BENEATH THE SURFACE IS PURPOSE: A MIXED METHOD EXPLORATION OF PURPOSE-FIT AS A DRIVER OF EMPLOYER ATTRACTION

A Dissertation
Submitted to the
Temple University Graduate School

In Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Executive Doctorate of Business Administration

---

by
Bucky Fairfax
Temple University, Fox School of Business
May 2021

Review Committee:

TL Hill, Chair, Professor of Strategic Management and Managing Director of Fox Management Consulting and Executive Education

Crystal Harold, Associate Professor of Human Resource Management and a Paul Anderson Research Fellow at the Fox School of Business

Pallavi Chitturi, Deputy Chair and Professor in the Statistical Science Department and Associate Director, Executive DBA Program of the Fox Business School

Reader:

Anthony Di Benedetto, Professor of Marketing and Supply Chain Management and Senior Washburn Research Fellow at the Fox School of Business

ABSTRACT

This dissertation investigates the role of organizational purpose as a driver in attracting employees to employers. The dissertation consists of two related studies both anchored in the literature on employer attraction, defined as the favorable interaction between potential applicants and the images, values, and information about an organization (Coldwell et al., 2008), and perceived fit, defined as the employee's suitability with the culture and values of the organization (Hinkle, R. K., & Choi, N., 2009). In the first study, semi-structured interviews were performed on 23 prospective job seekers to explore the alignment between personal and organizational purpose in making an employer more attractive. The participants identified the opportunity for professional growth and development, the people with whom one works, and alignment with organizational purpose as key drivers of employer attraction over and above the usual concerns of compensation and job requirements. Interviewees invested in organizational purpose alignment with more emotional intensity; noted that alignment with organizational purpose was sometimes more important than compensation and stability; and suggested that the "pursuit of purpose is privilege" and, as such, influenced by an individual's economic security. Reconciling these findings with extant theory, a new concept of Purpose-fit is proposed as an additional and important driver of employer attraction. Purpose-fit is defined as the perceived alignment of individual and organizational purpose assessed by job seekers through evaluation of image and reputation, mission and values, social contribution, and meaningful work.

The second study utilized a choice-based conjoint survey to investigate the importance and tradeoffs between key drivers of employer attraction, including Purpose-fit, basic salary, opportunities for professional growth and development, and opportunities to work with similar people. The conjoint survey explored the effects of an employee's generation, individual economic security, and reaction to respondent's employer response to the social crisis of COVID-19 and the Black Lives Matter movement on the relative importance of Purpose-fit. There were four important findings: 1) Opportunity for professional growth and development was the dominant driver of employer attraction across all demographic segments; 2) Job seekers will trade off some level of salary for Purpose-fit, even if they experience economic insecurity; 3) Contrary to the extant literature, older generations placed more relative importance on Purpose-fit than younger generations; and 4) Prospective job seekers with positive employer experience in response to COVID-19 or Black Lives Matter placed higher relative importance of Purpose-fit, were more willingness to accept less pay, and reported lower levels of active job search. In summary, Purpose-fit emerged as an important driver of employer attraction among prospective job seekers, differentiated by generation, economic security, and positive experience of employers' response to social crisis, resulting in reported willingness to accept less pay.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my wife Jessica and my daughters Grayson and Stella, whose unyielding love, encouragement, and patience provided the support I needed to pursue and complete this research and life goal. You inspire my purpose every day.

I also want to offer thanks to my mother, Joyce, and late sister, Tonya Fairfax, for their belief in me and proud support.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge everyone who played a role in this academic accomplishment. First of all, my family, whose support and sacrifice provided me the environment to dedicate my time and focus on this research. Secondly, my employer RTI International, my manager Lisa May, CEO Dr. Wayne Holden, and my HR colleagues for their support, flexibility, and encouragement. Third, my committee members, each of whom provided excellent and patient advice and guidance throughout the research process. Lastly, all my cohort colleagues in the Executive DBA program who provided much needed support, advice, listening, and inspiration. Thank you all for your support, understanding, and encouragement.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The motivation for this research is based on the integration of three key areas, i) employer attraction, ii) organizational purpose, and iii) the future of work. Employer attraction reflects what attracts employees to employers over other competitors and how employers are differentiated by their attributes, brand, reputation, and image. Enhancing employer attraction is a strategic imperative for companies competing in the global economy. Providing human resources and talent management practitioners the knowledge of what differentiates an employer in attracting talent will provide a competitive advantage in the global market. This advantage is critical as the war for talent – "the increasingly competitive landscape for recruiting and retaining talented employees" – continues to intensify, and competition for qualified employees and specialized skills and knowledge increases as a global business challenge (Michaels, Handfield-Jones, & Axelrod, 2001). By combining these three motivation themes, this dissertation explores the relative importance of organizational purpose in attracting employees in a world and future of work with increasing competition for talent, generational diversity, economic uncertainty, advanced technology and social networking, and polarization.

Extant literature and research in employer attraction establish the importance of perceived fit as a leading indicator of employer attraction. Two prevailing concepts in perceived fit include Person-Environment fit, which indicates the compatibility between an individual and work environment that occurs when their characteristics are well matched (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005), and Person-Organizational fit, which emphasizes the congruence between the norms and values of organizations and the values of persons (Chatman, 1989). In addition to the growing literature and interest in purposeful and

meaningful work (Steger, Dik, & Duffy, 2012), the importance of organizational purpose, although nascent in academic literature, is emerging in business publications, management consulting and is evident in research with younger generations at work, i.e., the importance of corporate social responsibility programs for attracting Generations Y and Z employees (*Conemillennialcsrstudy*, 2015).

Gyori, Kazakova, and Gyori (2019) defined purpose as "the ambition to create value by contributing to the welfare of society." From an organizational perspective, purpose explains why the organization's existence is important and reveals the real meaning of the underlying work at the organization. Purpose reflects what an organization stands for and is typically communicated through the company's mission and values (Margolis & Hanson, 2002). From a job seeker's perspective, organizational purpose is the fundamental reason why the organization exists (Margolis & Hanson, 2002) and can be an attractive attribute of the employer for a job seeker.

In addition to an array of extrinsic motivators of employer attraction such as compensation, benefits, and stability, the extant literature provides established concepts and theories associated with the symbolic dimensions of employment. These include signaling theory (Connelly, Certo, Ireland, & Reutzel, 2011), social identity theory (Tajfel, Turner, Austin, & Worchel, 1979), similarity attraction (Byrne 1971), and organizational reputation and image. These theories and concepts reinforce the importance of fit, identity, similarity, and attraction of organizational purpose for job seekers. Employers extend signals through their brand, online identity, and organizational reputation that are received and evaluated by prospective job seekers. Job seekers identify with organizations that contribute to their self-esteem and self-identity needs. Job seekers

are also attracted to organizations with similar characteristics, which they see in themselves or desire for their self-identity. For example, research shows that the Millennial generation (Generation Y) prefers to work for organizations with corporate social responsibility programs that align with their social impact values (*Conemillennialcsrstudy*, 2015).

There are a number of unresolved problems in the literature related to employer attraction and perceived fit. These gaps in the research are as follows: i) what are the drivers of employer attraction that differentiate one employer from another, ii) is organizational purpose among the key drivers of employer attraction given the emphasis among Millennials with corporate social responsibility, and iii) what are the tradeoffs among these key drivers for prospective job seekers? These general questions inform the investigative inquiry and research questions that guide this dissertation.

The research questions that guide this investigation on the relative importance of perceived alignment between individual and organizational purpose in employer attraction are as follows.

1. *Is perceived alignment between individual and organizational purpose a driver of attraction for job seekers in the evaluation of employers?*
2. *How does an employee's generation affect the relative importance of the perceived alignment between individual and organizational purpose when evaluating employer attraction?*
3. *How does an employee's economic security impact the relative importance of the perceived alignment between individual and organizational purpose when evaluating employer attraction?*

Study one of this dissertation applied a qualitative method of inductive, semi-structured interviews among prospective job seekers and determined that organizational purpose is an important driver when considering and evaluating employers. The level of importance placed on organizational purpose over other prevailing employer attributes proved different by generation and was further influenced by the job seeker's economic security. Notably, congruence with organizational purpose and the job seeker's individual purpose seemed to be an under-the-surface and added dimension of consideration for the job seeker. This alignment between individual and organizational purpose in the context of employer attraction led to the proposition of a new concept of Purpose-fit as a driver of employer attraction.

Study two of this dissertation used a choice-based conjoint survey to explore the tradeoffs of key drivers of employer attraction identified in study one. The study investigated the moderating effects of generation and economic security on Purpose-fit in affecting the perceived attractiveness of employers. In addition, study two investigated participants' willingness to accept less pay (WTALP) for their desired attribute of preference with an employer. Study two further investigated the effects of the COVID-19 social crisis and Black Lives Matter movement on the relative importance of Purpose-fit in employer attraction. The inclusion of these social phenomena in this research was exploratory and provided the opportunity to evaluate pre-and post-crisis inputs from separate research samples of participants on drivers of employer attraction and relative importance of Purpose-fit, as study one was completed before the COVID-19 outbreak and the Black Lives Matter movement following the death of George Floyd and other black citizens in 2020.

Findings from the completed studies confirm the importance of individual and organizational purpose alignment among prospective job seekers and validate Purpose-fit as a concept. Prospective job seekers identified the perception of organizational purpose alignment as a key driver of employer attraction and reported a WTALP to work for an organization where there is perceived Purpose-fit. Generation moderated the importance of perceived organizational purpose alignment, with higher levels of importance emphasized by the older generations at work, contrary to extant literature which emphasizes stronger differentiation among the Millennial and Generation Z generations. Economic security as a moderator of the importance of perceived organizational purpose alignment was partially validated. Study one noted the pursuit of purpose as privilege and secondary to establishing basic needs among the younger and milieu generations. Study two noted no significant effect from economic security on the choice and relative importance of Purpose-fit. However, economic insecurity does not preclude the pursuit of Purpose-fit among prospective job seekers. Lastly, in the current times of social crises and unrest with the COVID-19 pandemic and racial injustice, this study established that the employee experience of how an employer responds to social crisis moderated the relative importance of perceived Purpose-fit. In cases of positive experience with an employers' response to both COVID-19 and racial injustice, the relative importance of Purpose-fit was heightened along with increased WTALP and lower active job search.

Implications for practice are presented and discussed in detail. In particular, the newly defined concept of Purpose-fit proving important as a driver of employer attraction across generations at work has implications for talent management, strategy, and employer brand and marketing. As the war for talent intensifies, Millennials are emerging

into management and leadership, with Generation Z following behind to fill in the prominence of the labor force. These generations share similar characteristics of being socially conscientious and are attracted to organizations that have an active corporate social performance and responsibility (Catano & Hines, 2016; Meister, 2012; Costanza et al., 2012; Ng., Schweitzer, & Lyons, 2010) and report purpose as an important consideration in their search for employers (Achor, Reece, Kellerman, Robichaux, 2018). These current and future generations' work preferences will accelerate the emergence and importance of organizational purpose and pressure test Purpose-fit as a key driver of employer attraction.

In the future of work, defined by changes in response to technological progress, globalization, ageing populations, evolving worker preferences, and new organizational business models and forms of work (Beechler & Woodward, 2009), organizations will experience great challenge, complexity, and opportunity. Incorporating organizational purpose in corporate and talent strategy will establish a differentiated brand and purpose alignment opportunity to attract critical talent for the organization. This implication has never been more important as social crises challenge employers and employees on organizational purpose.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

The phenomenon of employer attraction has been widely researched and is growing in popularity in human resources and talent management research, as competition is high in the war for talent. Job seekers have choices and preferences, and employers are looking to differentiate themselves as preferred employers of choice, especially for top talent and key skills (Michaels, Handfield-Jones, & Axelrod, 2001). There are not many traditional employer attribute that differentiate one employer from the next, as most employers offer comparable tangibles such as compensation, benefits, etc. However, some employers may be more favorable in their market competitiveness strategy and positioning. Given that employer offerings are fairly consistent across similar industries, geography, and company size, key questions to investigate are what attracts employees to specific employers over others, and which employer attributes are most important to present and future workforces? This knowledge would give employers a competitive advantage over others in attracting and acquiring the talent and skills needed in their human capital to achieve their business objectives.

This literature review is organized as follows: a review of i) the employee lens on employer attraction and extrinsic and intrinsic rewards, ii) the organizational lens on employer attraction and the importance of organizational image and reputation, and employer brand, iii) the prevailing concepts of perceived-fit and person-organizational fit, iv) two key theories in employer attraction -- social identity and similarity attraction, v) identifying organizational purpose and its emerging presence and importance, and vi) generational differences in job seeker preferences and employer attraction.

The Employee Lens on Employer Attraction

A significant amount of research has been dedicated to understanding what attracts job seekers to employers and what predicts employer attraction. Understanding the meaning of employer attraction is a necessary starting point. Berthon, Ewing, and Hah's (2005) definition of employer attraction posits that employer attraction is the "envisioned benefits that a potential employee sees working for a specific organization." Similarly, Tsai & Yang (2010) defined organizational attractiveness as "the applicants' willingness to pursue a job and to accept job offers from an organization." For this research study I adopt Coldwell et al.'s (2008) employer attraction definition of "the favorable interaction between potential applicants and the images, values, and information about an organization." This definition provides the basis of employer attraction per the job seeker and prospective employee's view, preferences, and evaluation.

Extrinsic Motivators and Traditional Rewards

The existing literature in human resources management, employer branding, employer attractiveness, and job choice motivation provides a collection of employer attributes that influence and predict employer attraction, intention to apply, and intention to accept a job offer (Berthon, Ewing, & Hah, 2005; Chapman et al., 2005; Highhouse, Lievens, & Sinar, 2003; Lievens & Highhouse, 2003; Reis & Braga, 2016; Rynes & Barber. 1990; Tsai & Yang, 2010; Twenge et al., 2010). Such attributes include financial (compensation, benefits, etc.) and non-financial (employer image, work-life balance, etc.)

characteristics as well as intrinsic (personal satisfaction) and extrinsic (rewards) motivations.

