading to facilitate interpretation. Loadings under .45 are replaced by zeroes. Interpretative labels are denoted for each factor as well as the Cronbach alpha (α) for each factor is found in the footnote in Table 2. As shown, the Cronbach alpha for each of our six variables is significantly over .70, which means, the measure of the scales of all my variables are quite reliable.

Table 2

	Factor Analysis (Study 1)						
	COMPONENT						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Overall, I have a very favorable impression of this company.	0.89	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
I believe this company is an ideal place to work.	0.81	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
I know other people who have said positive things about this company and have favorable impressions about this company.	0.81	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
I applied for or intend to apply for employment with this company.	0.77	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
This company is my first employer of choice.	0.74	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
This company holds job fair events at colleges or universities to attract new applicants.	0.00	0.94	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
At least on one occasion, I have read about or been informed by friends of job fair activities organized by this company.	0.00	0.92	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
This company has held or taken part in at least one job fair event at a college or university in the past twelve months.	0.00	0.91	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
This company sponsors events such as, concerts, sports, events or speakers, at one or more universities.	0.00	0.00	0.91	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
This company sponsors scholarships at one or more universities.	0.00	0.00	0.91	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
This company donated money for scholarships, and/or donated money for naming rights at a college or university.	0.00	0.00	0.85	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
This company's recruiting brochures caught my attention.	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.88	0.00	0.00	0.00
I have seen or heard advertising for job opportunities at this company on the radio, on televisions, on flyers or in the school newspaper.	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.80	0.00	0.00	0.00
This company's recruitment brochures or Web site gave me detailed information about their job opportunities.	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.80	0.00	0.00	0.00

This company has a good reputation for being very environmentally responsible.	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.88	0.00	0.00
This company contributes a lot to the improvement of the local community.	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.79	0.00	0.00
The management of this company is among the best in terms of how the company treats customers and its employees.	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.77	0.00	0.00
This company has a good relationship with the career services office of my college or university.	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.82	0.00
Students who have gone to work for this organization have had good experiences.	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.81	0.00
A lot of alumni from my college or university have gone to work for this company.	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.79	0.00
I have friends or know other people who have informed me that they have applied for or are applying for employment with this company.	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.85

Component 1= Organizational Attraction ($\alpha = .87$); Component 2= Job Fair Practices ($\alpha = .93$); Component 3= Sponsorship Activities ($\alpha = .88$); Component 4= Corporate Advertisements ($\alpha = .78$); Component 5= Recruitment Brand Image ($\alpha = .78$); Component 6= Word-of-Mouth Endorsements ($\alpha = .78$); Component 7: Single Intent Question (dropped from analysis) ($\alpha = .NA$)

- **Hypothesis #1:** The extent of a company’s sponsorship practices will positively influence job seekers’ organizational attraction through positive organizational brand image perceptions.

In order to test this hypothesis, I conducted a multiple regression analysis with sponsorship practices as the independent variable (IV), organizational brand images as the proposed mediator and organizational attraction as the dependent variable (DV). Following Baron and Kenny (1986), I examined the extent to which (a) the IV (sponsorship practices) and the hypothesized mediator (organizational brand images) were significantly correlated; (b) the hypothesized mediator (organizational brand images) and the DV (organizational attraction) were significantly correlated; and (c) the inclusion of the mediator as an additional predictor in the

regression of the DV on the IV resulted in a decrease in the significance of the correlation between the independent variable (IV) and the dependent variable (DV).

As shown in Table 3 below, I found that sponsorship practices and organizational brand images were significantly and positively correlated, $r(167) = .48, p < .01$, as expected; organizational brand images and organizational attraction were significantly correlated, $r(167) = .61, p < .01$.

Table 3 Correlations Among Variables (Study 1)

	Word-Of-Mouth Endorsements	Job Fair Activities	Corporate Advertisements	Recruitment Brand Image	Organizational Attraction
Sponsorships	.56**	.46**	.46**	.48**	.20**
Word-Of-Mouth Endorsements		.58**	.52**	.48**	.33**
Job Fair Activities			.60**	.49**	.23**
Corporate Advertisements				.51**	.24**
Recruitment Brand Image					.61**

* denotes $p < .05$, ** denotes $p < .01$, *** denotes $p < .001$

Table 4

Multiple Regression: Mediating Effects of Organizational Brand Images on the Relationship between Sponsorship Practices and Organizational Attraction

	B	S.E.	<i>t</i>	Sig.	95% C.I. for EXP(B) Lower Upper	
Step 1						
Sponsorship Practices	.16	.05	3.00	.003	.05	.26
Constant	3.77	.19	19.48	.000		
<i>F</i>	9.01**					
<i>R</i> ²	0.05					
Step 2						
Sponsorship Practices	-.05	.06	-1.33	.182	-.15	.04
Organizational Brand Images	.57	.06	9.48	.000	.46	.70
Constant	2.28	.22	10.30	.000		
<i>F</i>	51.82***					
<i>R</i> ²	0.39					
ΔF	89.79***					

*denotes $p < .05$, ** denotes $p < .01$, *** denotes $p < .001$

As shown in Table 4 above, sponsorship practices alone accounted for about 5% ($R^2 = .052$) of the variance in organizational attraction, which was a statistically significant amount of shared variance, $F(1,166) = 9.02, p < .01$. Including organizational brand images as an additional predictor increased the amount of shared variance to 39% ($R^2 = .386$), and this increment was statistically significant, $\Delta F(1,165) = 89.79$, positive regression coefficient ($b = .57, p < .001$).

Table 4 shows that, the inclusion of organizational brand images as an additional predictor in the regression of sponsorships practices on organizational attraction resulted in a decrease (as per Baron and Kenny) in the significance of the correlation between sponsorships practices and organizational attraction from $p < .003$ to $p > .182$. This result supports Hypothesis 1 as it shows

that organizational brand images fully mediates the relationship between sponsorships practices and organizational attraction.

- **Hypothesis #2:** Word of mouth endorsements will be positively associated with job seekers' organizational attraction through positive organizational brand image perceptions.

In order to test this hypothesis, I conducted a multiple regression with word-of-mouth endorsements as the independent variable (IV), organizational brand images as the proposed mediator and organizational attraction as the dependent variable (DV). Following Baron and Kenny (1986), I examined the extent to which (a) the IV (word-of-mouth endorsements) and the hypothesized mediator (organizational brand images) were significantly correlated; (b) the hypothesized mediator (organizational brand images) and the DV (organizational attraction) were significantly correlated; and (c) the inclusion of the mediator as an additional predictor in the regression of the DV on the IV resulted in a decrease in the significance of the correlation between the IV and DV.

As shown in Table 3, word-of-mouth endorsements and organizational brand images were significantly and positively correlated, $r(167) = .48, p < .01$, as expected; organizational brand images and organizational attraction were significantly correlated, $r(167) = .61, p < .01$, as expected. As shown in Table 5 below, word-of-mouth endorsements alone accounted for about 16% ($R^2 = .16$) of the variance in organizational attraction, which was a statistically significant amount of shared variance, $F(1,166) = 32.11, p < .001$. Including organizational brand images as an additional predictor increased the amount of shared variance to 39% ($R^2 = .394$), and this increment was statistically significant, $\Delta F(1,165) = 62.10$, positive regression coefficient (b) = .48, $p < .001$.

Table 5 shows that, the inclusion of organizational brand images as an additional predictor in the regression of word-of-mouth endorsements on organizational attraction resulted in an elimination of the significance of the correlation between word-of-mouth practices and organizational attraction from $p < .001$ to $p > .05$. Thus, Hypothesis 2 is supported, such that the results show a full mediation of organizational brand images on the relationship between word-of-mouth endorsements and organizational attraction.

Table 5

Multiple Regression: Mediating Effects of Organizational Brand Images on the Relationship Between Word-of-Mouth Practices and Organizational Attraction

	B	S.E.	<i>t</i>	Sig.	95% C.I. for EXP(B)	
					Lower	Upper
Step 1						
Word-of Mouth	.35	.06	5.67	.000	.23	.47
Constant	2.93	.25	11.58	.000		
<i>F</i>	32.11**					
<i>R</i> ²	0.16					
Step 2						
Word-of-Mouth	.12	.05	2.00	.050	.00	.24
Organizational Brand Images	.48	.06	7.94	.000	.36	.60
Constant	1.95	.25	7.88	.000		
<i>F</i>	53.61***					
<i>R</i> ²	0.39					
ΔF	63.10***					

*denotes $p < .05$, ** denotes $p < .01$, *** denotes $p < .001$

- **Hypothesis #3:** The extent of an organization's practices in job fairs will be positively associated with job seekers' organizational attraction through positive organizational brand image perceptions.

In order to test this hypothesis, I conducted multiple regression with organization's practices with job fairs as the independent variable (IV), organizational brand images as the proposed mediator and organizational attraction as the dependent variable (DV). Following Baron and Kenny (1986), I examined the extent to which (a) the IV (organization's practices with job fairs) and the hypothesized mediator (organizational brand images) were significantly correlated; (b) the hypothesized mediator (organizational brand images) and the DV (organizational attraction) were significantly correlated; and (c) the inclusion of the mediator as an additional predictor in the regression of the DV on the IV resulted in a decrease in the significance of the correlation between the IV and DV.

As shown in Table 3, I found that organization's practices with job fairs and organizational brand images were significantly and positively correlated, $r(167) = .49, p < .01$, as expected; organizational brand images and organizational attraction were significantly correlated, $r(167) = .61, p < .01$, as expected. As shown in Table 6, job fairs activities alone accounted for about 10% ($R^2 = .10$) of the variance in organizational attraction, which was a statistically significant amount of shared variance, $F(1,166) = 19.11, p < .001$. Including organizational brand images as an additional predictor increased the amount of shared variance to 38% ($R^2 = .380$), and this increment was statistically significant, $\Delta F(1,165) = 73.53$, positive regression coefficient (b) = .53, $p < .001$.

Table 6 below shows that, the inclusion of organizational brand images as an additional predictor in the regression of organization's practices with job fairs on organizational attraction resulted in an elimination of the significance of the correlation between organization's practices with job fairs and organizational attraction from $p < .001$ to $p > .69$. Thus, Hypothesis 3 is

supported, such that the results show a full mediation of organizational brand images on the relationship between organization's practices with job fairs and organizational attraction.

Table 6

Multiple Regression: Mediating Effects of Organizational Brand Images on the Relationship Between Job Fair Practices and Organizational Attraction

	B	S.E.	<i>t</i>	Sig.	95% C.I. for EXP(B)	
					Lower	Upper
Step 1						
Job Fair	.20	.05	4.37	.000	.11	.29
Constant	3.58	.18	20.04	.000		
<i>F</i>	19.11***					
<i>R</i> ²	0.10					
Step 2						
Job Fair	.01	.05	0.36	.692	.08	.09
Organizational Brand Images	.53	.06	8.58	.000	.40	.65
Constant	2.19	.22	9.94	.000		
<i>F</i>	50.49***					
<i>R</i> ²	0.38					
ΔF	73.53***					

*denotes $p < .05$, ** denotes $p < .01$, *** denotes $p < .001$

- **Hypothesis #4:** Corporate advertisements will be positively associated with positive organizational brand image perceptions, which will turn result in job seekers' organizational attraction.

In order to test this hypothesis, I conducted multiple regression with corporate advertisements as the independent variable (IV), organizational brand images as the proposed mediator and organizational attraction as the dependent variable (DV). Following Baron and Kenny (1986), I examined the extent to which (a) the IV (corporate advertisements) and the

hypothesized mediator (organizational brand images) were significantly correlated; (b) the hypothesized mediator organizational brand images) and the DV (organizational attraction) were significantly correlated; and (c) the inclusion of the mediator as an additional predictor in the regression of the DV on the IV resulted in a decrease in the significance of the correlation between the IV and DV.

As shown in Table 3, I found that corporate advertisements and organizational brand images were significantly and positively correlated, $r(167) = .51, p < .01$, as expected; organizational brand images and organizational attraction were significantly correlated, $r(167) = .61, p < .01$, as expected. As shown in Table 7, corporate advertisements alone accounted for about 9% ($R^2 = .09$) of the variance in organizational attraction, which was a statistically significant amount of shared variance, $F(1,166) = 16.80, p < .001$. Including organizational brand images as an additional predictor increased the amount of shared variance to 38% ($R^2 = .379$), and this increment was statistically significant, $\Delta F(1,165) = 76.39$, positive regression coefficient (b) = .54, $p < .001$.

Table 7 below shows that, the inclusion of organizational brand images as an additional predictor in the regression of corporate advertisements on organizational attraction resulted in an elimination of the significance of the correlation between corporate advertisements and organizational attraction from $p < .001$ to $p > .82$. Thus, Hypothesis 4 is supported, such that the results show a full mediation of organizational brand images on the relationship between corporate advertisements and organizational attraction.

Table 7

Multiple Regression: Mediating Effects of Organizational Brand Images on the Relationship
Between Corporate Advertisements and Organizational Attraction

	B	S.E.	<i>t</i>	Sig.	95% C.I. for EXP(B)	
					Lower	Upper
Step 1						
Corporate Ads	.20	.05	4.10	.000	.10	.29
Constant	3.63	.18	20.15	.000		
<i>F</i>	16.80***					
<i>R</i> ²	0.09					
Step 2						
Corporate Ads	-.01	.05	-0.20	.823	.11	.08
Organizational Brand Images	.54	.06	8.74	.000	.42	.67
Constant	2.22	.22	10.09	.000		
<i>F</i>	50.41***					
<i>R</i> ²	0.38					
ΔF	76.39***					

*denotes $p < .05$, ** denotes $p < .01$, *** denotes $p < .001$

Discussion

Because I believe effective recruitment is crucial for the success of every organization, and enhancing recruitment outcomes is necessary for organizations to win the war for talent acquisition, and I also believe providing HR managers with a greater understanding of the psychological processes that job seekers engage in when assessing the attractiveness of recruiting firms will assist them to improve applicant attraction, I undertook this research to provide insights to all organizations into the best approaches to communicate organizational brand images to job seekers to increase organizational attractiveness on the part of job seekers and improve recruitment outcomes.

First, I defined recruitment generally and conducted a literature review to understand how past literature have examined organizational recruitment in context with organizational brand image. Next, I turned to theory and research and examined how recruitment is defined and measured in the interdisciplinary perspectives of human resources administration, marketing and organizational management and integrated the literature in these bodies of studies.

Based on the literature, I postulated that organizations can effectively use sponsorships practices, encourage and rely on word-of-mouth endorsements, and use activities at job fairs to disseminate organizational positive brand images to numerous job seekers and successfully increase organizational attraction on the part of many job seekers and enhance recruitment outcomes. Accordingly, I developed three hypotheses supporting the foregoing findings based on the literature.

I further theorized that organizations can use corporate advertisements to communicate positive organizational brand images to many job seekers to create firm brand awareness, and brand visibility to successfully increase organizational attraction among many job applicants and enhance recruitment outcomes. Relying on the literature, I developed my fourth hypothesis predicting that the use of corporate advertising will be positively associated with brand visibility and brand image awareness, which will in turn increase organizational attraction on the part of many job seekers and improve recruitment outcomes.

Through the use of Mahalanobis (1936) distance scores I identified 21 multivariate outliers, which indicated unusual combinations of all of the variables in the study. In investigating the nature and characteristics of these outliers, I discovered that while many of these participants completed the survey in five minutes, most completed the survey in six minutes with only four participants among the outliers completing the survey of 35 questions in

seven minutes. In contrasting the average completion time of the 21 outliers of six minutes with the average completion time of the remaining 168 participants of twelve minutes, I found a huge unexplained gap. I therefore attributed the cause for the outliers to participants' haste, error and a lack of attention and understanding of the survey questions. Under the circumstances, I felt justified in excluding these 21 outliers from the dataset.

Based on the results of my empirical research, I found support for all four hypotheses and believe these findings would provide appropriate guidance to HR managers and other hiring managers. The marketing literature suggests when consumers of goods and services become exposed to a number of marketing activities, positive brand image perceptions is improved. In the same vein, this study suggests that organizational use of multiple recruitment strategies simultaneously, (such as sponsorships, job fair activities, word of mouth endorsements and corporate advertisements) invariably result in positive brand image perceptions and in enhanced organizational attraction. Thus, I posit that organizational use of or engagement in sponsorship practices, promoting word-of-mouth endorsements by establishing employee referral programs or encouraging current and/or former employees to communicate the employer brand often to the public, participating in job fair activities, and investing heavily in corporate advertisements simultaneously would all collectively lead to increased positive brand image perceptions leading to enhanced organizational attraction on the part of job seekers. Thus, my empirical research findings appropriately respond to Ryne's (1991) who argued that failure to assess the effects of multiple recruitment practices simultaneously may lead to the overestimation of the effect size of a single practice or organizational factor. My empirical study provides solid evidence indicating the relevance of multiple recruitment methods and organizational brand images in attracting

many job seekers, which I expect would motivate further research investigating the impact of organizational attraction on actual job applications and job choice decisions.

CHAPTER 4

IMPLICATIONS

This research addressed calls in the literature to study applicant attraction and intentions to apply to organizations, which are the primary objectives of recruitment (Rynes, 1991). My study provides important implications for theory and practice; the results of my empirical research are relevant to both HR managers and academics, because the pursuit and competition for skillful employees requires organizations to invest enormous resources in recruitment-related branding strategies.

The results from my empirical research suggest that, the original framework derived from consumer-goods brand equity theory in marketing provides a suitable basis from which to conceptualize employee-based brand equity and can be applied to employee-based brand image in recruitment. Specifically, this study offers an important theoretical rationale by integrating recruitment and brand image literatures and explaining why job seekers may react more positively to the recruitment practices of one organization and less positively to the recruitment practices of another organization.

I also integrate the definitions and measurements of recruitment brand image in human resource administration, marketing and organizational management literature and highlight the critical links of recruitment between these interdisciplinary bodies of studies.

Finally, my empirical research contributes to existing sparse literature on the subject by enhancing our knowledge in the area of employer branding and recruitment strategies associated with brand image perceptions.

This study provides several practical implications for the world of management. Results of my research suggest that, the literature on customer-based brand image can be useful in

understanding how job seekers make employment decisions and suggesting how employers can enhance recruitment outcomes.

I highlight to practitioners in this study how organizations can strategically align the human resource function of recruitment with employer branding to strategically and effectively recruit talent in competitive labor markets. By providing understanding to HR professionals of how organizational positive images influences job seekers interest, my study should help firms identify the ideal image to portray in the recruitment process.

Overall the results of this research study support the notion that organizational HR practitioners and other hiring managers can rely on brand images, and utilize multiple organizational recruitment practices and factors, such as, sponsorship practices, word-of-mouth endorsements, job fair practices and use of corporate advertising simultaneously to communicate employer brand images to job seekers to increase organizational attraction on the part of many job seekers to enhance recruitment outcomes.

My distillation on employer branding provides understanding to organizations of how job seekers may rely on employer branding developed through sponsorships, word-of-mouth endorsements or referral, job fair activities, corporate advertisements, personal experience, and their perceptions of the brand to aid their decisions when evaluating and comparing potential employers to make application decisions.

My research provides useful information to prospective job seekers as to what constitutes organizational brand images and provide guidelines as to how job applicants can better evaluate brand images within organizations to be able to make informed job application decisions.

Finally, my empirical study provides invaluable guidance that, if an organization aspires to enhance recruitment outcomes and set itself apart from competitors in the battle for talent, it

should concentrate on communicating its distinctive brand image to many job seekers through differentiation by focusing on its instrumental and symbolic meaning as an employer in the marketplace, such as, creating an image of the firm as one that practices and provides positive benefits such as, flexible work schedules, advancement opportunities, organizational justice, seeks and values employee feedback, values employee empowerment, values family and diversity policies, and/or distinguishes itself as an innovative place to work. Research results herein provide firms with an invaluable framework to simplify and focus priorities for improving recruitment outcomes.

Limitations And Directions For Future Research

Despite the strengths of my findings, the results of my study are bound by several applicable limitations that constrain the generalizability and interpretation of the findings which must be acknowledged. First, my survey asked respondents to rate only one organization which they desired to work for, which is in stark contrast with job applicants usual and actual job search practices of considering and applying for jobs in several organizations simultaneously and over a long period of time. Future research should extend my findings and ask job seekers to rate several organizations over a long period. For instance, a longer empirical study can be designed to assess job seekers' perceptions of recruitment brand images of three firms they are attracted to and applied for employment and would potentially interview with, and such would strengthen the external validity of the present study.