Job seekers choose employers, and these choices are informed and influenced by extrinsic and intrinsic motivators and rewards in alignment with their preferences and needs. Many studies on employer attraction focus on and emphasize extrinsic motivators. Such motivators include an above-average basic salary, an overall competitive and equitable compensation package, performance rewards and bonuses, health and life benefits, formal recognition and appreciation from management, promotional opportunities within the organization, and job security and employment security.

In addition to organizational attributes, employer attraction is also perceived by job-level attributes. Job level attributes are characteristics of the job itself, not the organization at large. Job level attributes of attraction include autonomy, the potential for advancement, challenge, development, and travel. Other job level attributes include the colleagues and people at work, the manager, and cross-organization experience and opportunities. Behling, Labovitz, and Gainer (1968) developed the objective factor theory, which posits that applicants are thought to make job choice decisions based on the attractiveness of such objective job attributes. Two notable meta-analyses on employer attraction by Uggerslev, Fassina, and Kraichy (2012) and Chapman et al. (2005) similarly classified job-choice attributes as key drivers of attractiveness. The attraction of job seekers also includes the position level, level of embeddedness, number of incumbents in the applicant pool, attractiveness relative to competitors, job tasks, and rigidity of skill requirements defined as "vacancy characteristics" (Rynes & Barber, 1990). Job attributes are instrumental job characteristics, objective, concrete, and factual and are among the

strongest predictors of employer attraction, contending job seekers may base their job choices primarily on their evaluation of job attributes versus employer-specific attributes (Lievens & Highhouse, 2003). However, this dissertation sets out to investigate and prove that employer attraction goes beyond such extrinsic, instrumental, and objective factors.

Intrinsic Motivators and Non-Traditional Rewards

Beyond the traditional attributes, there are non-traditional attributes that affect a job seeker's employer attraction such as non-financial rewards and more intrinsically motivated employer attributes. With intrinsic motivators, the job seeker self-determines a sense of interest, pride, and belonging with the prospective employer. A key example of an intrinsic motivator is organizational identity. Organizational identification is an affinity that motivates job seekers to associate themselves to the organization. Organizational identity is defined as the central, enduring, and distinctive character of an organization that motivates members by imparting values that employees can identify with to give their actions meaning in the workplace (Cable & Edwards, 2009). Lievens, Van Hoye, and Anseel (2007) distinguish two types of organizational identity: (i) a member's perceptions of the image of the organization, and (ii) a members' assessment of other's perceptions of the image of the organization. In contrast to instrumental objective job attributes, symbolic job attributes are subjective, abstract, and intangible. Such attributes convey symbolic company information in the form of imagery and trait inferences and form important meaning for the job seeker concerning their own identity, their identity associated with the employer, as well as the perception of others on their association with the employer.

Employer attraction is notably related to instrumental-objective (extrinsic) and symbolic-subjective (intrinsic) dimensions and attributes. These attributes are reflected in Berthon, Ewing, and Hah's (2005) Employer Attractiveness Scale (EmpAt Scale). This validated 25 item scale comprises of five categorical factors of employer attractiveness: Application Value, Development Value, Economic Value, interest Value, and Social Value. These factors cover both extrinsic motivators (job security, above average pay, promotional opportunities, etc.) and intrinsic motivators (acceptance and belonging, innovative employer, feeling good about yourself as a result of working for a particular organization, etc.) of employer attraction.

From the employee lens, drivers of employer attraction include both extrinsic and intrinsic factors in balance of rewards, satisfaction, and personal identification and association.

The Organizational Lens on Employer Attraction

Employers adopt many strategies related to employee attraction, focusing on objective and subjective, extrinsic and intrinsic, and monetary and non-monetary rewards and attributes. Given the growing influence and convenience of social media, employer branding, and value propositioning, employers place a lot of importance on subjective, intrinsic, and non-monetary attributes as means of attraction. Three key areas of focus from the organizational lens on employer attraction are i) organizational image, ii) employer brand, and iii) reputation.

Organizational Image

Organizational image is the construction of the public impressions of an organization created to appeal to an external audience while simultaneously interpreted

by the organization's members (Greenhaus & Callanan, 2006) and plays an important role in employer attraction. An organization's image may be publicly well known and established or require research by the job seeker to gather information through the company website, annual reports, Glassdoor® and other social media, secondary sources, or publicly available information. Organizational image affects the job seeker's evaluation of the employer in which a positive image becomes a driver of employer attraction.

Early impression of an organization's image affects employee attraction and that initial attraction to the organization is based on symbolic meaning and inferred traits the job seeker identifies and associates with the organization (Lievens & Highhouse, 2003). Organizational image serves as a symbol to job seekers. It creates a perception of what the employer stands for and how that aligns with the job seeker's interests. Whether based on ethics and moral standing, social responsibility, financial integrity, innovation, or other reputable characteristics, job seekers evaluate the organization's image and values against their own to determine if there is alignment and whether an organization has certain characteristics that are important to the job seeker (Cable, & Turban, 2003). Highhouse, Lievens, and Sinar (2003) note that a job seeker's concern for symbolic attributes is motivated by desires to regulate others' impressions of oneself. The authors provide a theory of symbolic attraction and social identity consciousness based on (i) the job seeker's concern for social adjustment, (ii) a desire to impress others through affiliation with an impressive organization, and (iii) a concern for value expression where membership with an organization projects an image of wholesomeness.

Organizational image contributes to the job seeker's self-esteem and gauges how others judge them as part of the organization. Job seekers identify with organizations as a means of defining themselves, expressing themselves, and acquiring social approval of others. Job seekers look to the organization for their self-identity and place importance on how others view their association with the employer. Pride from organizational membership and others' impressions of the employer are an important part of the individual's self-concept and their social identity as joining a particular organization is a concrete, public expression of a person's values and abilities (Cable & Turban, 2003).

Image congruity theory positions that consumers have a greater attraction toward products with brand images similar to their actual and idealized self-image (Ericksen, 1997). In application to employer attraction, prospective job seekers are attracted to organizations with personalities they perceive as similar to their own actual and ideal self-concepts where actual congruence exerted a greater influence on organizational attraction than ideal congruence (Harold and Nolan, 2010). Just as consumers will pay for an identical product for a better brand name, individuals may be willing to pay a premium in the form of lower wages (or other tradeoffs) to accept an identical job with a firm that increases their pride and self-esteem (Cable & Turban, 2003).

Employer Branding and Reputation

There is a consistent integration with marketing and recruitment concepts and theories in the literature and research on employer attraction. This is most evident in the literature on employer brand. Employer brand is defined as the package of functional, economic, and psychological benefits provided by employment and identified with the employing company (Ambler & Barrow, 1996). Employer brand emphasizes concern for

building an image in the minds of the potential labor market that the company is a great place to work (Berthon, Ewing, & Hah, 2005). Employer brand provides an employer identity and image primarily focused toward current and prospective employees and therefore directly related to employer attraction. Employers competing to attract talent emphasize organizational identity by curating brand and reputation images, media, and messages. The employer brand puts forward a defining signal of who the employer is, what it stands for, what it is like to work there, who works there, etc., for the job seeker to receive and interpret.

Linking employer brand, organizational image, and employer attraction, Tsia & Yang (2010) noted that one of the most important associations applicants perceive regarding a given company is credibility images. Cable and Turban (2003) stated that consumers value the prestige, exclusivity, or "fashionability" of a brand because of how it relates to their self-concept. Prestige is an individuals' interpretation and assessment of a firm's reputation based on their exposure to information about the organization and maybe informed from various sources of information both within and outside of the control of the employer (Uen, Ahlstrom, Chen, & Liu, 2015). With regard to employer attraction, job seekers place value on an employers' reputation because of the pride they expect from being associated with the employer. Job seekers evaluate whether an organization has a good reputation to determine if they want to be associated with the employer. When employers understand and integrate these factors into the employment brand, they can successfully compete globally in attracting employees (Berthon, Ewing, & Hah, 2005).

From the organizational lens, strategies of employee attraction include drivers of extrinsic and intrinsic factors expanded by an emphasis on organizational image, employer branding, and reputation that convey signals for identification and similarity to effect employer attraction.

Perceived Fit

One of the most cited and leading indicators of employer attraction is perceived fit (Chapman et al., 2005; Uggerslev, Fassina, & Kraichy, 2012) which has generated considerable attention in research with respect to its influence on organizational attraction (Cable & DeRue, 2002). A seminal theory and model in talent management from Schneider (1981) is the Attraction-Selection-Attrition model that posits the influence of fit where proposed attraction to, selection for, and retention in an organization are determined by the perceived similarity between a person and the environment. The degree of fit between employees and their work environments (Person-Environment fit) is a concept that dates back to psychology and the 1935 work of Kurt Lewin's Dynamic Theory of Personality. There have been many follow-on studies on this central concept. Kristof-Brown et al. (2005) defined person-environment fit (PE fit) as the compatibility between an individual and work environment that occurs when their characteristics are aligned. Numerous research studies have applied the PE fit concept in the evaluation of matching employees with their environment to include Schaffer's Theory of Job Satisfaction (1953), McGrath's Model of Stress and Performance (1970), and Holland's Theory of Vocational Choice (1959) among others. Several studies have specifically integrated PE fit in recruitment and selection research to include the Wanous Matching

Model (1980), the Breaugh Person-Job Congruence Model (1992), and the Werbel and Gilliland Facet Model of Fit (1999).

Of the many variations on PE fit, person-organization fit (PO fit) is most relevant to this study. The PO fit model was developed by Chatman (1989) and conceptualizes fit in terms of the shared values held by the person and organization and is defined as the congruence between the norms and values of organizations and the values of persons. Kristof (1996) further defined PO fit as an individual's subjective belief about their perceived compatibility with a workplace. Carless (2005) expanded the definition as the compatibility between people and organizations that occur when (i) at least one entity provides what the other needs, (ii) they share similar fundamental characteristics, or (iii) both. Überschaer, Baum, Bietz, and Kabst (2016) noted that PO fit research is concerned with understanding the antecedents and consequences of compatibility between people and the organizations in which they work. PO fit encompasses two broad conceptualizations of i) complementary fit aligning need fulfillment between the employee and employer and ii) supplementary fit when a person and an organization share qualities, values, characteristics, or goals.

An important dimension of PO fit is the evaluation of value congruence by the job seeker with the employer. Value congruence occurs when a job seeker and employer have similar values. Value congruence refers to the similarity between an individual's values and the cultural value system of an organization (Chatman, 1989; Kristof, 1996) and is defined as when job seekers and potential employers attach similar importance to certain work-based values such as relationship, autonomy, and prestige (Chatman, 1989). Molina

(2016) further defined value congruence as the degree to which an individual's values match the values found in their work environment.

Experiencing value congruence during the recruitment process perpetuates certain expectations about certain work environments and employer relationships, which positively impacts organizational attraction (Yu, 2014). Job seekers are more attracted to employers whose perceived values match their own and they prefer organizations where their personal characteristics are aligned with organizational attributes (Cable & Judge, 1997; Chatman, 1989). In aligning organizational image and perceived fit, a positive social evaluation of a company's corporate image can cause job seekers to identify with the company's values and ideals, thereby increasing the perceived fit of the job seeker (Wei, Chang, Lin, & Liang, 2016) and positively affecting employer attraction.

Job seekers attempt to match their values with an organization's reputation (Cable & Judge, 1997). Many studies indicate that an organization's attractiveness is influenced by perceptions of values, particularly the importance of applicants' perceptions of their values alignment with potential employers in shaping their employer choice (Coldwell et al., 2008). Congruence between job seekers' perception of an organization's values and their perception of their own values positively affects the job seeker's perceived PO fit with the organization and significantly predicts their job choice intention (Cable & Judge, 1996). Additionally, when the supplementary fit is attributable to value congruence, it becomes a strong predictor of the employee's attitudes, including organizational commitment and job satisfaction (Überschaer, Baum, Bietz, & Kabst, 2016).

The concept of perceived fit is a critical component of employer attraction. It draws on the prospective job seeker an evaluation of the employer based on information

and experience in the determination of fit. A key element of this evaluation beyond goals, skills, or needs alignment is congruence with values, personal characteristics, i.e., Person Organization fit. Job seekers are more attracted to employers where they perceive there is fit and alignment between their values and the organization.

Social Identity and Similarity Attraction Theory

A key theory associated with employer attraction is social identity. Social identity theory suggests that a person's self-concept is made up of both a personal identity and a social identity, and people identify with organizations to the degree that organizational membership contributes to their self-esteem and self-consistency needs (Tajfel, Turner, Austin, & Worchel, 1979). Social identity theory further posits that people have a natural desire to link themselves to social groups and that these groups can become part of the person's social identity. In the organizational context, employees can obtain self-enhancement and social approval when they perceive, and are perceived by others, that the organization for which they work to be rather favorable (Tsai & Yang, 2010).

Organizational attraction is determined by more than simply instrumental attributes of the job (pay, benefits, opportunities); it is also affected by symbolic meanings, such as being associated with a particular firm (reputation, image, etc.), and it is also linked to self-identity and self-expression concerns (Lieven & Highhouse, 2003). Attraction to the symbolic features of firms is functional in that it allows the job seeker to communicate how he or she wants to be perceived (Highhouse et al., 2007). Job seekers concern themselves with not only tangible and functional features of jobs but also with meanings that people associate with the employing organization (Lievens & Highhouse, 2003). In short, people identify with an organization as a means of expressing themselves

and acquiring social approval. The extent to which job seekers believe that membership in the organization is relevant to their social identity (i.e., organizational identity salience) will moderate the extent to which they infer positive information from the organization's attributes communicated through recruiting activity and other signals (Celani & Singh, 2011).

Another key theory for employer attraction is Byrne's (1971) similarity attraction theory. Similarity attraction theory posits that people are more attracted to similar individuals rather than dissimilar individuals. This theory has been applied in employer attraction research proposing that job seekers place more importance and are therefore more attracted to organizations where employees have similar characteristics. A key source of information for the job seeker is people information (Cable & Turban, 2001), and similarity with the attributes of current employees is found to predict employer attractiveness among job seekers (Devendorf & Highhouse, 2008).

These key theories establish a critical point of view for employer attraction. The theories show that attractiveness to employers or jobs goes beyond traditional extrinsic attributes; rather, they emphasize personal identification, symbolic attraction, congruence, and meaning through association.

Organizational Purpose

Purpose is the ultimate priority of the organization and its reason for existence (Basu, 2017).There are four key and closely related observations in the management literature on organizational purpose (Henderson & Van den Steen, 2015). First, firm purpose is directed toward a prosocial goal, i.e., a benefit to society. Second, employees care deeply and are passionate about a firm's purpose. Third, this care and passion

remains even for employees whose job activities are far removed from the direct activities of an employer that fulfills their purpose. Fourth, firms try to show the authenticity of social engagements. Purpose is a source for order and direction for an organization. It is a concrete goal or objective for the firm that reaches beyond profit maximization as: a) purpose can create value for a firm beyond its social impact by developing or strengthening employees' identity and reputation and b) firms are effective carriers of identity and reputation where firm association and employee work activities contribute to the firm's purpose, employees infer a positive identity and reputation which they may value over salary and be willing to accept a lower salary given the identity and reputation benefits they receive from the firm (Henderson & Van den Steen, 2015).

Organizations have started paying closer attention to and communicating about their purpose and related economic, social, governance, ethical, and environmental responsibilities (Dhanesh, G. S., 2020). There is also a growing interest in establishing purpose among employers and CEOs of leading organizations. The Workplace Culture Institute reported that leaders recognize the importance of purpose-driven companies and provide key points on the growing significance of purpose (Margolis, 2019). The Business Roundtable, an association of Chief Executive Officers of leading American companies, released a Statement on the Purpose of the Corporation highlighting the role corporations can play in improving human society. The Global Leadership Forecast 2018 illustrated the impact of purpose on financial performance and that purpose-driven companies outperform the market by 42%. The November 2019 CNBC/SurveyMonkey @Work Survey and Workplace Happiness Index reported that among 8,000 professionals surveyed, 34% of respondents noted that feeling work is meaningful is the most

important factor in determining workplace happiness as opposed to 21% reporting good pay as the most important factor.

The 2015 E&Y Beacon Institute report on the Business Case for Purpose surveyed 474 global executives and found i) a high level of consensus among executives that purpose matters with a widespread belief that purpose has positive effects on key performance drivers, ii) very few companies utilize purpose as a driver of strategy and decision making, iii) in organizations where purpose has become a driver of strategy and decision making, executives reported a greater ability to deliver revenue growth and drive successful innovation and ongoing transformation, and iv) identification of several benefits of purpose to include providing employees with a sense of meaning and fulfillment (Montgomery, 2019). Rebecca Henderson further notes for the Business Case for Purpose (October 2015: page 4), "Once they're past a certain financial threshold, many people are as motivated by intrinsic meaning and the sense that they are contributing to something worthwhile as much as they are by financial returns or status."

In their book *Purpose-Driven Leadership*, Cardona P., Rey C., Craig N. (2019) identified two sides of purpose that need to be harmonized: organization to employee and employee to organization. Organization to employee is where the organization defines a purpose and communicates it to the employee. When the employee internalizes the organizational purpose, they get a more meaningful understanding of their work. Employee to organization is where individuals derive a sense of meaning in their work from their personal purpose and incorporate their unique purpose into the organization. The authors propose that "purpose synergy" is the intersection of individual purpose and

organizational purpose and channels the potential of the person's purpose within the context of the company's purpose (Cardona P., Rey C., Craig N., 2019).

In the 2014 publication by the Academy of Management on Organizations with Purpose, a quote by the lead editor posits that a focus on purpose acknowledges the interdependence of business and society—one cannot flourish without the other; it engages an exploration of how corporate purpose and the values that drive it might best be brought together in the service of society; further, it assumes that business success can be intertwined with the success of the society in a way that allows the business to thrive (Hollensbe et al., 2014).

Similarly related to and often confused with organizational purpose is organizational mission. The importance of organizational mission is well established in organizational management research, primarily in the areas of sustaining employee commitment, engagement and retention, but with notable absence on employer attraction. Exceptions include non-profits where i) mission might be salient in attracting employees but less effective in retaining them (Brown & Yoshioka, 2003), and ii) individuals who work in the nonprofit sector are intrinsically motivated in terms of job choice (Park & Word, 2012), i.e., public service.

Organizational studies have identified organizational mission as a driver of employee retention, engagement, and salary sacrifice (McGinnis & Ng, 2016). Nonprofits and similar charitable organizations have used mission attachment and their reputation for purposeful and meaningful work to overcome (or at least reduce) the advantages in salaries, benefits, and career paths offered by for-profit, private and commercial companies (Ng, Schweitzer, & Lyons, 2010; Brown & Yoshioka, 2003). This suggests

that an authentic and well-communicated mission statement can differentiate a firm and serve as a driver of attraction for prospective job seekers despite salary competitiveness challenges.

Terms like vision, mission, purpose, and values are often used interchangeably. However, these terms have distinct definitions, purposes, and applications. Vision is an aspirational description of what an organization would be like if it achieves its goals and intentions and is a motivator and driving force for how a company defines success. Mission describes what the organization does to deliver on the vision and aligns employees and stakeholders to the same focus and objectives. Organizational purpose provides reasons why an organization exists, is holistic, and the fundamental reason for being. Purpose is broader and describes what drives the people in an organization and gives employees a sense of fulfillment by allowing them to contribute to a greater cause and see the impact of their efforts on society. Values define what the organization believes in and how people in the organization are expected to behave with each other, customers and suppliers, and other stakeholders. Values provide moral direction for the organization, guide decision-making, and serve as a standard for employees to judge violations. An example from Deloitte., LLP. (*Deloitte's Purpose*, 2018) follows.

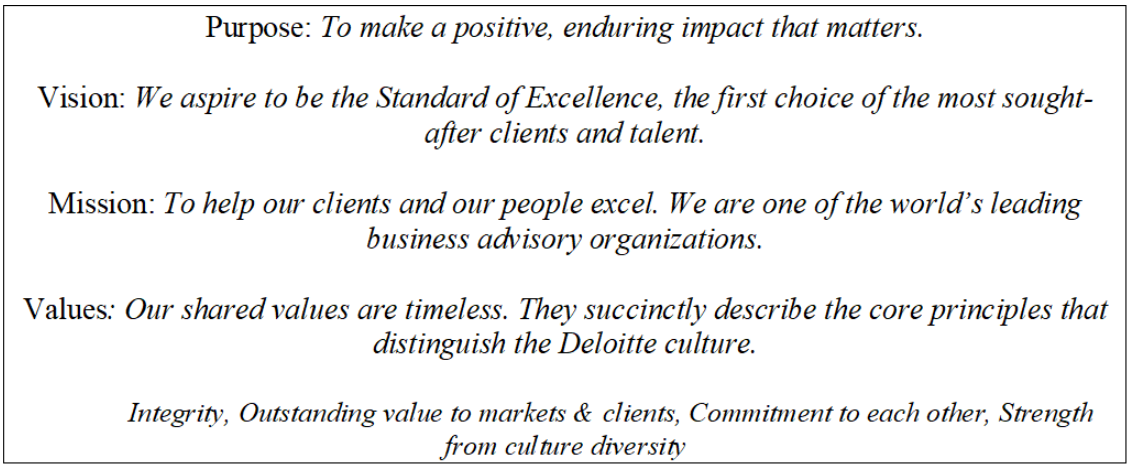

Figure 1. Sample employer purpose, vision, mission, and values statement

The concept of organizational purpose is gaining traction and attention by employers in defining their organizational identity and reason for being. Organizational purpose not only provides a differentiation for employer attraction as compared to organizations that do not define and promote their purpose, but also can serve as a competitive advantage given the emerging importance of organizational purpose alignment among prospective job seekers. Organizational purpose is not only emergent in its relative importance in employer attraction but is a key element of the dyadic relationship of individual and organizational purpose alignment for job seekers evaluating employers.

Generational Differences

Generational differences in employer attraction are evident in the research comparing Millennial (Generational Y, Z) and non-Millennial generations (Generation X and Baby Boomers), and the commentary suggests that perception of organizational purpose might be of particular importance. The generations at work that are typically

compared are the Baby Boomers (born 1944-1965), Generation X (born 1966-1976), Millennials/Generation Y (born 1977-1994), and Generation Z (born 1995-2012). Generational date ranges and makeup of the labor force in the United States are provided in Table 1.

Table 1.

Generational Demographics

Generation	Birth Years	% of Labor Force	Est #s In Labor Force in Millions	Est Population In Millions
Traditionalists	1945 or earlier	2%	3M	55M
Baby Boomers	1944-1965	25%	41M	76M
Generation X	1966-1976	33%	53M	82M
Generation Y	1977-1994	35%	56M	73M
Generation Z	1995-2012	5%	9M	74M

Source: Pew Research Center, April 2018

The literature on Millennials is well researched and established. The Millennial workforce has been described as highly entitled, prone to short tenures and job flipping, holding high expectations for flexibility and work-life balance, and expecting promotions within a short period of time. Other popular characteristics regarding Millennials are their ambition and desire to make a difference, being eager learners, a sense of collectivism, a desire for continuous reinforcement and immediate feedback, placing high value on recognition, self-confidence, impatience, and adaptability, and favoring a technological work environment (Cennamo & Gardner, 2008; Costanza et al, 2012; Martin & Ottemann, 2015; McGinnis Johnson & Ng, 2016; Ng, Schweitzer, & Lyons, 2010). Comparatively, Generation X are characterized as cynical, skeptical, having a live-for-

today mentality, being self-reliant and independent, entrepreneurial, loyal, and having a strong sense of morality. Generation X are also characterized as selfish, committed to their own careers above their organization, and preferring skill development, productivity, and work-life balance rather than status and tenure (Cennamo, L., & Gardner, D., 2008). Baby Boomers are described as having a strong focus on hard work and achievement, valuing status and extrinsic rewards as recognition for loyalty and commitment, more respectful of authority and hierarchy, with good supervisor relations and positive interactions with co-workers to be important (Cennamo, L., & Gardner, D., 2008).

Generations vary in terms of workplace preferences that affect their motivation to join an organization. Research suggests for employer attraction among generations at work 1) the influence of interest values (i.e., valuing innovation, creativity, challenging environment, high quality) *increases* with age; 2) the importance of economic values (i.e., above average salary, promotional opportunities) *decreases* with age, and 3) developmental considerations (i.e., feeling good and self-confident as a result of working for the organization) were most important for Millennials, followed closely by high economic values (Reis & Braga, 2016).

The Theoretical Values-Attitude-Attraction model suggests generational workplace values in three categories of i) basic employment preference, ii) career development, and iii) management approach & culture. This model proposes that generational differences lead to differences in attitudinal workplace perceptions and expectations, and ultimately motivates employee attraction where such value preferences are evident or perceived in the employer or job (Martin & Ottemann, 2015). Martin and

Ottemann's prediction for each generation notes i) developing challenging career paths and recognizing the importance of monetary rewards is an integral part of the total rewards package for Baby Boomer, ii) Generation X are most likely to ask for higher pay, hiring bonuses, promotions, and self-direction, and iii) Millennials tend to look for long-term career development, a variety of experiences, a sense of purpose and meaning in their work, open social networks, and work/life balance.

While Generation Z is just entering the workforce, early impressions are that this generation will further disrupt the workplace similar to the Millennial generation before it, with increased emphasis on work-life balance, high-touch and high-tech, continuous learning and development, feedback, and diversity and inclusion. Although more entrepreneurial, tech-savvy, and social media dependent, Generation Z retain the Millennials' interests in key social, environmental, and political issues (Parker, Graf, & Igielnik, 2020) and are attuned with organizational purpose.

Corporate Social Responsibility

A key difference in generational work preferences is the relative importance placed on an employer's corporate social responsibility. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is defined as an organization's interest in social responsibility as well as social policies that aid in improving its relationships with society and is an integral aspect of an organization's image (Catano & Hines, 2016). Research on employer attraction has focused on generational differences with considerable attention on Millennials highlighting their placing high importance on corporate social responsibility in employer evaluation. The values of Millennials differ from those of older workers, and such differences lead Millennial job seekers to emphasize greater importance of CSR in their

current and prospective employers. Many of the Millennials' social engagement expectations align with CSR policies and their desire to have impact on society. In the "2015 Millennial Corporate Social Responsibility Study", Cone Communications notes several key facts related to Millennials and CSR, most notably, i) 76% of Millennials in their study would consider a company's CSR when deciding where to work, ii) 62% would choose to work with a socially responsible company even if the salary would be less than another company, and iii) when a company supports a social or environment issue, 93% would have a more positive image of the company (*Conemillennialcsrstudy*, 2015).

Similar to consumers paying attention to CSR records of companies from who they are making purchases, it is presumable that applicants are considering the same when evaluating employers (Maignan, Ferrell, & Hult, 1999). For Millennials, this is further emphasized given the importance of social conscience of this generation. Similar to Millennial consumers, prospective Millennial job seekers consider CSR important to the overall assessment of a company's attractiveness.