Secondly, respondents to my study were either college students or individuals who recently graduated from college and were actively looking for employment; such may affect external validity. I may not be able to generalize my results to middle-aged and more experienced individuals looking for jobs or employed job seekers wishing to switch careers and

who may be less likely to rely on brand images to assess job attributes and organizational brand images that are attractive to millennials and inexperienced college students. Also, many recent college graduates or soon-to-be college graduates are applying for their first jobs, so due to their lack of work experience may have different expectations and/or perceptions of organizational brand images regardless of the recruitment strategies they are exposed to, than would mature and more experienced job seekers. Therefore, a suggested area for future research would be to explore reactions of middle-aged or older job seekers who have been in the workforce for at least two decades, as well as job seekers with families to the organizational branding strategies outlined in this study.

A third limitation is that, my study surveyed only college educated job seekers in the United States even though most job seekers in America are not college educated. This also limits the opportunity for me to generalize the results of the present study to other job seekers who did not attend college. Non-college educated job seekers form an overwhelming majority of the population in the United States. It would be helpful if future research is undertaken to overcome this limitation, where the survey is posted on Amazon Mechanical Turk and participation is open to all and encompass all adult job seekers in the United States regardless of educational background.

The fourth and final limitation of my study is that, this study did not evaluate the role of social media in employer branding, or how organizations can and do utilize social media platforms such as, Facebook, You-Tube, LinkedIn and Twitter to communicate their brand identities to job seekers. With the current popularity of social media and the overwhelming number of people using social media often, it is possible that job applicants seek information on employer branding from social media more than from any other source. I therefore believe

examining the role of social media in recruitment and the impact on brand image perceptions is an area that is particularly ripe for future investigation. While this study has yielded significant insights on employer branding using traditional recruitment methods, and job applicants' reaction thereto, its benefits can be broadened by a second study evaluating the effects of organizational recruitment branding on social media platforms and job seekers' reactions thereto. As such, I undertake to conduct Study 2 to examine how the use of social media as a recruitment source influences applicants' brand image perceptions and organizational attraction.

CHAPTER 5

INTRODUCTION

Study 2

As information technology has advanced rapidly in the past ten years, the competition for top talent has become very fierce. Many organizations have resorted to several means to communicate their brand identities to prospective job seekers to enhance organizational attraction; recently the most prominent of which is through social media platforms such as, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube and Twitter. Social media has created the opportunity for organizations to enhance their image as an employer (Smith & Kidder, 2012) due to these sites being most commonly used by students, job seekers, and professionals (Henderson & Bowley, 2013). Since 2010, different social media platforms have been the primary source of information about different companies and their recruitment for jobs (Laick & Dean, 2011). Herbold and Douma, (2013) state that Facebook and LinkedIn were among the top most visited platforms by people searching for jobs. Social media websites such as, Facebook, You Tube, Twitter, and LinkedIn, have become the most important destinations on the internet for job seekers (Tavleen, 2013). When an organization uses audio-visual means (that is, videos of specific jobs, business units or employees) to communicate job-related information on social media platforms, potential candidates can experience the company in a more manifold, lively and realistic way than in other communication channels (Kissel & Buttgen, 2015). Even though employers use numerous social media platforms for recruitment branding, this study focuses on only four (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and You tube) because these are the four most popular and most widely used social media platforms for employer branding worldwide (Jobvite Social Recruiting, 2016).

The popularity of promoting organizational brand images through social media has provided enormous opportunities for Human Resource professionals and other hiring managers to be involved in activities beyond traditional HR functions, resulting in calls for empirical research in the area. As such, studies are needed to better understand how companies use social media for their employer branding (Backhaus, 2004; Girard et al., 2013; Sivertzen et al., 2013). Understanding what attracts talented recruits to a company and how the use of social media may influence this process may provide important insights for human resources managers (Alniacik, Alniacik, Erat, & Akcin, 2014). Due to a lack of research in this area, there are unanswered questions about how employer branding on social media is perceived by job seekers and how they react to employer branding messages on social media platforms. There are also unanswered questions about whether organizational use of social media platforms helps to convey pertinent brand image information to job seekers. It is also unclear whether the use of social media provides any value in influencing job seekers' organizational attraction beyond more traditional recruitment sources, such as, sponsorships, job fair activities, word-of-mouth endorsements and corporate advertisements. The central motivation of this research is to address this knowledge gap. This proposed study is intended to build on the findings in Study 1 and investigate the role of social media in informing job applicants' organizational brand image perceptions. In Study 2, I expand beyond more tangible (instrumental) job and organizational attributes when assessing brand image to also include more subjective or symbolic attributes (Lievens & Highhouse, 2003). Moreover, in Study 2, I explore whether the use of social media during recruitment helps explain incremental variance in applicants' level of organizational attraction, beyond the more traditional recruitment sources that were investigated in Study 1.

The research question I pose herein is: Do job seekers' use of social media in seeking recruitment information result in positive perceptions of instrumental and symbolic attributes of an organization leading to enhanced organizational attraction? Recognizing and appreciating the growing relevance of social media worldwide, I am motivated to analyze how numerous organizations are successfully enhancing organizational attraction by utilizing social media to promote job openings and company information to job seekers and encourage many more organizations to leverage social media and replicate use of these sources to enhance organizational attraction. A survey conducted by Jobvite's Social Recruiting (2014) found that 93 percent of the 1,855 recruiting professionals surveyed use or plan to use social media in their employer branding and recruitment efforts. With such a high percentage of recruiters using or planning to utilize social media for branding and sourcing candidates, I believe social media has become an obvious choice for recruitment branding and worth investigating its relevance in disseminating information on employer attributes to job seekers and enhancing organizational attraction on the part of job seekers. Surveying how prospective job applicants react to organizational recruitment information on social media platforms is very important and this proposed study is intended to do just that.

This research study aims to make important contributions and yield a number of theoretical and managerial implications. This paper should contribute to the literature by adding additional knowledge to the literature on the use of social media by job seekers for job search and by organizations for employee recruitment. This proposed research should integrate the marketing, social media, psychology and employer brand equity literature and highlight the critical links between these interdisciplinary bodies of studies.

My paper aims to provide several practical implications for HR managers. First, I expect this research to provide substantial evidence that employers' use of social media in employee recruitment result in more positive brand image perceptions leading to enhanced organizational attraction. Secondly, I expect this proposed research to bring to light evidence that organizational use of social media platforms such as, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and You Tube can enhance organizational attraction and add value beyond more traditional recruitment sources.

The rest of this paper is structured as follows: First, I review prior literature and identify how organizational attractiveness is defined, as well as identifying the different dimensions of organizational brand image. Next, I present the theoretical framework behind the proposed research, before developing hypotheses based on the literature. I then develop a conceptual model depicting and explaining how the antecedents identified by my hypotheses link to my construct. Immediately thereafter, I describe my proposed research methods and analysis and how I intend to test for support of my three hypotheses, followed by my research expectations. I then state the anticipated theoretical and managerial contributions and implications of my study, and conclude with a timeline for the conclusion of this research.

Literature Review

Social media can be defined as digital platforms on which users can create a profile, connect with other users, generate and distribute content and engage in interactive communication (Boyd & Ellison 2007, McFarland & Ployhart 2015). Social media, which is an emerging concept in the field of technology and marketing is used by many organizations to promote the employer brand, is defined as, "a group of Internet-based applications build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user generated content" (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010, page 61). A key feature of social media is

its openness; social media includes online applications, platforms and media which aim to facilitate interactions, collaborations and the sharing of content, ranging from social networking sites like Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, etc. to Wikis, blogs, podcasts and video sharing sites, social media has an entire gamut of interfaces to its name (Barnes et al, 2015). Social media usually covers social networking sites like Facebook, My Space, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, content sharing sites like YouTube, Flickr, slide sharing, collaborative projects like wikis (Saffer et al, 2013). Social media may play a key role in the recruitment process in terms of branding the organization to potential employees (Sivertzen, et al. 2013). The use of social media by organizations has benefits such as free, unlimited use and shorter response time with respect to contact and activities (Furu, 2011). Because social media offer vast possibilities for direct communication (for example, video, audio, posts, live chat, pictures, private messages), they also provide excellent tools for communicating the brand meaning of the employer by many businesses (Conn, 2010). Organizations use their Facebook profiles to announce job openings, LinkedIn to search for potential applicants, and advertise on blogs, Twitter or YouTube regarding the events and activities undertaken by them (Beer & Burrows, 2012). Job seekers' perceptions of a job opportunity with an organization may be related to the employer's brand image perception on social media platforms such as, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and LinkedIn, similar to how buyers of consumer products evaluate product brands and make purchasing decisions. Thus, social media platforms such as, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter and LinkedIn and employer branding go hand in hand as they afford businesses of all sizes the ability to showcase their culture, their people, and more importantly, their employer brand identities to potential job applicants to enhance organizational attraction.

Employer attractiveness is defined as the benefits potential employees see in an employment in a specific organization (Berthon et al., 2005). Most previous studies demonstrated that organizational attraction was influenced by applicants' perceptions of job and organizational characteristics such as pay, opportunities for advancement, location, career programs, or organizational structure (Cable & Graham, 2000; Highhouse & Slaughter, 1999). Other studies revealed that, in the early stages of the recruitment process, prospective applicants ascribed traits to organizations (Slaughter, et al. 2001). According to Lievens and Highhouse (2003) we recognize the instrumental and symbolic attributes, where the first refer to what the organization offers that is useful for job seekers (e.g., salary package or development opportunities). Symbolic attributes, in turn, represent subjective and intangible aspects, such as the degree of business innovation, culture, and prestige, (Reis & Braga, 2016). Research in this area suggests that employer brand attractiveness can be explained not only through functional attributes such as compensation or advancement opportunities, but also through brand personality traits (Lievens & Highhouse, 2003). The instrumental/symbolic framework postulates that job seekers are also attracted to organizations because of the symbolic meanings that they associate with them (Lievens & Highhouse, 2003). Brand personality traits, defined as a "set of human characteristics associated with a brand" (Aaker, 1997, p. 347), include, sincerity, excitement, sophistication, ruggedness, and competence. Just as a favorable brand personality positively impacts brand equity (Callcott & Phillips, 1999), so too should favorable organization personality perceptions positively impact recruitment equity. Organizational attractiveness relates to the envisioned values or benefits that a potential employee perceives or expects in working for a specific firm and many organizations make use of social media platforms such as,

YouTube, Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter in communicating both instrumental and symbolic images to job seekers to increase organizational attraction.