CSR also affects organizational image and provides signals to the job seeker that informs employer attraction such as anticipated pride from being affiliated with an organization with CSR commitments, perceived value congruence with the organization, and expectations on how the organization treats its employees (Jones, Willness, & Madey, 2014). Job seekers prefer organizations with whom they perceive congruence between their and the organization's primary values and the organizational image influences a firms' ability to attract applicants (Backhaus, Stone, & Heiner, 2002). The attraction of Millennial job seekers to an organization's CSR policies may reflect, in part,

the Millennial's own set of values and an attempt to achieve value congruence (Catano & Hines, 2016) with the employer. Companies with stronger CSR are perceived as more attractive employers, with research indicating organizational corporate social performance is positively related to employer attractiveness to job seekers with high levels of job choice (Albinger, H. S., & Freeman, S. J., 2000).

Purposeful Work and Salary Sacrifice

Millennials more than other generations are looking for meaningful and fulfilling work (McGinnis & Ng, 2016). Meaningful Work is defined as "any paid or unpaid work or occupational role people fulfill that is judged by them to possess meaning, purpose or significance" (Steger, Dik, & Duffy, 2012). Weeks and Schaffert (2017) define meaningful work as serving others and seeing lives improved and further identified that Millennials stated overall that having a meaningful job was very important. In the 2016 Deloitte Millennial Survey, 30% of Millennials surveyed noted that meaningful work is important and reported a willingness to choose corporate culture and meaningful work above everything else. In the follow-on 2019 Deloitte Global Millennial Survey, 46% of Millennials surveyed reported more attraction to making a positive impact in their communities or societies at large over having children or starting families (39%), and slightly below earning high salaries (52%) and travelling the world (57%).

Given their high rankings for the importance of social impact and high intrinsic value placed on corporate social responsibility, Millennials are also attracted to nonprofit work, public service, and humanitarian organizations. The nonprofit sector has historically promoted its public service-oriented mission to attract employees, especially as nonprofits typically pay lower salaries than commercial or private sector organizations.

Nonprofit workers are also differentially motivated from their private sector counterparts placing more emphasis on the intrinsic aspects of work (McGinnis & Ng, 2016). A phenomenon related to nonprofit employees is the "donative labor" hypothesis (Leete, 2001). This hypothesis posits that nonprofit workers "donate" their labor and accept lower wages in exchange for the intrinsic satisfaction they receive for assisting with the achievement of an organization's mission-oriented goals (McGinnis & Ng, 2016). NetImpact's "Talent Report: What Workers Want in 2012" notes that 35% of college students would take a 15% pay cut to work for a company committed to CSR, 45% would take a pay cut for a job that makes a social or environment impact, and 58% would take a pay cut to work for an organization with values "like my own" (Meister, 2012). Further, a 2018 study of 2,285 American professionals in 26 industries found that workers are willing to forego 23% of their entire future lifetime earnings in order to have a job that is always meaningful (Anchor et al., 2018).

Multiple generations and generational gaps in the workplace create a challenge in talent management to accommodate all the differences and preferences among the generations at work. Employers are recognizing the differentiation opportunity and importance of aligning with generational preferences to attract and retain the necessary talent to compete and thrive as an employer. The younger generations are placing greater emphasis on social responsibility, purpose, and meaning, and look for these characteristics when evaluating employers and fit, placing greater importance on organizational purpose and alignment with their individual purpose.

Summary of Literature Review

The literature on employer attraction is well researched and established. Consistently cited are traditional and non-traditional, objective and symbolic, financial and non-financial, extrinsic and intrinsic attributes, rewards, and motivators. In addition, the extant literature establishes social identity as the theoretical basis of the phenomena emphasizing the importance of intrinsic features of employer attraction through symbolism, image, identity, and association. Further, the concepts of person-environment fit and person-organizational fit are established as prevailing drivers of employer attraction with emphasis on the importance of complementarity, supplementary fit, and values congruence.

Generational differences, with emphasis on Millennial preferences note above all else the strong preference for organizations with corporate social responsibility programs. The emergence of organizational purpose in employee preference, especially with the younger generations at work, suggests an increased importance of this employer attribute among the younger generations.

There is no direct identification of organizational purpose or the perceived alignment of individual and organizational purpose as a driver of employer attraction in the extant literature. The emerging importance of perceived individual and organizational purpose alignment is primarily established and emphasized in business publications whereas academic literature primarily focuses on purposeful and meaningful work or indirectly associates organizational purpose as values congruence within person-organizational fit. Individual and organizational purpose alignment also becomes conflated mission and when associated with Millennial attraction to firms with corporate

social responsibility programs. Given the emerging importance placed on organizational purpose by businesses and job seekers and the indirect association of organizational purpose in the prevailing "fit" constructs, distinct attention on the relative importance of organizational purpose alignment is of the essence.

With an identified gap in the literature on specific investigation of organizational purpose alignment, the following research studies investigate the relative importance of organizational purpose as an attribute of employer attraction, the perceived alignment of individual and organizational purpose in evaluation of fit and as a driver of employer attraction, and the tradeoffs made between organizational purpose alignment and other prevailing drivers of employer attraction. In addition, the influence of moderating variables of generation, economic security, and social crises on the impact of organizational purpose alignment on employer attraction are investigated and reported.

The following two research studies examine further the phenomena of employer attraction and perceived fit. Chapter 3 summarizes a qualitative study investigating drivers of employer attraction and uncovers the emerging importance of perceived organizational purpose alignment affected by generation and economic security and introduces a new concept of Purpose-fit as a driver of employer attraction. Chapter 4 summarizes a quantitative study examining the relative importance of Purpose-fit as a driver of employer attraction, tradeoffs of other employer attributes, and willingness to accept less pay. This research study further investigates the effect of generation, economic security, and introduces the impact of employer response to social crisis on the relative importance of Purpose-fit. In full, the combined research studies provide contribution to the research and literature of employer attraction and perceived fit with

practical implications in the fields of human resources and talent management, employer branding, and marketing.

CHAPTER 3: STUDY ONE

PURPOSE-FIT AS A DRIVER OF EMPLOYER ATTRACTION

Background

Understanding what attracts employees to certain employers over others and how employers are differentiated by their attributes, attraction strategies, and employer brands is a strategic imperative for companies competing in the global workplace. This knowledge provides differentiation and competitive advantage for employers in their Human Resources and Talent Management practices. This differentiation is important to job seekers as they seek alignment of their knowledge, skills, and abilities with that of job requirements as well as the employer providing for basic and advanced needs and overall fit with the organization. This advantage is critical for employers in the increasingly competitive global market and a future of work marked by volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity (VUCA) in employment trends, talent mobility, business transformation, and scarcity of talent and specialized skills. These phenomena place greater importance than ever on employee attraction and employer differentiation for employers (Beechler & Woodward, 2009).

The existing literature in human resources management, employer branding, organizational attraction, and job choice motivation comprise a litany of employer attributes that influence and predict a job seeker's employer attraction, intention to apply, and intention to accept a job offer. However, among the employer attributes researched,

organizational purpose is noticeably absent and not distinguishably represented in the literature. This is a notable gap as the importance of purpose alignment placed on organizations with social responsibility programs is growing among job seekers, particularly among the emerging workforces. Millennials, along with the emerging Generation Z, prefer organizations that have active corporate social performance (Catano & Hines, 2016; Meister, 2012; Costanza et al., 2012) as well as employers who demonstrate commitment to social responsibility that aligns with their value preferences.

This research study seeks to identify drivers of employer attraction among prospective job seekers. Filling a gap in employer attraction literature, study one of this two-part, mixed method study, begins the research with a qualitative method to investigate through inductive inquiry whether organizational purpose is an important attribute for job seekers in employer attraction and its relative importance compared with other employer attributes. Key attributes and themes from the qualitative analysis will be further investigated in follow-on quantitative research in study two.

This chapter is organized per the following sections. First, a review of the methodology, data, and analysis are provided. Second, analysis and results are presented to include key themes from the qualitative analysis and coding. Third, findings are presented along with research propositions and a new concept of Purpose-fit is introduced. Lastly, limitations and implications for future research are discussed.

Methodology

To investigate and capture the nuance and subtlety of organizational purpose alignment, this research study adopted a qualitative research approach and data collection method incorporating inductive semi-structured interviews with active, prospective, and

recent job seekers among the prevailing generations at work. Interview participants spanned various demographics (age, gender, education, etc.) with a primary focus in the knowledge sector. The following interview protocol, data and descriptive statistics, and data analysis summarizes the qualitative method and approach.

Interview Protocol

Interview participants included active Generation Z and Millennial (Generation Y) job seekers and those who recently accepted a job (< 12 months) as well as Generation X and Baby Boomers active in the workforce or job seeking. Qualitative interviews investigated the decision-making process of the participants to uncover which employer attributes are most attractive for job seekers in their employer search. The interviews took an inductive inquiry, semi-structured and open-ended question approach. The semi-structured format allowed for open ended questions and discussion rather than a prescribed question and answer format. The semi-structure approach also allowed for examples and other related context to come forward in the dialogue and experience sharing from the interview participants. The investigator did not directly inquire on any specific employer attributes and allowed for the participant's response to guide the next level of inductive inquiry and questioning. Importantly, to avoid leading the conversation, the investigator did not ask directly about the relative importance of organizational purpose unless the interviewee mentioned the attribute.

The qualitative interviews investigated and controlled for point in career by asking older generations (Generation X and Baby Boomers) to reflect on their first professional job and compare it to their current job search. Interviews were structured to inquire whether younger generations (Generations Z, Y) value different employer

attributes from older generations (Generation X, Boomers), and whether older generations differ from younger generations at the point in career that younger generations are today. Interview scripts were formed to include control questions in demographics to confirm the criteria for participation was met, and to add to analysis and research results discussed later in this section.

Interview participants were recruited using the snowball method developed by Goodman (1961) as a means for studying the structure of social networks. This method draws from the investigator's professional and academic network to provide a set of diverse subjects to meet the participant criteria for investigation. The investigator's professional and academic network were provided a summary of the research motivation and participant criteria to refer interested participants to the investigator. Interview participants were also directly sourced by the investigator. The investigator searched for job seekers within the investigator's established network on LinkedIn®, contacted the network professional, and followed protocol accordingly to establish interest and qualification for participation in the interview. Many of the participants were not known personally by the investigator.

Interested participants received an introductory email by the investigator inviting them to participate in a research interview. Included in the invitation was an active consent description and prompt, as well as a choice of scheduling time, date, and preferred method for interview (video or audio). All interviews were conducted virtually by phone or by Zoom video conference. The interviews were administered by the investigator and recorded for transcription. Participants were able to opt out of recording if they preferred – only one participant opted out of recording but participated in the full

interview. Participants were also extended the option to opt out of the interview at any time. No participant fully opted out an interview after expressing interest to participate in the interview. Interviews were conducted during the month of November 2019.

Descriptions of the Data

Data collected from the interviews included demographics of the participants and descriptive narrative from the semi-structured interviews in order to i) develop as rich an understanding as possible of the importance of organizational purpose alignment in employer attraction, ii) explore the relative importance of organizational purpose and other employer attributes, and iii) explore the generational effect of organizational purpose alignment among participants. The investigator spoke to job seekers and working professionals of many ages, career-levels, and with a diverse set of backgrounds and life experiences. Participants were from all active generations in the workforce (Generation Z, Millennial, Generation X, and Baby Boomers) across genders, various ethnicities, individual and family education levels, economic backgrounds, active job search and employment status, professional experience, and professional industries and fields.

The 23 interview participants included 14 younger generation (Generation Z and Millennial) job seekers and nine older generation (Generation X and Baby Boomer) job seekers, and a balance of diverse demographics. The majority of male participants were millennial, non-minority, held a master's degree, were not financially responsible for anyone other than themselves, and predominantly in the industries of Finance and Healthcare and in the fields of Human Resources, Operations, and Supply Chain. The majority of female participants were equally minority and non-minority, equally distributed among industries reported, and primarily represented fields of Information

Technology, Human Resources, and Teaching. Participants with advanced education level reported at least one parent's education level as greater than high school. Minority participants had lower incidences of a parent with advanced education. More than half of the interview participants were unknown to the interviewer. Detailed descriptive statistics of the interview participant demographics are provided in Table 2.

Table 2.

Descriptive Statistics – Interview Participant Demographics Summary

Qualitative Study Theoretical Sample - Demographics Summary

Gender	#	%
Male	10	43%
Female	13	57%

Generation	#	%
Gen Z	1	4%
Gen Y	13	57%
Gen X	7	30%
Baby Boomer	2	9%

Ethnicity	#	%
Minority	8	35%
Non-Minority	15	65%

Education Level	#	%
College	1	4%
Associates	7	30%
Bachelors	3	13%
Masters	1	4%
Doctorate	11	48%

Mother Education	#	%
High School	6	26%
College	1	4%
Associates	2	9%
Bachelors	8	35%
Masters	5	22%
Elementary	1	4%

Father Education	#	%
Middle School	1	4%
High School	6	26%
College	0	0%
Associates	0	0%
Bachelors	8	35%
Masters	6	26%
Doctorate	2	9%

Industry	#	%
Arts and Entertainment	1	4%
Customer Service	1	4%
Education	1	4%
Energy	1	4%
Entrepreneuer	1	4%
Finance	1	4%
Healthcare	4	17%
Hospitality	1	4%
Management Consulting	3	13%
Music	1	4%
Non-Profit	1	4%
Pharmaceutical	1	4%
Retails	1	4%
Supply Chain	2	9%
Technology	1	4%

Field	#	%
Administration	1	4%
Executive Coaching	1	4%
Facilitator	1	4%
Freelancer	1	4%
Health Systems Consultant	1	4%
Human Resources	5	22%
Information Technology	3	13%
Management	1	4%
Operations	2	9%
Songwriter	1	4%
Supply Chain	4	17%
Teacher	2	9%

Location	#	%
CA	2	9%
DC	1	4%
DE	1	4%
FL	1	4%
MD	1	4%
NC	12	52%
NY	1	4%
PA	1	4%
VA	1	4%

Financially Responsibl	#	%
No	6	26%
Yes	9	39%
Didn't ask	8	35%

Data Analysis

Interviews were recorded and transcribed then uploaded to NVivo where they were coded, themed, and analyzed. Prior to upload, interview data was de-identified by replacing interview participant identifiable information with a record number. Thematic analysis was performed to identify second order coding, patterns, and emerging themes on key attributes of employer attraction. Sentiment analysis and emotion coding was conducted to evaluate positive, neutral, and negative sentiment and emotion levels among thematic coded passages. Abstracts of research literature utilized and referenced in this study were coded for comparative and thematic analyses with interview coding, themes, and case classifications in NVivo. Comparative demographic analysis was performed to investigate generational responses, attribute choice preference, and other patterns of analytical interest.

An initial first order of descriptive coding was established and conducted manually upon completion of an initial phase of 14 interviews and review of the transcribed interview scripts and audio and video files. This initial coding of interviews set the preliminary first order codes for an initial quality review. Transcripts of the initial and remaining interviews were uploaded in NVivo for a second round of first order coding, refining, expanding on the initial coding, and creating parent and sub-level descriptive codes. This resulted in 12 initial preliminary parental descriptive codes and 24 sub codes. The preliminary descriptive codes were further analyzed and prioritized based on file and reference count into a final 32 first order codes. First order codes were analyzed and integrated into eight second order codes and five higher order themes in cumulation to a theoretical assertion.

Interview passages were coded for sentiment in NVivo and analyzed to determine among the interview participants whether there was positive or negative sentiment by demographic or theme. The sentiment analysis and coding resulted in 264 positive references and 126 negative references among demographic dimensions, and 101 positive references and 38 negative references among interview codes.

Interview videos and audio were then emotion coded in NVivo and analyzed to determine whether there was high (positive) or low (negative) emotion by demographic dimensions on the themes of organizational purpose and job search experience. Emotion coding was based on the investigator's interpretation of the overall emotion and tone of the interview participant in observation of the video or audio interview. The coding resulted in 39 instances of high emotion and 15 instances of low emotion among the participant interviews.

Abstracts from key literature researched and referenced for this study was uploaded into NVivo, concept coded, and analyzed. A total of 79 research article abstracts were coded for analysis. This resulted in 16 first-order codes that were synthesized and grouped into 8 second-order codes with 8 sub codes. Literature abstract coding and second order coding from the qualitative interviews were mapped to the 5 key themes derived from the research and analysis establishing 20 reinforcing relationships between the literature abstracts and interview coding.

Analysis and Results

The data gathered in the 23 interviews and coded in NVivo along with the literature coding provided a robust analysis with notable insights and findings. Findings from the data and analysis are presented per the following. First, results from the

interview and literature coding are presented in graphic illustration. Second, descriptions and findings from the sentiment and emotion coding are presented. Third, findings and representative passages on the 5 key themes are summarized and presented.

Interview and Literature Coding

Through a synthesis of the qualitative coding and analysis, 8 second order themes emerged in *People, Culture, Reputation, Interview Experience, The Job, Career Growth, Purpose, and Competitive Salary*. Further analysis of second order coding adopting the Saldaña method (Saldaña, J., 2015) resulted in 5 higher order themes of i) the Importance of People, ii) Interview Experience and Reputation Signaling, iii) Social Identity and Perceived Fit, iv) Grow and Develop Career and Experience, and v) Purpose and Salary Sacrifice. Figure 2 illustrates the interview coding and thematic analysis cumulating to the theoretical assertion of Purpose-fit (organizational purpose alignment).

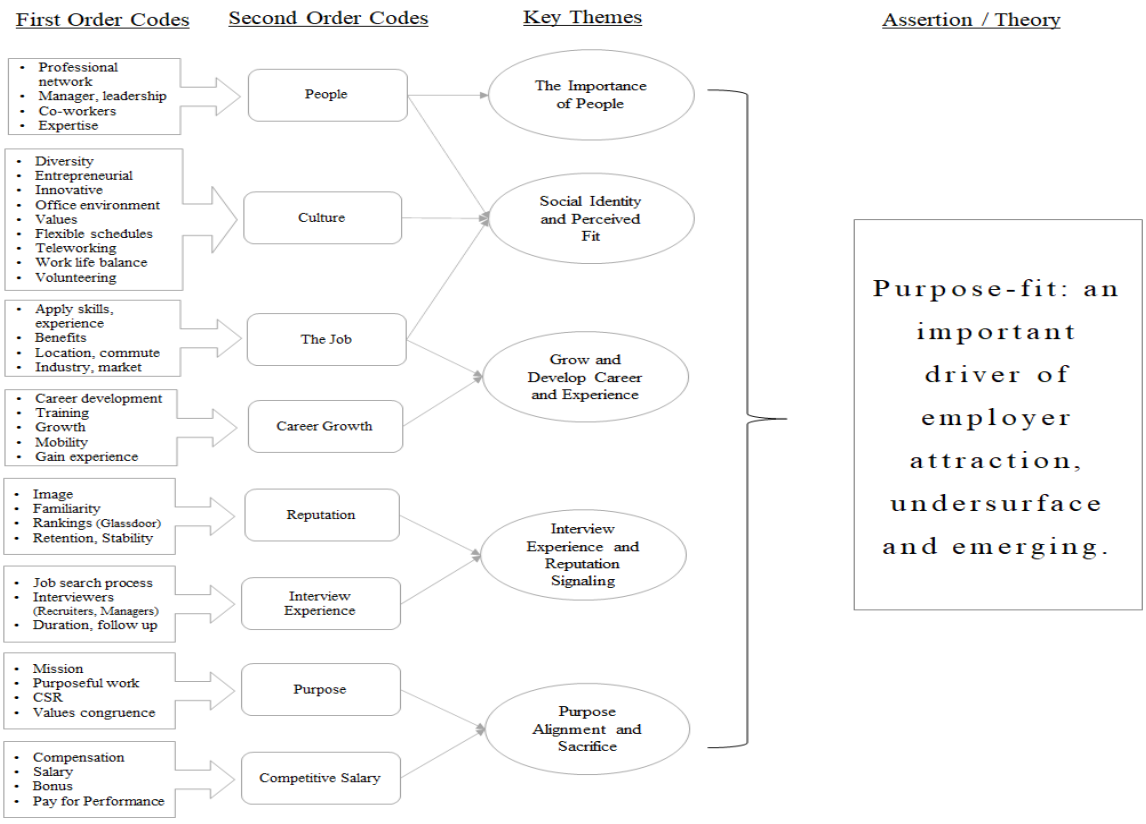

Figure 2. Semi Structured Interview Coding and Themes

An additional synthesis of the qualitative coding and analysis of 79 research article abstracts resulted in an initial 16 first order codes. Further analysis synthesized and generated 8 second order themes of *Career Growth, Compensation, Employer Attraction, Generations at Work, Organizational Identity, Person-Organizational fit, Purpose, and Signaling.*

Mapping the 5 key themes with the second order literature and interview coding resulted in 20 reinforcing coding relationships. The highest frequency of relationships between the literature and interview coding mapped with the theme of Social Identity and

Perceived-fit. Figure 3 illustrates the literature and interview coding relationships with the 5 key themes from the data analysis.

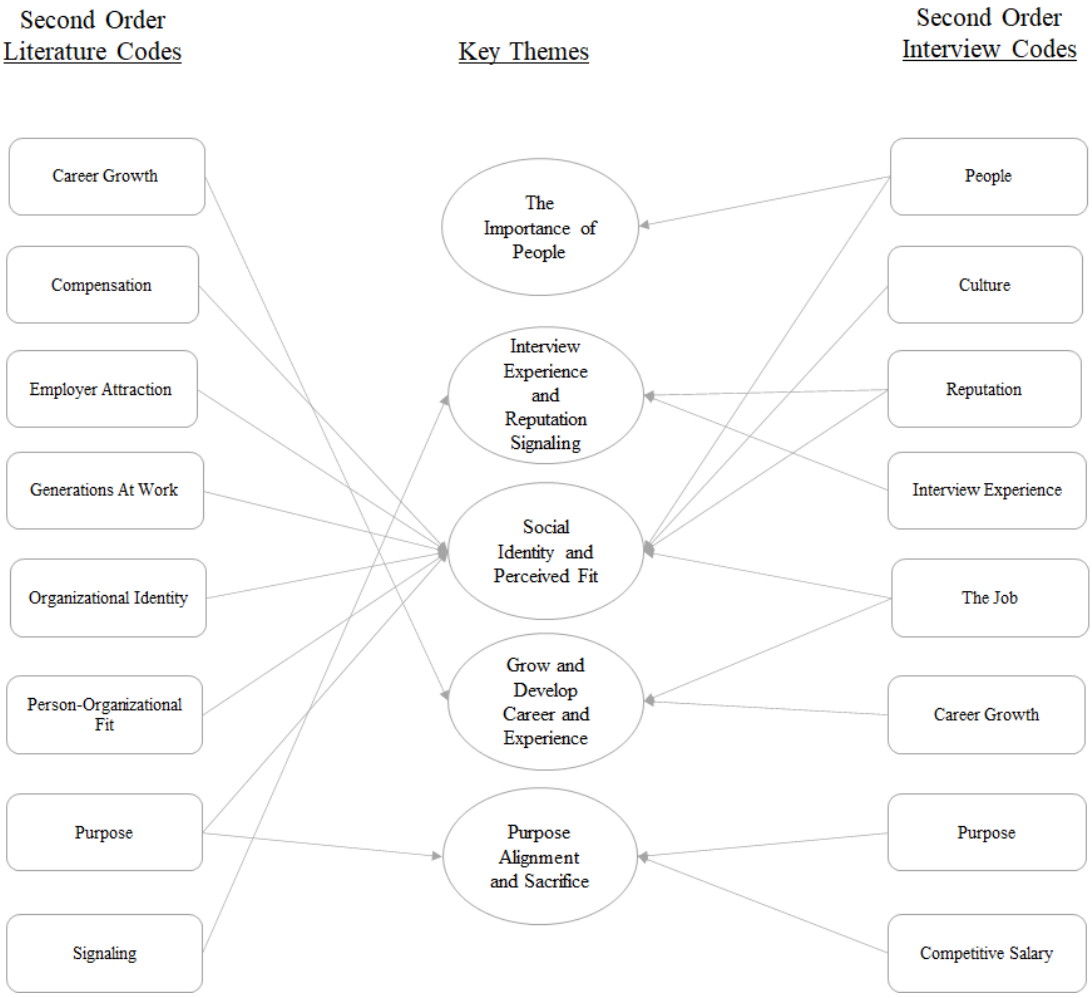

Figure 3. Coding Relationships: Literature Review and Interview Coding

Sentiment and Emotion Relationships

Results of the sentiment matrix coding shows overall positive sentiment is mostly emphasized by Millennials, men, and non-minorities and represented in the second order codes of culture, industry, and people. Negative sentiment is mostly emphasized by women, Millennials, and non-minorities and represented in the second order codes of

culture, purpose, and compensation. The significance of the sentiment coding and analysis is providing insight into favorable drivers of attraction and negative conditions that may cause employees to pursue other employers. In example, the sentiment coding for purpose was equal in number of positive and negative sentiment codes, however, the negative comments provide insight on organizational purpose being less important to some participants in attraction and presumably retention. Note the following sample passages.

"This is not very important to me anymore."

"I've considered transitioning to non-profit but what I'm struggling is what is meaningful to me."

"Secondly, when I was younger, mission was important, but I worked for private sector organizations that were not bad but were not saving the world."

In contrast, positive sentiment on the code of organizational purpose emphasized the importance of purpose in attraction by minority participants. Note the following passages.

"They didn't have to be non-profit but had to be working on something that was socially important, bettering our world."

"Finding place where you can learn and grow, a learning organization that aligns with your values, that's where people will be happiest and find meaningful work and derive meaning."

Sentiment analysis also provided insight by demographics. For example, the analysis provided insight on attributes Generation X noted as more positive and important per the following.

"An academic environment and freedom to learn and grow."

"Nonsense questions from the interview process is a turnoff. This is a signal of being more progressive."

"I figure I have 10 years left and don't care if I get promoted again or make more money."

"A great offer in a city that I liked and had friends."

In contrast, a more negative sentiment on attributes from Generation X noted the importance of culture from a previous negative experience in the following passages.

"I'm not interested in going back to a place with a toxic culture."

"Plus, the culture was not what they sold; it was quite toxic."

"It rattled me on the fact that there were red flags that I should have seen."

"Having been in toxic cultures and challenges transforming cultures, [culture] is important."

Table 3 illustrates a matrix sentiment analysis of the interview participant demographics and second level coding themes. A heat map treatment is applied to show the number of positive versus negative sentiments in overall ratio of passages coded.

Table 3.

Sentiment Analysis – Codes and Demographics

Codes and Sentiment	Positive	Negative	**Demogrphics and Sentiment**	Positive	Negative
1 : Career Growth	8	1	1 : Females	40	19
2 : Compensation	8	6	2 : Gen Boom	8	5
3 : Culture	23	7	3 : Gen Millennial	49	24
4 : Interview Experience	5	3	4 : Gen X	27	12
5 : Job	22	2	5 : Gen Z	4	1
6 : People	18	4	6 : Males	48	23
7 : Purpose	9	9	7 : Minorities	28	17
8 : Reputation	8	4	8 : Non-Minorities	60	25

Legend

Highest ratio of positive energized response

Moderate ration of positive energized response

Lowest ratio of positive energized response

High ratio of positive energized response

Low ratio of positive energized response

Two themes were specifically focused on for emotion coding. The first theme was purpose. In instances where the interview conversation focused on purpose, the investigator examined the level of energy and emotion exhibited by the interview participant. In total, 13 participants conveyed positive emotion and energy on relative importance purpose as compared to 5 participants who exhibited lull or negative emotion and 5 participants who were captured as not applicable or no mention of topic of purpose in the interview. Millennials, men, and non-minorities made up the majority of both positive and negative sentiment for purpose. The significance of the emotion coding is that it provided insight into attributes or experiences that the participants feel positive or negative emotion indicating a higher degree of relative importance. In example, the following comments were captured as positive emotion observation among minority participants reflective of a previous less favorable experience.