Organizations have experienced that effective employer branding leads to certain competitive advantages, and this makes it easier to attract and retain employees (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004). Which source provides potential job applicants with information is a key determinant of their initial attraction to an employer (Barber, 1998; Rynes & Cable, 2003; Zottoli & Wanous, 2000). Social media platforms have the potential to act as a relationship building tool because of the dialog function and sense of connection typical for this media (Kent, 2010). Beyond the amount of information provided, information quality (for example, accuracy, up-to-datedness, credibility) constitutes an important determinant of cognitive processing (Dholakia, et al, 2014). As Rieh and Danielson (2007, p. 312) note, “Out of a set of objects that appear to hold various information values, people tend to choose the items that appear to be most credible.” Job seekers therefore perceive employer information on social media as reliable; so, the sourcing of credible information in social media (most pertinent to the current investigation, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and LinkedIn) should lead job seekers to form positive attitudes and preferences regarding a specific employer.

Social media websites have become most important destinations on the internet for many, including job-seekers. What makes social network sites unique is that they allow users to make a public profile and make their social network visible to others and communication takes place primarily between humans who already are a part of their extended social network (Saffer et al, 2013). Social media has the potential to act as a relationship building tool because of the dialog function and sense of connection typical for this media (Kent, 2010). Additionally, the existent literature suggests that people trust social media more than company websites and trust the

people in their network and not only do they seek and share opinion but “they also act on the opinion they receive” (Jansen, Sobel, & Cook, 2010, p. 3858). In the United States alone, 86% of the top 100 companies use at least one social media platform (Coon, 2010), and websites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, You Tube, and Twitter have become prime sources of communicating employer information to job seekers and attracting and acquiring job applicants (Cooper, 2014). LinkedIn, the world’s largest professional network on the Internet, is used by 94 per cent of the world’s 500 fastest-growing companies to communicate employer brand image to job seekers and for talent acquisition (Barnes et al, 2015). According to Statista (2017), Twitter has amassed an average of 720 million active users as of the first quarter of 2017. And just like You-tube, LinkedIn and Facebook, millions of businesses are actively using Twitter by tweeting to promote the employer brand and increase employer attraction and by tweeting about company highlights, organizational achievements, employee stories, and involvement in community activities. Many organizations commonly use social media to communicate employer reputation and other positive brand images, such as, being trendy or having a great culture, being environmentally friendly, respecting family values, promoting diversity, or offering training and development opportunities to job seekers job and attracting potential candidates to apply for jobs.

A survey conducted by Jobvite (2016) revealed that 76% of employers in the United States are currently using social media for branding and recruiting and increasing application intentions. Moreover, 73% of recruiters who use social media for branding and recruiting saw an increase in candidates’ quality, while 78% have successfully hired a candidate through social media recruiting, and 49% of recruiters using social media recruiting have seen a sustained increase in employee referrals. In 2010, for example, 48 per cent of all US jobseekers conducted at least one social job-hunting activity on Facebook, and one in six members of the US

workforce indicated that an online social network was one of the sources they used to find a job (Jobvite, 2011). Because social media offers possibilities to interact with job-seekers, especially through well-developed audio-visual tools, communicating of an employer brand information is likely more effective than in conventional recruitment channels. As a means to establish a better employer brand among its current and potential employees, and increase organizational attraction, many companies are making use of social media platforms to maximize the benefits of their recruitment efforts. Companies, such as Amazon, Microsoft, Walmart, General Motors, Home Depot, Amazon, General Electric, Wells Fargo, and Comcast use social media platforms, to disseminate pertinent company information to job applicants to increase organizational attraction. This trend is increasing at a rapid rate as many more organizations resort to social media to communicate their identities to current and potential employees.

While signaling theory demonstrates the potential to explain the influence of many predictors on applicant attraction outcomes (Ehrhart & Ziegert, 2005), self-categorization theory and social identity theory (Turner et al., 1987) has the potential to help researchers understand the conditions under which applicants look upon certain signals more favorably than others. Social identity theory indicates the potential for organizational membership to serve as part of a person's social identity or self-concept, and it becomes evident that personality concepts may be specifically appropriate in an employment context (Ehrhart & Ziegert, 2005). The integration of signaling theory and social identity theory may provide an improved understanding of the associations between an organization's recruitment activities and applicant attraction outcomes (Celani & Singh, 2009). Providing firms with a greater understanding of the psychological processes that job seekers engage in when evaluating organizational attractiveness on social media platforms should HR managers improve job seekers' attraction to their respective

organizations and improve recruitment outcomes. Accordingly, social media platforms provide excellent avenues for job seekers to evaluate signals from organizations and compare with their self-identities, their personality traits and their own needs and values and to discuss such in real time with friends and family to determine if an organization is a good option for them.

A recent study on e-recruitment suggests that there has been a decrease in the use of corporate websites; one of the main reasons for this changing trend can be attributed to the features of social media which enable recruiters to maintain constant connectivity and long-term conversations with job seekers (Bondarouk & Olivás-Lujan, 2013). Furthermore, the advantage of using social media and social networking sites lie in the ease of identity sharing, which can be utilized by employers to develop and effectively communicate their own organizational identity (Smith & Kidder, 2014). Many companies use Facebook and You Tube as a space to showcase videos that highlight the key aspects of its culture and employer brand. Regularly maintaining and updating corporate online profiles via videos, employee testimonials, recent awards and recognition, and current job openings helps to foster credibility, and impact the company reputation, as well as communicate positive corporate images to job seekers to attract many applicants (Caers, 2015). The sharp decrease in the use of company websites by job seekers is due largely to job seekers' perceptions that organizational recruitment information on social media platforms are up-dated more frequently, and thus are more credible. Such perceptions by job seekers invariably make social media platforms the preferred choice for organizations in communicating employer recruitment information to job seekers.

CHAPTER 6

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

The Value Of Social Media Beyond Traditional Recruitment Sources

As postulated in study 1, use of a variety of traditional recruitment sources is positively associated with brand image perceptions and organizational attraction. Whether use of social media during recruitment adds value beyond the use of traditional sources remains an unanswered question. It is my position that the answer to this question is yes. As articulated in the development of Study 1's hypotheses and in Study 1, there is a vast literature to support the role of traditional sources in enhancing recruitment utility (e.g., Collins, 2007; Collins & Stevens, 2002). However, as articulated above, over the last 10 years social media may have become more prominent and the preferred medium for reaching prospective applicants and communicating organization and job relevant information. Because social media offers vast possibilities for direct communication (for example, video, audio, posts, live chat, pictures, private messages), they also provide excellent tools for communicating the brand meaning of the employer by many businesses (Conn, 2010). Social media platforms play a key role in the recruitment process in terms of branding the organization to potential employees (Sivertzen, et al. 2013). Organizations use their Facebook profiles to announce job openings, LinkedIn to search for potential applicants, and advertise on blogs, Twitter or You Tube regarding the events and activities undertaken by them (Beer & Burrows, 2012). When communicating through social media, contact with the target group is personal, realistic and interactive, as well as cost efficient and wide ranging and it provides an opportunity for more organizations to communicate what they stand for easily and directly, which should result in an increase in organizational attraction of numerous job seekers (Caers & Castelyns, 2014). These lead to my first hypothesis below:

- **HYPOTHESIS #1:** Use of social media in job search will explain incremental variance in organizational attraction beyond the use of traditional recruitment sources (i.e., sponsorships, word-of-mouth, job fairs, and corporate advertisements).

Social Media Use And Perceptions Of Instrumental Job Attributes

According to the instrumental/symbolic framework, images are composed of both instrumental and symbolic dimension (Lievens & Highhouse, 2003). Instrumental image dimensions describe the organization in terms of objective, concrete, and factual attributes that are inherent in the organization, such as pay, job security and advancement opportunities (Lievens, 2007). Job seekers are attracted to these instrumental attributes on the basis of their utilitarian need to maximize benefits and minimize costs (Katz, 1960). Utility serves as the primary reason for consumers' attraction to instrumental attributes (Lievens & Highhouse, 2003). The results of a study conducted by Deloitte (2015) indicate that Millennials expect leading companies to provide employees with opportunities for learning and personal growth. Generation Y is often presented as preferring a positive work environment and stimulating work offering opportunities for advancement and success, encouraging a collective management style, and attentive to work-life balance (Eisner, 2005). For instance, an individual may want to buy a vehicle because it provides him or her with transportation, and comfort. Similarly, a job seeker may be interested in applying for a job because the employer is in close proximity to the applicant's residence. The convenience of working close to home may be the utility driving the applicant's decision. Thus, instrumental attributes, such as, good salary and bonuses, training and development programs, flexible work schedules, and job security may trigger interest among job applicants because of their perceived utility.

As aforementioned, social media is increasingly becoming a rich source of information about companies as employers. Job seekers can gather a great deal of detailed and realistic information about objective, instrumental firm attributes. Use of audio-visuals, employee testimonials, and related communications can provide potential candidates with credible information about pertinent attributes such as work/life balance, benefits, culture, and related instrumental attributes.

This information in turn, should positively affect applicants' attraction to the firm. As such and consistent with the logic offered in Study 1, I propose that applicants' use of social media in job search will positively influence perceptions of instrumental images. The foregoing discussions give rise to the second hypothesis below:

- **HYPOTHESIS #2:** Use of social media platforms in job search, will be positively related to organizational attraction through enhanced perceptions of instrumental attributes.

Social Media Use And Perceptions Of Symbolic Images

Whereas Study 1 primarily operationalized employer brand image as perceptions of more instrumental attributes, Study 2 expands on this operationalization by also including perceptions of symbolic images. The instrumental/symbolic framework postulates that beyond instrumental attributes, job seekers are attracted to organizations because of the symbolic meanings they associate with them (Lievens & Highhouse, 2003). These symbolic image dimensions describe the organization in terms of subjective, abstract, and intangible traits, and are similar to what other researchers have labeled organizational personality perceptions (Slaughter, Zickar, Highhouse, & Mohr, 2004). Job seekers are attracted to these symbolic traits because they enable them to maintain their self-identity, to enhance their self-image or to express themselves (Aaker, 1997). Job seekers tend to be especially attracted to employing organizations that have traits,

such as, being caring and innovative, similar to their own (Tom, 1971). Just like a consumer brand (product), an employer brand (the company) possesses a personality and an image in the mind of the labor market, which can create tight bonds between the brand and its workforce (Fernandez-Lores et al., 2015). Self-expression serves as the primary reason for consumers' attraction to symbolic attributes (Lievens & Highhouse, 2003). Studies have shown that symbolic attributes may be especially relevant and can differentiate an employer from its competitors more so than instrumental attributes (Lievens & Highhouse, 2003). Although the application of personality concepts to brands is not unquestioned (Yoon, et al., 2006), brand personality traits help explain considerable variance in employer brand attractiveness (Lievens & Highhouse, 2003). They are recognized as "an efficient way to distinguish a brand from its competitors at the symbolic level" (Sung & Kim, 2010, p. 640). Certain types of individuals will be more attracted to companies they perceive to be innovative because the company's innovativeness matches their self-concept or enhances their self-esteem (Dutton et al., 1994; Shamir, 1991). For example, conscientious individuals are careful, thorough, hardworking, and ambitious (Costa & McCrae, 1985). Conscientious persons tend to thrive in environments where the work is difficult, as they tend to set more difficult goals for themselves (Barrick et al., 2002). Moreover, these ideas are often the products of long hours of hard work by industrious employees (Hayes, 2003; King, 1998). Examples of organizational personality traits which job seekers may infer in organizations and associate to themselves on social media platforms are, sincerity, competence, prestige, honesty, innovative, trendy, and intelligent.