"For me, this #1 on my list – a sense of higher purpose vs the day to day. I have more of an interest and fascination on the greater good."

"I've realized how much money is not important to me. I get to choose how and where I put my energy. This connection to something bigger is much more important."

"Diversity of thought is one context for innovation but it is also values based… what do you value, what do you see that is important, we're all the same – how much progress can we make."

The second theme for emotion coding was job search. In instances where the interview conversation focused on the job search experience, the investigator examined the level of energy and emotion exhibited by the interview participant. Similar to purpose, the investigator noticed increased energy around the topic of job search. Unlike purpose, the emotion around job search was more negative than positive. Emotion coding for job search resulted in 7 participants exhibiting negative response, 12 participants exhibited neutral responses, and 4 participants exhibited positive responses. Females, Millennials, and minorities made up the majority of positive sentiment for job search while Millennials, males, and non-minorities represented the majority of negative sentiment for job search.

The significance of this emotion coding is the relationship of this sentiment with the experience of the job search process, interview experience, and their associated impact on the job seeker's attraction to the employer. Examples of positive emotion coded comments provided insight on the importance of networking which could inform talent strategy through employee referrals, alumni networking, and social sourcing.

"A lot of the possibilities came through my network and making connections with current and former colleagues."

"Now, I have much more connections and networking and building my network from conference, networking, etc. I will still use the usual websites, but now would also use my networks, etc. Before, I had no connections. Now that I have networks, I can research, network, and refer. Sometimes you need someone to vouch for you and that can make all the difference."

"I can see who in my network is connected to this organization and reach out for input about what it's like to work there, culture, people and connections. "

Table 4 illustrates the emotion coding analysis with interview participant demographics for purpose and job search. A heat map treatment is applied to show the number of positive versus negative sentiments against overall ratio of passages coded.

Table 4.

Emotion Coding – Purpose, Job Search and Demographics

Emotion Coding	Purpose Energized	Not Tested	Purpose Lull	Job Search Positive	Job Search Neutral	Job Search Negative
1 : Females	6	3	1	3	6	1
2 : Gen Boom	1	1	0	0	1	1
3 : Gen Millennial	7	2	4	3	6	4
4 : Gen X	5	1	1	1	4	2
5 : Gen Z	0	1	0	0	1	0
6 : Males	7	2	4	1	6	6
7 : Minorities	4	3	1	2	5	1
8 : Non-Minorities	9	2	4	2	7	6

Legend

Highest ratio of positive energized response
Moderate ration of positive energized response
Lowest ratio of positive energized response
High ratio of positive energized response
Low ratio of positive energized response

Key Themes from Interviews

Observations in the interviews as well as the qualitative analysis of the data and coding resulted in five key themes: 1) Importance of people; 2) Interview experience and reputation signaling; 3) Social identity and perceived fit; 4) Grow and develop career and experience; and 5) Purpose alignment and sacrifice. These themes are discussed in more depth in the following sections.

Purpose Alignment and Sacrifice

The central focus of research study one was to investigate whether organizational purpose emerged is a driver of employer attraction. The analysis and research findings suggest that the importance of organizational purpose did not initially or immediately come forward with many of the interview participants. However, for some, organizational purpose was a key and critical consideration. As the semi-structured interviews played out, organizational purpose ultimately presented itself for many of the interview participants in a variety of ways. Organizational purpose was presented in career choices that align to an interview participant's personal purpose the following passages.

"I was looking for mission driven organizations. They did not have to be non-profit but had to be working on something that was socially important, bettering our world. Another example was HR software and thought that had a good purpose to better HR, a field that I'm in."

"When I was a child growing up, by the time Vietnam got to be a majority cultural negative, I was steeped in the lore of the rightness of American military service and heroism. I wanted to identify with it. I wanted to serve and that's what I did."

Organizational purpose was also presented as a differentiator of employer choice when asked with all things are considered equal, what attributes would persuade you to choose another employer.

"It would have to be for a company with a mission that would have impact at a scale that is bigger than I can do alone in my company. In all these years I haven't talked to companies about jobs unless they are able to make change and impact the world."

"Not currently employed. I want to do my own thing. To me, there is nothing more purposeful than that. Now the barometer of success is whether I'm happy."

Organizational purpose was present in second career choices of Baby Boomers for doing something they loved or were particularly good at without regard to tangible benefits of employment.

"I have a small company that is a social impact project – [I'm] driving social change while making money doing it. If I am able to scale that business remotely and quit the corporate world, that would be the ultimate goal and accomplishment – it provides for self, family, and drives social change."

"My 2nd career is as a Home Inspector. If I'm ever going to work for myself, this is the time. I realized about myself that I really like closure… this job gives me closure every day. I also like the variety and tasks which this job gives me."

Purpose was also present in themes of organizational image and reputation. For many of the interview participants, working for an organization that is doing good in the world is an important driver of employer attraction.

"Purpose is the most important. It would be very difficult going to work every day for an employer that I don't agree with their ethical practices".

"Help the company reach their goals and agree with what they believe in. Their purpose, ethical practices, corporate social responsibility and being involved in the community."

"I did enjoy being part of the drug development and what these products enabled around the world and I felt good about it and being part of it. I felt a good sense of purpose."

The presence of sacrifice and willingness among the interview participants for tradeoff of certain attributes of employer attraction over others emerged as a theme. Salary sacrifice was most evident in the findings. As expected and consistent with the literature and research, compensation is an important attribute for all generations in this study. However, with few exceptions, compensation was not the ultimate driver. In most cases it was an initial filter but within a range of flexibility. Strength of other attributes have influence on the level of salary the job seeker is willing to accept and sacrifice in many cases. Such influential attributes on salary included flexibility, career growth, culture, and reputation. The notion of salary sacrifice was noted by several interview participants who cited degrees or percentages of salary they would be willing to accept for a lower level of salary in tradeoff for other important attributes. Some participants noted a willingness to accept a lower level of salary for less rigidity and flexibility.

"I can tell you that if I was provided two positions of which one was more rigid, I would take the less rigid for less money."

Others noted a willingness to accept a lower level of salary based on their work experience understanding the importance of other tradeoffs.

"I'd be willing to sacrifice salary some for the right opportunity and culture. As you get older, you realize what is more important."

"Salary sacrifice – short answer, yes. The long answer, it depends how bad the company is. If a little bit bad, I'm willing to sacrifice 10-20%."

Other participants noted they are currently sacrificing or have sacrificed salary as a tradeoff for other opportunities or employer offerings.

"I took this role that had many of these important attributes and sacrificed salary for it. I would be willing to negotiate on salary."

"Salary sacrifice… absolutely. An example is when I went to [Employer]. I took a lower-level role with lower pay. I took it because they had a talent issue and this put me in a fast-track pipeline and the opportunity to reshape the culture."

While there were no direct notations of willingness to accept a lower level of salary for purpose, it is noted that serval participants cited working for or interest in working for a purposeful organization, such as a mission-based or nonprofit organization where it is presumed that some level of salary is sacrificed as a practice in these industries.

In addition, analysis of economic backgrounds among interview participants proved an influence on preference and importance of certain employer attributes. In example, some younger Millennials who are second generation immigrant minorities, master's degree educated, and whose at least one parent was middle school educated noted the following.

"The absolute important [driver for employer choice] was compensation to be sure to afford a living".

"I was recently at a recruiting event and was surprised at some of the questions from students coming straight out of school and what they are focused on… environment, diversity, social responsibility. For me, I think it is about your economic background, fight or flight. I've got to take care of myself first. It's more about how I'm going to take care of me and my family first. Their position seemed, I don't know… very privileged. I couldn't relate."

"I have had a lot of jobs that didn't pay well at all and I could barely make ends meet. This has led me to be more money motivated and seeking more freedom and control."

In contrast, an older Millennial who is a non-minority and whose parents are both college educated noted the following:

"Purpose is the most important. It would be very difficult going to work every day for an employer that I don't agree with their ethical practices. Their purpose, ethical practices, corporate social responsibility and being involved in the community is really important to me."

A final passage for illustration from the previously quoted younger immigrant Millennial who noted purpose as a privilege – when asked about what they love about their current job notes the following:

"I became a trainer at [Employer] and had an intern this year at work and really enjoyed it. Which is why I guess I'm interested in education but realize I have to cut my pay considerably. I had an opportunity to be a teacher assistant once and I LOVED IT! I loved doing it. I think I would love being a teacher. I like the feeling of seeing someone who is stuck or frustrated and helping them, it makes me happy to see someone happy

with their accomplishment. But the pay though. I think to myself, man I would love teaching, but then looking at the pay, it is not great and then the additional debt you take on to advance your degree is too much. I just recently paid off all my student loans. I have no debt and am excited about it and saving to further an education and become a teacher, but like 10 years out."

Table 5.

Interview Passages – Purpose alignment and sacrifice

Sub theme	Theme: Purpose alignment and sacrifice
Purpose first	"For me, this #1 on my list – a sense of higher purpose vs the day to day. I have more of an interest and fascination on the greater good. "
	"This [Purpose] is not very important to me anymore."
	"I've considered transitioning ed to non-profit but what I'm struggling is what is meaningful to me."
	"Secondly, when I was younger, mission was important, but I worked for private sector organizations that were not bad but were not saving the world."
	"They didn't have to be non-profit but had to be working on something that was socially important, bettering our world."
	"Finding place where you can learn and grow, a learning organization that aligns with your values, that's where people will be happiest and find meaningful work and derive meaning."
	"I was looking for mission driven organizations. They did not have to be non-profit but had to be working on something that was socially important, bettering our world. Another example was HR software and thought that had a good purpose to better HR, a field that I'm in."
	"When I was a child growing up, by the time Vietnam got to be a majority cultural negative, I was steeped in the lore of the rightness of American military service and heroism. I wanted to identify with it. I wanted to serve and that's what I did."
	"It would have to be for a company with a mission that would have impact at a scale that is bigger than I can do alone in my company. In all these years I haven't talked to companies about jobs unless they are able to make change and impact the world."
	"Not currently employed. I want to do my own thing. To me, there is nothing more purposeful than that. Now the barometer of success is whether I'm happy. I've realized how much $ is not important to me. I get to choose how and where I put my energy. This connection to something bigger is much more important."
	"I've realized how much money is not important to me. I get to choose how and where I put my energy. This connection to something bigger is much more important."
Generational	"I have a small company that is a social impact project – [I'm] driving social change while making money doing it. If I am able to scale that business remotely and quit the corporate world, that would be the ultimate goal and accomplishment – it provides for self, family, and drives social change."
	"My 2nd career is as a Home Inspector. If I'm ever going to work for myself, this is the time. I realized about myself that I really like closure… this job gives me closure every day. I also like the variety and tasks which this job gives me."
Authentic purpose and image	"Purpose is the most important. It would be very difficult going to work every day for an employer that I don't agree with their ethical practices".
	"Help the company reach their goals and agree with what they believe in. Their purpose, ethical practices, corporate social responsibility and being involved in the community."
	"I did enjoy being part of the drug development and what these products enabled around the world and I felt good about it and being part of it. I felt a good sense of purpose."
	"Diversity of thought is one context for innovation but it is also values based… what do you value, what do you see that is important, we're all the same – how much progress can we make. "
Salary sacrifice	"I figure I have 10 years left and don't care if I get promoted again or make more money."
	"I can tell you that if I was provided two positions of which one was more rigid, I would take the less rigid for less money."
	"I'd be willing to sacrifice salary some for the right opportunity and culture. As you get older, you realize what is more important."
	"Salary sacrifice – short answer, yes. The long answer, it depends how bad the company is. If real bad… a little bit bad, I'm willing to sacrifice 10-20%."
	"I took this role that had many of these important attributes and sacrificed salary for it. I would be willing to negotiate on salary."
	"Salary sacrifice… absolutely. An example is when I went to [Employer]. I took a lower level role with lower pay. I took it because they had a talent issue and this put me in a fast track pipeline and the opportunity to reshape the culture."
Economic stability	"The absolute important [driver for employer choice] was compensation to be sure to afford a living".
	"I was recently at a recruiting event and was surprised at some of the questions from students coming straight out of school and what they are focused on… environment, diversity, social responsibility. For me, I think it is about your economic background, fight or flight. I've got to take care of myself first. It's more about how I'm going to take care of me and my family first. Their position seemed, I don't know… very privileged. I couldn't relate."
	"I have had a lot of jobs that didn't pay well at all and I could barely make ends meet. This has led me to be more money motivated and seeking more freedom and control."
Purpose as priviledge	"I became a trainer at [Employer] and had an intern this year at work and really enjoyed it. Which is why I guess I'm interested in education but realize I have to cut my pay considerably. I had an opportunity to be a teacher assistant once and I LOVED IT! I loved doing it. I think I would love being a teacher. I like the feeling of seeing someone who is stuck or frustrated and helping them, it makes me happy to see someone happy with their accomplishment. But, the pay though. I think to myself, man I would love teaching, but then looking at the pay, it is not great and then the additional debt you take on to advance your degree is too much. I just recently paid off all my student loans. I have no debt and am excited about it and saving to further an education and become a teacher, but like 10 years out."

Social Identity and Perceived Fit

Another key theme from the research was Social Identity and Perceived Fit. The importance of social identity manifested in many ways through the research interviews. Survey participants looked for important cues that provided them a positive and meaningful identity association with the employer. Aspects of organizational reputation, culture, and people provided these signals and data to evaluate and associate identity and meaning. In example, the following passages emphasize the importance of the image and reputation of the employer as an attribute of employer attraction.

"Reputation was a factor. Culturally, I got the sense for the few organizations that I interviewed with about the competitiveness of the culture and how the company was perceived as a competitive, work hard, play hard culture. This was attractive to me."

"Reputation and perception do play a big roll. I can bring up an example of Volkswagen who are known for cheating on their emissions. They could provide a good job and pay but I'd still not want to work for them."

Participants emphasized the importance of the alignment of an organization's values and their own values in employer attraction and choice.

"To kick start the research, narrowing down the company's value and mission statement to make sure it aligned with my personal values, as well as their policies."

"Values alignment is weeded out in my research. As a public-school teacher there is not a lot of room for politics. But if there was, I would want to be sure that I was at an organization that has similar values politically as myself."

"I also want to make sure at this point in my career that my values align with the products and services the company provides. [Employer], for example… this company perpetuates debt – didn't align to my values."

"The position and company seemed interesting. When they told me what they actually are doing… marketing to small business and collecting from receivables. The type of business in this marginalized base were typically minority owned businesses. For me, this #1 on my list – a sense of higher purpose vs the day to day. I have more of an interest and fascination on the greater good."

A notable emphasis of values alignment in perceived fit was the importance of diversity among participants. In example, the following passages emphasize the importance placed on whether an organization values diversity as an indicator of values alignment with the job seeker.

"Another important factor was the company's stance on discrimination/racism. Their stance on discrimination and racism and hiring individuals of all backgrounds."

"Diversity at the leadership level is important, both gender and ethnicity, as the makeup of the leadership team is telling of what the organization believes in and whether I want to work there."

"The biggest one is diversity at the leadership level. Is there diversity of people, diversity of thought, etc., because I want to be able to see myself at that level."

In analyzing the various views and opinions on important attributes for employer attraction among the interview participants, two influential factors were the participant's years of experience in the workforce and generational demographic and economic backgrounds. Younger Millennials and Generation Z participants, with their limited work

experience, often reported a more idealistic and stereotypical naivete seeking and expecting the utopian employer and workplace. In example, a later stage Millennial participant provided the following.

"Gone are the days of stagnant and political organization that millennials will not want to be part of. And the stigma of job hopping – [it is] more toxic to stay in a company for 15 years and not change anything. Any millennials are not going to standby for poor leadership. Unemployment is low, we can jump and we will. It is no longer a privilege to work… (former employer)."

Whereas in contrast, older Millennials with upwards of 10 years of work experience reported different work expectations. These participants prioritized attributes and preferences that were informed by work experience and reflective of their point in career priorities. For example, two older Millennials acknowledged the following.

"Having been in the workforce for a few years now, other factors have been added to the list of important things. Things that would sway is a higher salary of course, manager and management style, autonomy in the job, the company culture – teams or silo projects and prefer team culture."

"Flexibility – over time I've come to appreciate and something that I think is needed and I certainly need it. As an individual, there are things I need to do personally. I have my life and no one else to do things for me so I need flexibility in schedule to get things done. Overall well-being becomes more important than salary. I can tell you that if I were provided two positions of which one was more rigid, I would take the less rigid for less money."

This perspective became more evident in older generation interview participant inputs. One Generation X participant noted a considerable shift in perspective, preferences, and expectations over the course of their career.

"It was pretty clear that money, power and aspiration to become an executive was so important. Now the barometer of success is whether I am happy. I have realized how much money is not important to me. I get to choose how and where I put my energy. My desire to have money is based on my need to be validated. And the journey to achieve money did not make me happy and once I achieved it, I was more disenfranchised based on what it takes to achieve it and maintain it. This connection to something bigger is much more important."

Table 6.

Interview Passages – Social identity and Perceived fit

Sub theme	Theme: Social identity and Perceived fit
Image and reputation attraction	"Reputation was a factor. Culturally, I got the sense for the few organizations that I interviewed with about the competitiveness of the culture and how the company was perceived as a competitive, work hard, play hard culture. This was attractive to me."
	"Reputation and perception do play a big roll. I can bring up an example of Volkswagen who are known for cheating on their emissions. They could provide a good job and pay but I'd still not want to work for them."
Values alignment	"To kick start the research, narrowing down the company's value and mission statement to make sure it aligned with my personal values, as well as their policies."
	"Values alignment is weeded out in my research. As a public-school teacher there is not a lot of room for politics. But if there was, I would want to be sure that I was at an organization that has similar values politically as myself."
	"I also want to make sure at this point in my career that my values align with the products and services the company provides. [Employer], for example… this company perpetuates debt – didn't align to my values."
	"The position and company seemed interesting. When they told me what they actually are doing… marketing to small business and collecting from receivables. The type of business in this marginalized base were typically minority owned businesses. For me, this #1 on my list – a sense of higher purpose vs the day to day. I have more of an interest and fascination on the greater good."
	"With coming back to my community in [City, State], being able to come back and give back to my community and be service oriented through my work was the biggest draw."
Culture	"I'm not interested in going back to a place with a toxic culture."
	"Plus, the culture was not what they sold; it was quite toxic."
	"It rattled me on the fact that there were red flags that I should have seen."
	"Having been in toxic cultures and challenges transforming cultures, [culture] is important."
	"I enjoyed the working environment, made friends, enjoyed going to work. It's what I liked and what I'm after now. I'm not interested in going back to a place with a toxic culture. I'm now just looking to enjoy my work."
Diversity	"Another important factor was the company's stance on discrimination/racism. Their stance on discrimination and racism and hiring individuals of all backgrounds."
	"Diversity at the leadership level is important, both gender and ethnicity, as the makeup of the leadership team is telling of what the organization believes in and whether I want to work there."
	"The biggest one is diversity at the leadership level. Is there diversity of people, diversity of thought, etc., because I want to be able to see myself at that level."
Generational	"…Gone are the days of stagnant and political organization that millennials will not want to be part of. And the stigma of job hopping – [it is] more toxic to stay in a company for 15 years and not change anything. Any millennials are not going to standby for poor leadership. Unemployment is low, we can jump and we will. It is no longer a privilege to work… (former employer)."
	"Having been in the workforce for a few years now, other factors have been added to the list of important things. Things that would sway is a higher salary of course, manager and management style, autonomy in the job, the company culture – teams or silo projects and prefer team culture."
	"Flexibility – over time I've come to appreciate and something that I think is needed and I certainly need it. As an individual, there are things I need to do personally. I have my life and no one else to do things for me so I need flexibility in schedule to get things done. Overall well-being becomes more important than salary. I can tell you that if I were provided two positions of which one was more rigid, I would take the less rigid for less money."
	"It was pretty clear that money, power and aspiration to become an executive was so important. Now the barometer of success is whether I am happy. I have realized how much money is not important to me. I get to choose how and where I put my energy. My desire to have money is based on my need to be validated. And the journey to achieve money did not make me happy and once I achieved it, I was more disenfranchised based on what it takes to achieve it and maintain it. This connection to something bigger is much more important."

Interview Experience and Reputation Signaling

A key theme from the interview responses was the importance placed on the interview experience and reputation reviews, both as signals of culture and what it would be like to work at the employer. Signaling theory posits when two parties (individuals or organizations) have access to different information and typically one party, the sender, must choose whether and how to communicate (or signal) that information, and the other party, the receiver, must choose how to interpret the signal (Connelly, Certo, Ireland, & Reutzel, 2011). Signaling theory is commonly used to explain how job seeker attraction to an organization can be influenced by information, or signals, about the organization's characteristics (Celani & Singh, 2011). Employers provide signals to the job seeker through messages and communications on their reputation, image, and brand through recruitment advertisements, their compensation and benefit offerings and employee programs, through the candidate recruiting experience, and through corporate social responsibility commitments as examples. These messages signal to the job seeker important information about the employer, what the employer provides to the employee, their values and ideals, what the job seeker can expect from the employer, organizational culture, people and colleagues, and other key indicators that influence employer attraction of the job seeker.

Several Millennial and Generation X participants noted that their interview experience, how they were treated, whether the recruiter followed up and responded to inquiries, and interactions with the interviewers and hiring managers, all were signals to the job seeker of the culture and work experience at the organization. Job seekers noted their initial interest and attraction to the employer was either strengthened or diminished

as a result of the interview experience, primarily with the recruiter, interview panel, and hiring manager.

"There have been companies where I have applied for jobs where they have been black box and I haven't heard anything back. There have been others that have also been more responsive. But this is a signal if they are not communicating to candidates, what does it say about the communication culture. If there is a decent experience then I'm motivated to keep the process going."

"When it came down to choosing this employer, I had two offers at the same time. Timing of the offer was important. The second was how the organization responded and treated me in the recruiting process. They were signals of culture and how they did business."

"I was surprised by the lack of professionalism and follow up by recruiters. In many cases I never heard from them. A number of people I know also job searching experienced the same. It was frustration. The experience affected attraction to the employer and affected my views of recruiters."

In addition, for most all of the interview participants, culture and reputational references were explored not only through interviews but also through online reviews such as Glassdoor® and other related mediums, referrals, and their personal and professional networks. For example, the following passages emphasize the prevalence but also the importance placed online media as signals for perception of reputation.

"It's all about reviews these days. If an employer has good reviews, I'd give up some pay to go to a place where people actually liked working."

"Standing of the company, how the company is perceived by the public, morals, what the company stands for… volunteer, community."

"But when researching online, I look for if what [they are] doing is cutting edge, up and coming industry, innovative industry, and global contributions. And upon further research, they appeared innovative and future oriented which was interesting and good coming from a startup that had recently been acquired."

Technology and the technological experience can be convenient and efficient for the job seeker and for the employer in recruiting administration. However, it was noted by several interview participants in the following passages that an overreliance on technology in the interview process and experience can have a negative perception on the job seeker and affect overall employer attraction as a signal of undervaluing human interaction.

"Technology has dehumanized the candidate experience – it's convenient but also creates distance. Companies that rehumanize the process can have an advantage."

The theme of Interview Experience and Reputation Signaling highlights generational differences. Although all active job seekers are taking advantage of the convenience of technology in their job search and employer research, Generations Z, Y, and X place more weight on the interview experience than Baby Boomers. Baby Boomer job seekers were less critical of the interview experience and focused more on job security and stability. An example passage from a Baby Boomer provides this point-in-career perspective.

"For me personally, [the most important employer attribute] would be job security. I need another 10 years of solid employment. I'm not looking for a job to retire to – I'm looking for a job to retire from."

Table 7.

Interview Passages – Interview experience and reputation signaling

Sub theme	Theme: Interview experience and reputation signaling
Interview experience	"There have been companies where I have applied for jobs where they have been black box and I haven't heard anything back. There have been others that have also been more responsive. But this is a signal if they are not communicating to candidates, what does it say about the communication culture. If there is a decent experience then I'm motivated to keep the process going."
	"Nonsense questions from the interview process is a turnoff. This is a signal of not being very progressive."
	"When it came down to choosing this employer, I had two offers at the same time. Timing of the offer was important. The second was how the organization responded and treated me in the recruiting process. They were signals of culture and how they did business."
	"I was surprised by the lack of professionalism and follow up by recruiters. In many cases I never heard from them. A number of people I know also job searching experienced the same. It was frustration. The experience affected attraction to the employer and affected my views of recruiters."
Reputation	"It's all about reviews these days. If an employer has good reviews, I'd give up some pay to go to a place where people actually liked working."
	"Standing of the company, how the company is perceived by the public, morals, what the company stands for… volunteer, community"
	"But when researching online, I look for if what [they are] doing is cutting edge, up and coming industry, innovative industry, and global contributions. And upon further research, they appeared innovative and future oriented which was interesting and good coming from a startup that had recently been acquired."
	"I can see who in my network is connected to this organization and reach out for input about what it's like to work there, culture, people and connections."
Technology	"Technology has dehumanized the candidate experience – it's convenient but also creates distance. Companies that rehumanize the process can have an advantage."
Generation	"For me personally, [the most important employer attribute] would be job security. I need another 10 years of solid employment. I'm not looking for a job to retire to – I'm looking for a job to retire from."

Grow and Develop Career and Experience

The importance of development of one's career was a prevailing attribute of significance across all interview generations and demographics. Generation Z and Millennials look for opportunities for career growth, gaining of experiences, and mobility.

"Promotion and career growth. When I found [Employer] it was much better. [Employer] had a clear timeline and opportunity to advance and career path."

"There is a clear ladder here which I didn't have before. Also knowing what your next step is and working toward that goal is interesting."

As a point of generational differentiation, Generation X looks for career growth into management and leadership, training and development opportunities, and opportunities to apply skills in different contexts and learning from those experiences.

"It's not the job you are taking, it's where the job can take you in 5 years."

"I'm career oriented and looking for my next role and also how my next role is a step toward my next role."

"Looking for career and growth, depth or breadth or both with vertical opportunity and mobility."

"Where can you gain the experience; at times it is hard to look at that longer career path."

Baby Boomers, although less concerned with career mobility, were focused on skill development to remain relevant and to ensure job stability toward retirement.

"I'm at a point in my life that I'm not looking for career growth. Utilizing my skills [is important]. What is not interesting is a chair to keep my butt warm."

Career growth suggests a longer-term orientation, which is paradoxical with the stereotypes of Generation Z and Millennials. One younger Millennial interviewee described their view on career development per the following passage.

"Future growth opportunity is important to me, but I look at it different today. I've come to think about employment as more fluid and working for multiple employers over time."

Another important insight and distinction on the theme of Grow and Develop Career and Experience was the difference in language and phrasing used between

genders. Female passage examples note that the majority of females used phrasing related to “career path”.

“Career pathing and development first…”

“There is a clear ladder here which I didn’t have before.”

“[Next] would be a career path.”

“[A place] where you can gain the experience and at times it is hard to look at that longer career path.”

The majority of males used phrasing related to “career growth”.

“I’m now looking for stability and growth.”

“What draws me most is the ability to move up.”

“Looking for career and growth next, depth or breadth or both with vertical opportunity and mobility (industry and functional).”