Many companies use social media as a space to showcase videos that highlight the key aspects of its symbolic image or its unique personality (Caers, 2015). Employee testimonials and videos that provide insight into the day to day work life within a company that are posted on

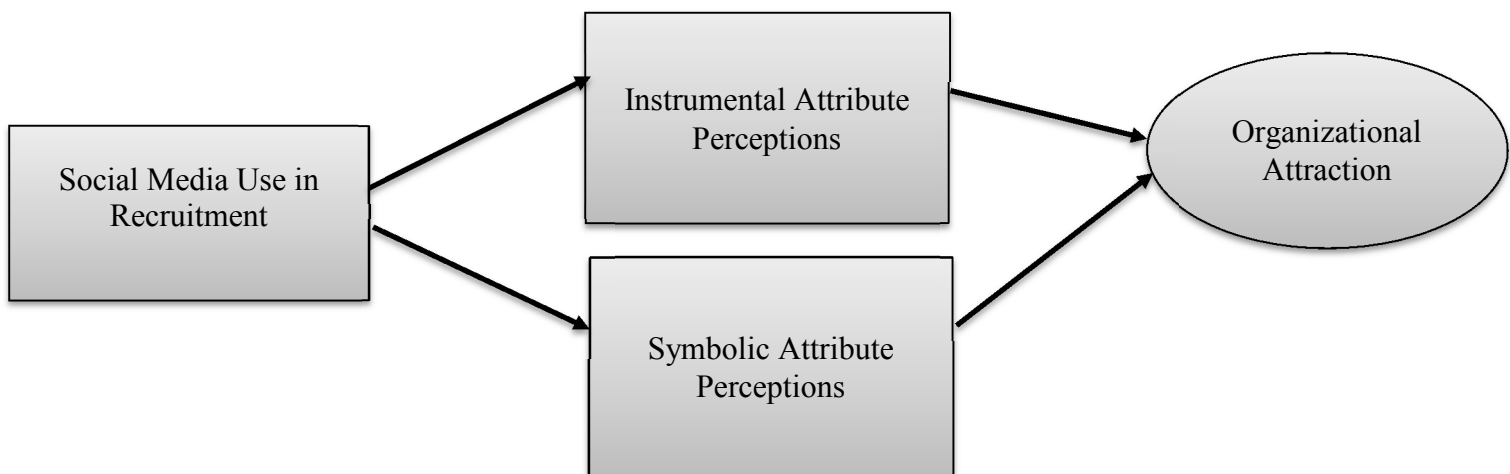
social media, can provide unique insights into these more subjective aspects of the company. Again, job seekers can compare this information against their own self-images to make an assessment of fit. When a potential employee's needs, personality and values fit the organization's image, the organization becomes attractive for this person (Cable & Judge, 1996; Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004).

The informal, user-specific, personal information exchange on social media exerts an important impact on attitudes and decisions (Muniz & O'Guinn, 2011). According to Sirgy's (1986) congruence theory, increasing the congruence between consumers' self-concept and the personality they perceive in an object results in increasing affinity for that object (for example, product, brand, employer). Research indicates that potential employees just like buyers of consumer goods also compare an organization's image with their own needs, personality and values (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004). This matching process, or self-congruity, plays an important role in predicting purchase motivations and brand choice, as well as employer choice (Malhotra, 1988). While text-based communication on social media is an important medium to develop an organizational reputation and promote its brand, combining words with a visual element as on You Tube, significantly enhances applicants' ability to make judgements of a company's symbolic image (Kissel & Buttgen 2015). Personality traits may be more easily identified, and more readily associated with an employer brand on social media platforms, by linking the personality traits of the employees and clients to the employer brand image (Wentzel, 2009). On social media, communication with other users and potential employer tends to be personal and rather informal, job seekers may ask questions and hold discussions with the employer, exchange their personal experiences with that employer or post comments that can help job seekers develop a greater understanding of the organization's personality (Kissel & Buttgen, 2015).

Prospective candidates are now using social media to find information about potential employers and gain insights into a company's corporate culture and its working practices (Tavleen, 2013). The interactive nature of social media and the amount of rich and diverse information present on these sites should help promote the more symbolic attributes of the organization. I propose that social media use will positively influence applicants' perceptions of the company's symbolic traits, which in turn should influence organizational attraction. These discussions lead to the following hypothesis:

- **HYPOTHESIS #3:** Use of social media platforms in job search, will be positively related to organizational attraction through enhanced perceptions of symbolic attributes.

FIGURE 2: A CONCEPTUAL MODEL ON THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA - EFFECTS ON EMPLOYER BRANDING AND ORGANIZATIONAL ATTRACTION -



The conceptual model presented in Figure 2 above, is derived from the literature and the three hypotheses above. Based on the literature, and as depicted in Figure 2, job seekers' utilization of four social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, You Tube and LinkedIn) in job search will explain incremental variance in organizational attraction beyond the use of traditional recruitment sources, such as, sponsorships, word-of-mouth endorsements, job-fair activities, and corporate advertisements. Additionally, the conceptual model in Figure 2 depict that, job seekers' use of these four social media platforms in seeking recruitment information will result in positive perceptions of instrumental and symbolic attributes of an organization resulting in increased organizational attraction.

CHAPTER 7

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

I undertook this empirical research to test for support for my three hypotheses. Specifically, I investigated if job seekers use of four social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, You-Tube and LinkedIn) for job search explain incremental variance in organizational attraction over traditional recruitment sources, such as, sponsorships, job-fair activities, word-of-mouth endorsements and corporate advertisements. I also investigated if, job seekers' use of social media in seeking recruitment information result in positive perceptions of instrumental and symbolic attributes of an organization leading to enhanced organizational attraction.

Study Design And Methods

In study 2, I collected data from a total 417 participants through Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTURK). Participants were compensated \$2.50 in exchange for participation. The study was limited to college students or recent college graduates (individuals who graduated from college within the past twelve months) who are 18 years old or older, and who are active job seekers (or were active job seekers in the past twelve months) and have used or are currently using any or all of the following four social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube) to seek recruitment branding information on organizations.

There were 417 respondents that varied in terms of gender, ethnicity, and age. The sample was predominately male (65.6%), and female (34.4%). Caucasians represented 54.2%, Asians were 24.7%, Hispanics were 10.3%, African-Americans made up 9.1%, while other ethnicities were 1.7%. (47.4%). Respondents aged 18 to 33 represented 77.3%, those over 33 years made up 22.2%, while two respondents or 0.5% were under age 18 and were prevented from continuing with the survey. As these individuals represent the newest labor market entrants,

I believed examining these effects in this sample will give me the most up-to-date information on how to best recruit from this labor group. To ensure rigor, I pre-tested my questionnaire by conducting a pilot study with five job seekers, which guided me uncover some weaknesses with my questions and led me to appropriately modify the questionnaire.

With the exception of the first twenty-two questions in my survey, all other questions were assessed on a 7-point Likert scale, where higher values reflect stronger agreement (a 1-7 scale where, SD=Strongly Disagree and SA=Strongly Agree). A full listing of the study questionnaire is presented in Appendix 2 and the coefficient alpha reliability for all variables are shown in Table 9. Listed below are my twelve variables for this research study.

Study Results

- Facebook: Based on the results of a completed Exploratory Factor Analysis I ran, I developed the three items as the best to assess the variable Facebook in recruitment. The coefficient alpha reliability of this variable as shown in Table 9 was 0.91. A listing of the questionnaire containing questions for all variables is provided in appendix 2 and the coefficient alpha reliability for all variables are shown in Table 9.
- Twitter: Following the completed Exploratory Factor Analysis referred to above, I developed three items as the best which were used to assess the use of Twitter in recruitment. The coefficient alpha reliability of this variable was 0.94.
- You Tube: Based on the results of a completed Exploratory Factor Analysis I ran, I developed three items questions which were used to assess the use of You Tube in recruitment. The coefficient alpha reliability of this variable was 0.95.

- LinkedIn: Following a completed Exploratory Factor Analysis referred to above, I developed three questions, and these were utilized to assess the use of LinkedIn in recruitment. The coefficient alpha reliability of this variable was 0.91.
- Instrumental Attribute Perceptions: Respondents were asked the extent to which they agree that the company they identified offers the following six attributes: good salary and fringe benefits, training and development programs, flexible work hours, job security, diversity policies, and opportunities for growth and advancement (Lievens & Highhouse, 2003). The coefficient alpha reliability of this variable was 0.84.
- Symbolic Attribute Perceptions: Respondents were also asked the extent to which they agree that each of the following eleven traits represents the company they identified: honest, sincere, trendy, cool, secure, intelligent, reliable, upper-class, prestigious, strong, and robust (Lievens & Highhouse, 2003). The coefficient alpha reliability of this variable was 0.91.
- Sponsorships: I used answers to three questions developed from Collins & Stevens (2002) to measure the variable Sponsorship Activities. The coefficient alpha reliability of this variable was 0.87.
- Word-of-mouth Endorsements: I formulated three questions whose answers were used to measure the variable Word-of-Mouth Endorsements. These questions were adopted from Collins & Stevens (2002). The coefficient alpha reliability of this variable was 0.84.
- Job Fair Activities: I used answers to three questions adopted from Collins & Han (2004) to assess the variable Job Fair Practices. The coefficient alpha reliability of this variable was 0.90.

- Corporate Advertisements: I utilized answers from three questions adopted from Collins & Han (2004) to assess the dependent variable Corporate Advertising. The coefficient alpha reliability of this variable was 0.82.
- Organizational Attraction: I used answers to three questions adopted from Highhouse et al. (2003) to measure the variable Organizational Attraction. The coefficient alpha reliability of this variable was 0.80.

Correlations, scale means, standard deviations and alpha reliabilities are presented in Table 8 below. Hypotheses 1 through 3 are based on the literature and on the conceptual model depicted in Figure 2. In hypothesis 1, I predicted that job seekers' use of social media in job search will explain incremental variance in organizational attractiveness over the use of traditional recruitment methods, such as, sponsorships, word-of-mouth endorsements, job fair activities and corporate advertisements. In hypotheses 2 and 3, I predicted that positive relationships between social media use and job seekers' perception of organizational instrumental and symbolic brand images, which will in turn lead to enhanced organizational attraction on the part of job seekers. I utilized SPSS to conduct a series of mediation regression (following Baron and Kenny, 1986).

Table 8**Correlations, Means, Standard Deviations and Cronbach Alphas (Study 2)**

Variable	N	Twitter	You Tube	LinkedIn	Instrumental Attribute Perceptions	Symbolic Attribute Perceptions	Organizational Attraction	Mean	Standard Deviation	Cronbach Alpha
Facebook	417	.74**	.70**	.31**	.31**	.37**	.37**	4.63	1.64	0.91
Twitter	417		.81**	.29**	.31**	.36**	.41**	4.12	1.84	0.94
You Tube	417			.20**	.25**	.33**	.36**	3.88	1.95	0.95
LinkedIn	417				.57**	.49**	.44**	5.32	1.43	0.91
Instrumental Attribute Perceptions	417					.83**	.70**	5.56	0.98	0.84
Symbolic Attribute Perceptions	417						.71**	5.51	0.95	0.91
Sponsorships	417							4.93	1.52	0.87
Word-of-Mouth	417							5.14	1.35	0.84
Job Fair	417							5.02	1.58	0.90
Corporate Advertisements	417							4.89	1.51	0.82
Recruitment Brand Image	417							5.81	1.07	0.87
Organizational Attraction	416							5.39	1.15	0.80

*denotes $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

- **HYPOTHESIS #1:** Use of social media platforms in job search, will explain incremental variance in organizational attraction beyond the use of traditional recruitment sources (i.e., sponsorships, word-of-mouth, job fairs, and corporate advertisements).

Hierarchical multiple regression analysis was used to test Hypothesis 1 where I predicted that use of social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, You Tube and LinkedIn) in job search will explain incremental variance in organizational attraction above and beyond that which use of traditional recruitment sources can do. Support for this hypothesis would be to examine whether the ΔR^2 (r-square) significantly increased between a model that includes traditional recruitment sources (sponsorships, word-of-mouth activities, job fairs and corporate

advertisements) and a model that includes social media recruitment sources (Facebook, Twitter, You Tube and LinkedIn).

Table 9

Testing Hypothesis 1: Hierarchical Regression

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	2.294	.176		13.065	.000
Sponsorship	.071	.051	.092	1.376	.170
Word-of-mouth	.330	.058	.382	5.647	.000
Job Fair	.074	.051	.095	1.438	.151
Corporate Advertisements	.136	.045	.173	3.056	.002
<i>F</i> (4, 411) = 86.59, <i>p</i> < .001					
2 (Constant)	1.829	.207		8.843	.000
Sponsorship	.039	.052	.051	.752	.453
Word-of-mouth	.298	.058	.344	5.121	.000
Job Fair	.070	.051	.090	1.369	.172
Corporate Advertisements	.110	.046	.140	2.397	.017
Facebook	.059	.038	.086	1.530	.127
Twitter	.004	.042	.006	.092	.927
You Tube	-.004	.037	-.006	-.095	.924
LinkedIn	.122	.037	.140	3.319	.001
<i>F</i> (8, 407) = 47.13, <i>p</i> < .001, $\Delta R = .024$; ΔF (4, 407) = 4.62, <i>p</i> < .05					

a. Dependent Variable: Organizational Attraction

Table 9 (above) provides the significance and the amount of explanatory variance (R^2) of each of the two models relative to each other for comparison. Table 9 shows that the better prediction model for explaining organizational attraction is the model that contains both traditional recruitment sources and social media recruitment sources, $F(8, 407) = 47.13, p < .001$. It explains about 46% of the variance in organizational attraction, which is a statistically significant increase in variance of about 2.4% (ΔR^2) over the model that includes only traditional recruitment sources, $\Delta F(4, 407) = 4.62, p < .05$. Therefore, Hypothesis 3 is supported. In particular, results in Table 9 reveal that use of LinkedIn was the most significant predictor of organizational attraction, after controlling for the effects of traditional recruitment methods ($\beta = .140, t = 3.319, p < .05$).

As shown in Table 8, all four social media platforms used in the study (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and LinkedIn) have direct significant correlations with organizational attraction. However, as shown in the results of hypothesis 1 depicted in Table 9, only LinkedIn was a significant predictor of organizational attraction, after controlling for effects of traditional recruitment methods. Possible reasons for these results may be because LinkedIn is the only social media platform among the four advertised as a business and employment-oriented service, largely used for professional networking, including employers posting jobs and job seekers posting their resumes, so this social media platform is the most popularly geared for and used by job seekers to seek employment information far more than Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. Accordingly, results in Table 9 suggest LinkedIn is a far more significant predictor of organizational attraction after controlling for effects of traditional recruitment methods, than any of the other three social media platforms.

- **HYPOTHESIS #2:** Use of social media platforms in job search, will be positively related to organizational attraction through enhanced perceptions of instrumental attributes.

In order to test Hypothesis 2, I conducted mediated regressions examining the effects of only one social media platform (LinkedIn) as the independent variables (IV), instrumental attributes as the proposed mediator, and organizational attraction as the dependent variable (DV). Only LinkedIn was used in multiple regression with mediation in testing in hypothesis 2, because evidence gathered from results of the hierarchical regression testing of hypothesis 1 (Table 9) showed that LinkedIn emerged as the only significant predictor of organizational attraction among the four social media platforms, after controlling for effects of traditional recruitment methods.

Since I predicted above that, use of social media in job search would be positively related to organizational attraction through enhanced perceptions of instrumental attributes, I proposed a hypothesized casual chain in which I expect a first variable (LinkedIn) which is an independent variable (IV) to positively affect a second variable (instrumental attributes) which is the mediator (M), which I expect in turn will positively influence a third variable (organizational attraction) which is the dependent variable (DV). I therefore expect to find evidence of full mediation of instrumental attributes on the relationship between use LinkedIn and organizational attraction, which would lead to the conclusion that, use of LinkedIn by job seekers indeed result in enhanced organizational attraction through instrumental attributes. Therefore following Baron and Kenny (1986), I examined the extent to which (a) the IV and the hypothesized mediator were significantly correlated; (b) the hypothesized mediator and the DV were significantly correlated; and (c) the inclusion of the mediator as an additional predictor in the regression of the DV on the

IV resulted in either an elimination or a decline in the significance of the correlation between the IV and DV.

Results in Table 8 show that the use of LinkedIn and instrumental attributes were significantly and positively correlated, $r(416) = .57, p < .001$ as expected and use of LinkedIn and organizational attraction were also positively and significantly correlated $r(416) = .44, p < .001$ as expected. Additionally, instrumental attributes and organizational attraction were significantly correlated, $r(416) = .70, p < .001$ as expected (Table 8).

Table 10

Testing Hypothesis 2: Instrumental Attributes: Use of LinkedIn

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)	3.37	0.21		15.83	0.00		
LinkedIn	0.39	0.04	0.44	10.07	0.00	1.00	1.00
2 (Constant)	0.99	0.23		4.34	0.00		
LinkedIn	0.05	0.04	0.06	1.43	0.15	0.67	1.49
Instrumental Attribute Perceptions	0.75	0.05	0.67	15.60	0.00	0.67	1.49

*denotes $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 10 shows that the inclusion of instrumental attributes as an additional predictor in the regression of use of LinkedIn on organizational attraction did result in an elimination of the significance (as per Baron and Kenny, 1986) of the correlation between use of LinkedIn and organizational attraction from $p < .001$ to $p > .15$, with a positive regression coefficient (β) = .75.

Thus, Hypothesis 2 is statistically supported, such that the results show a full mediation of instrumental attributes on the relationship between use of LinkedIn and organizational attraction.

- **HYPOTHESIS #3:** Use of social media platforms in job search will be positively related to organizational attraction through enhanced perceptions of symbolic attributes.

In order to test Hypothesis 3, I conducted mediated regressions examining the effects of only one social media platform (LinkedIn) as the independent variables (IV), symbolic attributes as the proposed mediator, and organizational attraction as the dependent variable (DV). Only LinkedIn was used in multiple regression with mediation in testing in hypothesis 3, because evidence gathered from results of the hierarchical regression testing of hypothesis 1 (Table 9) showed that LinkedIn emerged as the only significant predictor of organizational attraction among the four social media platforms, after controlling for effects of traditional recruitment methods.

Since I predicted above that, use of social media in job search would be positively related to organizational attraction through enhanced perceptions of symbolic attributes, I proposed a hypothesized casual chain in which I expect a first variable (LinkedIn) which is an independent variable (IV) to positively affect a second variable (symbolic attributes) which is the mediator (M), which I expect in turn will positively influence a third variable (organizational attraction) which is the dependent variable (DV). I therefore expect to find evidence of full mediation of symbolic attributes on the relationship between use of LinkedIn and organizational attraction, which would lead to the conclusion that, use of LinkedIn by job seekers indeed result in enhanced organizational attraction through symbolic attributes. Therefore, following Baron and Kenny (1986), I examined the extent to which (a) the IV and the hypothesized mediator were

significantly correlated; (b) the hypothesized mediator and the DV were significantly correlated; and (c) the inclusion of the mediator as an additional predictor in the regression of the DV on the IV resulted in either an elimination or a decline in the significance of the correlation between the IV and DV.

Results depicted in Table 8 show that the use of LinkedIn and symbolic attributes were significantly and positively correlated, $r(416) = .49, p < .001$ as expected and use of LinkedIn and organizational attraction were positively and significantly correlated $r(416) = .44, p < .001$, as expected. Also, symbolic attributes and organizational attraction were positively and significantly correlated, $r(416) = .71, p < .001$, (see Table 8).

Table 11

Testing Hypothesis 3: Symbolic Attributes: Use of LinkedIn

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)	3.37	0.21		15.83	0.00		
LinkedIn	0.39	0.04	0.44	10.07	0.00	1.00	1.00
2 (Constant)	0.77	0.23		3.37	0.00		
LinkedIn	0.11	0.03	0.13	3.19	0.00	0.76	1.32
Symbolic Attribute Perceptions	0.74	0.05	0.65	16.38	0.00	0.76	1.32

*denotes $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 11 (above) shows a regression coefficient of $(\beta) = .74$, but the inclusion of symbolic attributes as an additional predictor in the regression of use of LinkedIn on organizational attraction did not result in either an elimination or a decrease of the significance

of the correlation between use of LinkedIn and organizational attraction. Thus, Hypothesis 3 is not statistically supported, such that the results show no mediation of symbolic attributes on the relationship between use of LinkedIn and organizational attraction.

While instrumental attributes fully mediate the effects of LinkedIn use and organizational attraction, as shown in Table 11, contrary to my expectation, symbolic attributes on the other hand did not mediate the effects of LinkedIn use and organizational attraction, and the cause for this unexpected result is unknown. A likely cause for this contradictory outcome could be that, because instrumental attribute dimensions describe an organization in terms of concrete, and factual attributes, that are objectively desirable, and economical beneficial which are inherent in an organization such as, training and development programs, advancement opportunities, and good compensation and fringe benefits, job seekers can easily and more readily distinguish and identify an organization with these attributes, and are more likely to readily relate to them and respond more positively and affirmatively to research questions pertaining to such attributes. On the other hand, because symbolic attribute dimensions are identified as associations, ideas and feelings and describe an organization in terms of subjective, intangible and abstract in nature, such as an organization being viewed as, trendy, secure, reliable, and honest, job seekers may be hard put in directly identifying an organization with such traits and are therefore less inclined to affirmatively respond to research questions regarding such traits. Such may have caused the contradictory results in H2 and H3.

Discussion

In this research, I empirically investigated if job applicants' use of social media for job search explain incremental variance in investigated organizational attraction over the use of traditional recruitment methods. I also investigated whether job seekers' use of social media

platforms to seek employment information result in increased organizational perceptions of instrumental and symbolic attributes, which in turn result in enhanced organizational attraction.

This research yields mixed results. Results show that use of Facebook, Twitter, You Tube and LinkedIn are all positively and significantly correlated to instrumental attributes and symbolic attributes. In addition, instrumental attributes and symbolic attributes are positively and significantly correlated to organizational attraction and use of all these social media platforms are significantly related to organizational attraction. With respect to H1, results suggest that use of social media in job search does indeed explain significant incremental variance in organizational attraction beyond the use of traditional recruitment sources. In particular, use of LinkedIn during the job search process was a significant predictor of organizational attraction, after controlling for traditional recruitment methods.

Even though results show that all social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, You Tube and LinkedIn) are each positively and significantly correlated to organizational attraction, due to the fact that results from the testing of hypothesis 1 as depicted in Table 9, show that LinkedIn was the only significant predictor of organizational attraction after controlling for effects of traditional recruitment methods, LinkedIn was the only social media platform used in testing hypotheses 2 and 3. The most likely reason why only LinkedIn was the only significant predictor of organizational attraction in the hierarchical regression testing of hypothesis 1, could be that among the four social media platforms, only LinkedIn is advertised as a business and employment-oriented service allowing job seekers to post their resumes. So even though all social media platforms have direct positive correlation to organizational, results suggest that, use of LinkedIn during the job search process was the most significant predictor of organizational attraction, after controlling for traditional recruitment methods.

Result also show that hypothesis 2 is supported, as there is evidence that perceptions of instrumental attributes fully mediated the effects of LinkedIn use and organizational attraction. However, contrary to expectation outlined in H3, this hypothesis is not supported, as results suggest that symbolic attributes did not mediate the effects of LinkedIn use and organizational attraction. A likely reason for this unexpected result could be because dimensions of instrumental attributes are described as, objective, concrete, factual and economically beneficial and desirable attributes present in an organization, such as, good salary and fringe benefits, training and developments opportunities, job seekers can more easily identify with such perceptions in an organization, rather than symbolic attributes, such as organizational honesty and intelligence, which are abstract, intangible and subjective in nature.

Despite these mixed results, the positive and significant correlations between use of Facebook, Twitter, You Tube, LinkedIn and organizational attraction, suggests that social media platforms may be used to help draw potential employees to an organization.

CHAPTER 8

IMPLICATIONS

The uniqueness of this study is due to the fact that, it examines a new potential recruitment medium – social media – and the impact of these media on organizational attraction. Results suggest that job applicants who used each of these platforms experienced higher levels of organizational attraction.

To my knowledge, the present study is the first research study to compare job seekers' use of social media to assess whether job seekers' utilizing social media to seek employer information yields incremental variance in organizational attraction over and beyond the use of traditional recruitment methods. Results of this empirical research therefore contribute to the literature by adding valuable knowledge on the use of social media for job search.

This research study also advances knowledge by integrating the marketing, social media, psychology and employer brand equity literature by articulating the impact of social media on firm attractiveness and combining the critical links between these various streams of literature. This integration may provide a better and improved understanding of the links between a firm's social media branding activities and applicant attraction outcomes which should facilitate and enable managers better design and administer recruitment activities and processes to improve applicant attraction to their firms.

This study supports prior research that demonstrates that the instrumental-symbolic framework can be used to predict potential job seekers' perceptions of organizational attractiveness. Moreover, consistent with prior research (i.e., Lievens & Highhouse, 2003) this study identifies several specific examples of organizational instrumental attributes and symbolic

traits which job seekers may value when assessing organizations. This study can be used by organizations to help inform their recruitment efforts.

This research study provides several practical implications for HR managers. First, use of social media platforms is associated with more positive perceptions of an organization's instrumental and symbolic attributes as well as organizational attraction. Results of this study therefore provide appropriate response to Alniacik, et al. (2014), calling for studies that provide understanding and insights to human resources managers, as to what attracts talented recruits to a company and how the use of social media may influence the process. In particular, this study's findings demonstrate that use of LinkedIn can significantly increase attraction beyond use of more traditional recruitment methods. These results suggest that organizations should consider LinkedIn as a potentially useful tool to recruit job applicants.

As a result of this research, I posit that with the increasing prominence of social media and job seekers' increasing use of social media to seek recruitment information, organizational use of social media in recruitment can help to create value, create an image of a desirable employer and strengthen the organizational culture-value proposition, and help in attracting potential employees towards the organization, which HR managers must be aware of. These research results should encourage HR managers to include social media with traditional recruitment methods in providing information to prospective candidates about job openings, organization culture and benefits to attract a large pool of prospective job applicants.

Limitations And Suggestions For Future Research

The present research has several limitations which must be acknowledged. The first limitation of my findings is that, I did not measure and tested actual job choice decisions of job seekers, so my results do not reflect that job seekers' exposure to positive organizational

instrumental and symbolic attributes resulted in organizational attraction and ultimately led to job choice decisions. Potential avenue for future research on this topic should include a follow-up study with the same respondents as in the first study to evaluate their actual job choice decisions. Investigating actual job choice decisions in a follow-up study with the same respondents and tracking job seekers through the recruitment process should shed light on whether or not actual job choice decisions are related to the positive brand image of an organization held by potential job applicants.

The second limitation of the study is that, I limited my study to and sought responses from only individuals residing in the United States, but over ninety percent of the world's population live in other countries besides the United States. With my survey in the English language and limited to respondents residing in the United States, the result of the present study constrains the ability to generalize the results of these findings to other countries. Extension of the study to other countries and translation of the survey questions into other languages would be helpful in enhancing the generalization of the results and overcoming this limitation.

A third limitation of this study is that, by posting the survey online on Amazon Mechanical Turk, some respondents may have been wary of privacy concerns and did not want to subject themselves to privacy risks and therefore may have obscured their identity and may not have provided candid responses to the research questions. To overcome this limitation, future research on this topic which entail face-to-face interviews of respondents would likely yield more reliable responses.

The final limitation of the present study is that, while the study focused on potential job seekers' reaction to organizational branding of instrumental and symbolic attributes on social media platforms, it is not known how current employees of an organization may perceive or react

to these organizational attributes on social media platforms. Since it is commonly believed that retention of talented and experienced employees is more cost effective than attracting and recruiting new talent, efforts at employee retention should be given at least as much prominence by organizations as attracting potential employees. Therefore, organizational attractiveness on social media platforms such as, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and LinkedIn, should not be restricted to attracting only new and potential workers but should also entail efforts at retaining existing employees. Future research could be undertaken to investigate whether the relationships between organizational instrumental and symbolic attributes on social media platforms and organizational brand attractiveness are on a consistently comparable level when participants are existing employees who have been working for an organization for several years as opposed to when participants are potential applicants and not employees of an organization yet.

Another potential avenue for further research would be assessing how human resource managers can utilize social media as a tool for disseminating information about positive organizational instrumental and symbolic attributes to current employees to enhance retention. Such research could yield valuable insights into how the management of employer branding on social media platforms may have to be adjusted when the focus is on retaining current and actual employees of an organization compared to attracting new and prospective applicants. Such research would also be particularly helpful in yielding consistency in communicating instrumental and symbolic attributes of an organization in general to prospective applicants and to current employees.

Conclusion

Overall, findings from my research provide insights into the impact of various recruitment mediums on attracting the current generation of labor market entrants. Findings in

Study 1, show that organizational use of traditional recruitment methods such as, sponsorships, word-of-mouth endorsements, job fair activities, and corporate advertisements simultaneously would lead to increased positive brand image perceptions resulting in enhanced organizational attraction on the part of job seekers. On the other hand, findings in Study 2 reveal that, job seekers' use of social media, and LinkedIn in particular, in seeking recruitment information explain significant incremental variance in organizational attraction over the use of traditional recruitment methods. Additionally, findings in Study 2, show that, job seekers' use of LinkedIn - in seeking recruitment information on employers, lead to increased perceptions of instrumental attributes resulting in enhanced organizational attraction. Results of my empirical research in both Study 1 and Study 2 are relevant to HR managers and academics because the war for talent and the pursuit and competition for skillful employees requires organizations to often invest enormous resources in recruitment-related strategies to remain competitive and viable. However, results in Study 2 show that social media has become an emerging source of information for job applicants and that organizations aiming to increase their job applicant pool and enhance recruitment would be better positioned to do so by utilizing social media platforms in addition to traditional recruitment methods when recruiting job applicants.

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APPENDIX A

(SURVEY QUESTIONS FOR STUDY 1)

1. What is your gender?
 1. Male
 2. Female

2. What is your ethnicity?
 1. African- American
 2. Asian
 3. Hispanic
 4. Caucasian
 5. Other

3. What is the name of the college or university you graduated from or are about to graduate from?

4. What is your year of graduation?

5. What is (was) your major?

6. At the start of your final year in college, what was the name of the top company you were interested in interviewing with?

The following eight organizational brand image perceptions have been identified for this research: company reputation, job security, training and development programs, opportunity for rapid advancement, flexible work schedule, diversity policies, valuing employee feedback, and good salary and benefits.

Below are statements pertaining to the company you identified in question number 6 above, that you may agree or disagree with. Using the 1-5 scale below where SD=Strongly Disagree and SA=Strongly Agree, answer each of the following (choose the appropriate value) as may apply to you.

- 1: = Strongly Disagree
- 2: = Disagree
- 3: = Neither Agree nor Disagree
- 4: = Agree
- 5: = Strongly Agree

#	Question	1=Strongly Disagree	2=Disagree	3=Neither Agree nor Disagree	4 = Agree	5=Strongly Agree
7	This company has a good reputation					
8	This company provides job security.					
9	This company has training and development programs.					
10	This company provides opportunities for rapid advancement.					
11	This company has flexible work schedules.					
12	This company has good diversity policies.					
13	This company values employee feedback.					
14	This company provides good salary and fringe benefits.					

The following four recruitment practices or constructs that may or may not have been used by the company you identified are: Sponsorships, Word-of-mouth Endorsements, Job Fair Activities and Corporate Advertising. Each recruitment practice is grouped according to the three questions measuring the construct below. The last six questions below measure two outcome variables “organizational attraction” and “application intentions”.

Using the 1-5 scale below where SD=Strongly Disagree and SA=Strongly Agree, answer each of the following (choose the appropriate value) as may apply to you.

- 1: = Strongly Disagree
- 2: = Disagree
- 3: = Neither Agree nor Disagree
- 4: = Agree
- 5: = Strongly Agree

SPONSORSHIPS

#	Question	1=Strongly Disagree	2=Disagree	3=Neither Agree nor Disagree	4 = Agree	5=Strongly Agree
15	This company sponsors scholarships at one or more universities.					
16	This company sponsors events such as, concerts, sports events or speakers, at one or more universities.					
17	This company has either donated money for scholarships, and/or donated money for naming rights at a college or university.					

WORD-OF-MOUTH ENDORSEMENTS

#	Question	1=Strongly Disagree	2=Disagree	3=Neither Agree nor Disagree	4 = Agree	5=Strongly Agree
18	This company has a good relationship with the career services office of my college or university.					
19	A lot of alumni from my college or university have gone to work for this company.					
20	Students who have gone to work for this organization have had good experiences.					

JOB FAIR ACTIVITIES

#	Question	1=Strongly Disagree	2=Disagree	3=Neither Agree nor Disagree	4 = Agree	5=Strongly Agree
21	This company has held or taken part in at least one job fair event at a college or university in the past twelve months.					
22	At least on one occasion, I have read about or been informed by friends of job fair activities organized by this company.					
23	This company holds job fair events at colleges or universities to attract new applicants.					

CORPORATE ADVERTISEMENTS

#	Question	1=Strongly Disagree	2=Disagree	3=Neither Agree nor Disagree	4 = Agree	5=Strongly Agree
24	I have seen or heard advertising for job opportunities at this company on the radio, on televisions, on flyers or in the school newspaper.					
25	This company's recruiting brochures caught my attention.					
26	This company's recruitment brochures or Web site gave me detailed information about their job opportunities.					

RECRUITMENT BRAND IMAGE PERCEPTIONS

#	Question	1=Strongly Disagree	2=Disagree	3=Neither Agree nor Disagree	4 = Agree	5=Strongly Agree
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27	The management of this company is among the best in terms of how the company treats customers and its employees.					
28	This company has a good reputation for being very environmentally responsible.					
29	This company contributes a lot to the improvement of the local community.					

ORGANIZATIONAL ATTRACTION

#	Question	1=Strongly Disagree	2=Disagree	3=Neither Agree nor Disagree	4 = Agree	5=Strongly Agree
30	I know other people who have said positive things about this company and have favorable impressions about this company.					
31	I believe this company is an ideal place to work.					
32	Overall, I have a very favorable impression of this company.					

APPENDIX B

(SURVEY QUESTIONS FOR STUDY 2)

1. What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

2. What is your ethnicity?

- African American
- Asian 1
- Caucasian
- Hispanic
- Other

3. What is your age?

4. What is 9 minus 2 (9-2)?

- 11
- 19
- 7
- 10

5. What is 2 plus 2 (2+2)?

- 5
- 0
- 4
- 9

6. What is 4 times 3 (4 X 3)?

- 13
- 1
- 12
- 11

7. How many years of work experience do you have?

8. Which of the following media platforms have you used in your job search? (check all that may apply)?

- a. Facebook
- b. Twitter
- c. Linked In
- d. You Tube
- e. I have not used any of these platforms

9. What is the name of the college or university you graduated from or are about to graduate from?

10. Where are you in the job search process?

- Thinking about applying
- Actively applying for jobs
- Interviewing for jobs
- I have received job offers, but have not yet accepted
- I have accepted a job offer.

11. How frequently have you used Facebook?
Never
Very Rarely
Rarely
Occasionally
Frequently
Very Frequently
12. How frequently have you used Twitter?
Never
Very Rarely
Rarely
Occasionally
Frequently
Very Frequently
13. How frequently have you used You Tube?
Never
Very Rarely
Rarely
Occasionally
Frequently
Very Frequently
14. How frequently have you used LinkedIn?
Never
Very Rarely
Rarely
Occasionally
Frequently
Very Frequently
15. How frequently have you used Facebook for job search purposes?
Never
Very Rarely
Rarely
Occasionally
Frequently
Very Frequently
16. How frequently have you used Twitter for job search purposes?
Never
Very Rarely
Rarely
Occasionally
Frequently
Very Frequently
17. How frequently have you used You Tube for job search purposes?
Never
Very Rarely
Rarely
Occasionally
Frequently
Very Frequently
18. How frequently have you used LinkedIn for job search purposes?
Never
Very Rarely
Rarely
Occasionally

Frequently
Very Frequently

19. Name one company or organization that you are interested in applying to or interviewing with.

20. Have you applied to this company?

21. If yes, have you interviewed with this company?

22. If yes, have you received an offer from this company?

The following questions ask about your experiences during your most recent job search process. Specifically, these set of questions ask about your experiences with using **Facebook**, **Twitter**, **YouTube** and **LinkedIn** during your job search process. Please review each item carefully and rate the extent to which you agree with each statement.

FACEBOOK

#	Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
23	This company uses Facebook to provide applicants with information about the company.							
24	This company uses Facebook to provide applicants with information about the job.							
25	This company's Facebook page provided information that is useful for job applicants.							

TWITTER

#	Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
26	This company uses Twitter to provide applicants with information about the company.							
27	This company uses Twitter to provide applicants with information about the job.							
28	This company's Twitter page provided information that is useful for job applicants.							

YOU TUBE

#	Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
29	This company uses You Tube to provide applicants with information about the company.							
30	This company uses You Tube to provide applicants with information about the job.							
31	This company's You Tube page provided information that is useful for job applicants.							

LINKEDIN

#	Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
32	This company uses LinkedIn to provide applicants with information about the company.							
33	This company uses LinkedIn to provide applicants with information about the job.							
34	This company's LinkedIn page provided information that is useful for job applicants.							

Below are statements pertaining to the company you identified in question number 7 above, that you may agree or disagree with. Using the 1-7 scale below where SD=Strongly Disagree and SA=Strongly Agree, answer each of the following (choose the appropriate value) as may apply to you.

INSTRUMENTAL ATTRIBUTE PERCEPTIONS

#	Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
35	This company provides job security.							
36	This company has training and development program.							
37	This company provides good salary and fringe benefits.							
38	This company has flexible work schedules.							
39	This company has good diversity policies.							
40	This company offers the opportunity for growth and advancement.							

SYMBOLIC ATTRIBUTE PERCEPTIONS

#	Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
41	This company is honest.							
42	This company is sincere.							
43	This company is trendy.							
44	This company is cool.							
45	This company is secure.							
46	This company is intelligent.							
47	This company is reliable.							
48	This company is upper-class.							
49	This company is prestigious.							
50	This company is strong.							
51	This company is robust.							

The following four recruitment practices or constructs which may or may not have been used by the company you identified are: Sponsorships, Word-of-mouth Endorsements, Job Fair Activities and Corporate Advertising. Each recruitment practice is grouped according to the three questions measuring the construct below. The last six questions below measure two variables "recruitment brand image perceptions" and "organizational attraction". Using the 1-7 scale below where SD=Strongly Disagree and SA=Strongly Agree, answer each of the following (choose the appropriate value) as may apply to you.

SPONSORSHIPS

#	Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
52	This company sponsors scholarships at one or more universities.							
53	This company sponsors events such as, concerts, sports events or speakers, at one or more universities.							

54	This company has either donated money for scholarships, and/or donated money for naming rights at a college or university.								
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WORD-OF-MOUTH ENDORSEMENTS

#	Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
55	This company has a good relationship with the career services office of my college or university.							
56	A lot of alumni from my college or university have gone to work for this company.							
57	Students who have gone to work for this organization have had good experiences.							

JOB FAIR ACTIVITIES

#	Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
58	This company has held or taken part in at least one job fair event at a college or university in the past twelve months.							
59	At least on one occasion, I have read about or been informed by friends of job fair activities organized by this company.							
60	This company holds job fair events at colleges or universities to attract new applicants.							

CORPORATE ADVERTISEMENTS

#	Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
61	I have seen or heard advertising for job opportunities at this company on the radio, on televisions, on flyers or in the school newspaper.							
62	This company's recruiting brochures caught my attention.							
63	This company's recruitment brochures or Web site gave me detailed information about their job opportunities.							

RECRUITMENT BRAND IMAGE PERCEPTIONS

#	Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
64	The management of this company is among the best in terms of how the company treats customers and its employees.							
65	This company has a good reputation for being very environmentally responsible.							
66	This company contributes a lot to the improvement of the local community.							

ORGANIZATIONAL ATTRACTION

#	Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
67	For me, this company would be a good place to work.							
68	This company is attractive to me as a place of employment.							
69	A job at this company is very appealing to me.							