“Growth potential, career opportunities. Benefits were pretty much the same. It really came down to growth potential and opportunity to grow in my career.”

Although these are subtle differences, the distinct choices of language indicate the influence of economic security. Male participants reported fewer instances of being financially responsible for someone other than themselves. In contrast, female participants reported a more equal distribution of financial responsibility suggesting a desire for balance and stability in career development and personal commitments. This observation reinforces the influence of economic security on employer attraction, in this case the attribute of professional development and growth. “Advancement” and “growth” are key terms expressed by male participants with less financial responsibility and insecurity. “Path” and “gain experience” are key terms and phrases expressed by female

participants with more balanced financial responsibility and security. Females attribute higher importance to social values such as gaining career enhancing experience over the importance of economic value such as an attractive overall compensation package where male participants stressed more importance (Alnıaçık & Alnıaçık, 2012). Women value employee growth and development opportunities to a greater extent than males (Bellou, Rigopoulou, & Kehagias, 2015). Further, career goal progress is more important to men as they pay closer attention to career achievement whereas women see professional ability development as a more salient aspect of organizational career growth than career goal progress (Wang et al., 2014).

Career growth is also related to economics – as careers develop so should the economic position of the employee. The emerging workforce places importance on career growth to improve their economic position as they advance their careers and in their life.

Table 8.

Interview Passages – Grow and develop career and experience

Sub theme	Theme: Grow and develop career and experience
Generational	"An academic environment and freedom to learn and grow."
	"Promotion and career growth. When I found [Employer] it was much better. [Employer] had a clear timeline and opportunity to advance and career path."
	"What's leaning me this way is … and the role gets me one step closer in the career path to run a business unit and P&L."
	"There is a clear ladder here which I didn't have before. Also knowing what your next step is and working toward that goal is interesting."
	"It's not the job you are taking, it's where the job can take you in 5 years."
	"I'm career oriented and looking for my next role and also how my next role is a step toward my next role."
	"My first corporate job was [Employer] while I was in college. I was in that organization for 12 years because I kept getting opportunities."
	"Looking for career and growth, depth or breadth or both with vertical opportunity and mobility."
	"Where can you gain the experience; at times it is hard to look at that longer career path."
	"I'm at a point in my life that I'm not looking for career growth. Utilizing my skills [is important]. What is not interesting is a chair to keep my butt warm."
Career path and growth	"Career pathing and development first…"
	"There is a clear ladder here which I didn't have before."
	"I'm career oriented and looking for my next role and also how my next role is a step toward my next role."
	"[Next] would be a career path."
	"[A place]Where can you gain the experience and at times it is hard to look at that longer career path."
	"I'm interested in joining a company where I can continue to go – many years to continue to work."
	"I'm now looking for stability and growth."
	"It's not the job you are taking, it's where the job can take you in 5 years."
	"What draws me most is the ability to move up."
	"Looking for career and growth next, depth or breadth or both with vertical opportunity and mobility (industry and functional)."
	"Growth potential, career opportunities. Benefits were pretty much the same. It really came down to growth potential and opportunity to grow in my career."

Importance of People

The importance of people was a notable prevailing consideration, theme and finding from the research across all generations of interview participants. People were considered important signals in job interviews for Generation Z and Millennials providing an indication of culture and what it would be like to work with those among the interview panel as a boss and a team. For example, the following passages from Millennial interviews emphasize the importance of working with people they know.

"First, I knew most of the people there…".

"Multiple factors… outside of the industry, I knew team members…, knew people who [worked there and] used to work there."

When asked what attributes would persuade participants to choose another employer, one Millennial stressed the following.

"Personal relations and to work with people I know, my friends, people my age."

"I also want to work with other competent people, work on teams, learn from others, and share experience and knowledge as well."

This sentiment holds true across generations. For more work experienced generations, the experience of working with great people and teams and learning from them was a key driver for retention but also a driver of attraction when considering another employer. A Generation X interviewee noted the following.

"The only thing that would persuade me [to leave for another organization] is if I get a call from someone I worked with in the past that I respect…"

The most significant and consistent values placed on people across all generations was in networking for jobs and opportunities to gather employer and culture intelligence,

and the use of people as signals of success and positive employer association. The importance of people proved in management relations, teams, quality of workers and interviewers, as well as personal and professional network referrals, knowing people at the employer, and who works there. Participants from Generations Y and X noted the following.

"During the interview process with my last employer, I felt very comfortable with the people I interviewed with. I had a good feeling about the people I spoke with and that we were aligned and had good fit."

"When it came down to the job offer, you typically had multiples, and one of the differentiating factors was the interaction with the people in the process. I felt a trust and collegial connection that [I did not] get with the other firms. Interaction with the people in the process is the litmus test of what it will be like to work there. I put a lot of value in making the connection with the people who are there to get validation whether this is an organization I want to work with."

Millennial participants similarly noted the following on personal networking.

"I knew someone in the company and got a referral for an interview."

"It started with knowing someone at the company who took on more of a mentor role which started my interest and then I did my research."

Generation X participants shared this sentiment regarding the value of networking and the prevalence of the practice based on their own experiences.

"A friend of my father's was in HR at [employer], I got an interview and the opportunity."

"Who you are working with matters a lot which is hard to gauge so it was more on intuition from the interview. In looking at Glassdoor, review the ratings and seek out some connections through LinkedIn to inquire about culture, decision making, pace, etc."

People also proved as visual cues in job interviews and web searches for applicants inquiring and evaluating culture and diversity, the age of the organization, and expertise of the workforce, colleagues, and teams.

"It wasn't the highest salary offer – it was close, but I didn't go with the company that offered the highest salary. I also had some friends that worked there that weighted on reputation."

"Looking through an Instagram page and thought there wasn't much diversity and hoped to see more people of color."

The importance of people was both a prevailing attribute of employer attraction and employer attrition. The following passages reflect the importance of people when asked why you chose your current employer.

"Personal relations and to work with people I know, my friends, people my age."

"I like the people that I work with."

"Multiple factors… outside of the industry, I knew team members…, I knew people who used to work there."

Further, the following passage highlights the importance of people for employer attraction in relation to attrition risk.

"If synonymous jobs and companies, it would be the people that keep me there – it's hard to leave those working relationships. Relationships and trust take time to build.

However, if there was a good relationship with the new hiring manager, that may persuade me to leave."

The importance of people was a consistent theme among interview participants across all generations. The use of people in employer attraction varied, but job seekers placed high importance on the value of people as signals, referrals, identity association, and familiarity.

Table 9.

Interview Passages – Importance of people

Sub theme	Theme: Importance of people
People I know	"First, I knew most of the people there…".
	"Multiple factors… outside of the industry, I knew team members…, knew people who [worked there and] used to work there."
	"Personal relations and to work with people I know, my friends, people my age."
	"I also want to work with other competent people, work on teams, learn from others, and share experience and knowledge as well."
	"The only thing that would persuade me [to leave for another organization] is if I get a call from someone I worked with in the past that I respect…"
	"I like the people that I work with."
	"A great offer in a city that I liked and had friends."
	"Multiple factors… outside of the industry, I knew team members…, I knew people who used to work there."
Interviewers as signals	"During the interview process with my last employer, I felt very comfortable with the people I interviewed with. I had a good feeling about the people I spoke with and that we were aligned and had good fit."
	"When it came down to the job offer, you typically had multiples, and one of the differentiating factors was the interaction with the people in the process. I felt a trust and collegial connection that [I did not] get with the other firms. Interaction with the people in the process is the litmus test of what it will be like to work there. I put a lot of value in making the connection with the people who are there to get validation whether this is an organization I want to work with."
Networking	"A lot of the possibilities came through my network and making connections with current and former colleagues."
	"I knew someone in the company and got a referral for an interview."
	"It started with knowing someone at the company who took on more of a mentor role which started my interest and then I did my research."
	"Now, I have much more connections and networking and building my network from conference, networking, etc. I will still use the usual websites, but now would also use my networks, etc. Before, I had no connections. Now that I have networks, I can research, network, and refer. Sometimes you need someone to vouch for you and that can make all the difference."
	"A friend of my father's was in HR at [employer], I got an interview and the opportunity."
	"Who you are working with matters a lot which is hard to gauge so it was more on intuition from the interview. In looking at Glassdoor, review the ratings and seek out some connections through LinkedIn to inquire about culture, decision making, pace, etc."
	"I can see who in my network is connected to this organization and reach out for input about what it's like to work there, culture, people and connections."
People similar to me	"It wasn't the highest salary offer – it was close, but I didn't go with the company that offered the highest salary. I also had some friends that worked there that weighted on reputation."
	"Looking through an Instagram page and thought there wasn't much diversity and hoped to see more people of color."
People and retention	"If synonymous jobs and companies, it would be the people that keep me there – it's hard to leave those working relationships. Relationships and trust take time to build. However, if there was a good relationship with the new hiring manager, that may persuade me to leave."

Discussion

This research study puts forward key new insights for employer attraction. Among all the notable insights, observations, and themes drawn from this research study,

the emerging importance of organizational purpose, the focus on opportunity for career growth, and the importance of people bring forth new and deeper insights on employer attraction. In addition, the influence of generational effect and economic security are also key insights from the research.

At the center of this research study is an investigation of the importance of organizational purpose for employer attraction. The emergence of organizational purpose, while latent for many interview participants, emerged with importance following further inductive inquiry. Organizational purpose was not immediately evident as a desired attribute compared to the more traditional attributes of salary and growth. However, following deeper conversations about what differentiates employers, what would cause someone to change employers, or what someone would rather be doing, organizational purpose surfaced. Job seekers placed importance and value on the alignment of their individual purpose with that of the organizations they are considering. With so many similarly positioned attributes among employers in the market, alignment of organizational and individual purpose is a clear differentiator and attribute of importance for job seekers.

Generation effect on organizational purpose was also examined. As previously discussed, employees from different generations reported varying levels of importance of organizational purpose. Specifically, the younger generations (Millennials and Generation Z) placed more emphasis on its importance than older generations (Generation X, Baby Boomers). Although the findings in this study are consistent with established literature in terms of acknowledging generational differences in work preferences, it is unclear whether these differences are a generational difference per se or

more characteristic of the participant's point in career or point in life. Point in life cycle effect on employer attraction was beyond the scope of this research study and is noted to be considered for further research.

In addition, it is concluded that economic security had an effect on organizational purpose. Data collected in the interviews informed this influence. Economic demographic data as well as narrative coding and sentiment analysis suggested early in the survey field period that economic background and security has influence on the pursuit of purpose. A key finding is the notion that the pursuit of purpose is "privilege" and a higher order of personal need beyond that of basic needs. This notable finding draws upon Maslow's Motivational Theory and Hierarchy of Needs which posits that people are motivated to achieve certain needs and when one need is fulfilled, they seek to fulfill the next one but only when the lower order need is fulfilled. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs are i) Biological and Philosophical Needs: air, food, drink, shelter, warmth, sex, sleep; ii) Safety Needs: protection from elements, security, order, law, limits, stability, freedom from fear; iii) Social Needs: belongingness, affection and love from work groups, family, friends, romantic relationships; iv) Esteem Needs: achievement, mastery, independence, status, dominance, prestige, self-respect, respect from others, and v): Self-Actualization Needs: realizing personal potential, self-fulfillment, seeking personal growth and peak experiences (Maslow, 1943).

Organizational purpose aligns with self-actualization needs whereas needs of compensation and benefits, stability and security, and flexibility align with lower order needs. When job seekers are economically challenged or burdened, the lower order needs are not fulfilled and therefore limits the focus on or pursuit of purpose. However, if lower

order needs are fulfilled or stated differently, salary or economic security are not an issue for the job seeker, organizational purpose alignment emerges, albeit as privilege.

Opportunity for career growth resulted as a dominant driver of employer attraction across all generations and demographics of the interview participants. Career growth was focused on a variety of related areas such as career path, career development, growth in job and at the organization, gaining experience, and promotion. Emphasis on career growth was not stated in terms of rewards, salary, or more compensation with few exceptions. As the prevailing driver of employer attraction in this study, career growth outshined the more traditional attributes of compensation, benefits, work life balance, and flexibility.

The importance of people was noted as a key theme in the research findings with emphasis on the role and value of people in the job seeker's job search and employer evaluation process. In addition, familiarity of people plays a key role and serves a level of importance for the job seeker. Job seekers are looking for familiar faces, people they know, and people that look like them. A tribe or pack comfort and familiarity appeared more evident in the younger generations in this study. Generation X and Baby Boomers focused less on people they know being among their future colleagues and emphasized more the importance of referrals and placing value on their current colleagues and learning from their colleagues. The preference of working where people are familiar, of your own demographic, and make up a personal and professional base was an influential attribute of employer attraction primarily in the younger workforce generations. This finding is consistent with Byrnes' (1971) Similarity Attraction Theory.

Propositions

The following propositions are formed from the research and analysis of this study and to further investigate in the follow-on quantitative research of study two.

P1: Alignment of individual and organizational purpose is an important consideration among job seekers and working professionals.

A foundational conclusion of study one established organizational purpose alignment as an important attribute among many of the participants for employer attraction. This is notable as the importance of organizational purpose as an attribute for employer attraction emerged inductively through semi-structured interviews without any prompting on the concept by the investigator. In addition, organizational purpose alignment represented levels of observed positive emotion more so than any other attribute noted among participants.

P2: Alignment of individual and organizational purpose is a more important dimension of employer attraction for younger generations (Generations Y, Z) than it is for older generations (Generation X, Baby Boomers).

The importance of organizational purpose as an attribute of employer attraction varied by generation among the interview participants. Organizational purpose was represented within all generational segments however the highest level of importance was expressed by the younger generation participants. This is consistent with extant research and literature given the social conscience of Millennials and Generation Z and the importance they place on corporate social responsibility. Younger generations placed more importance on status than older generations. The career stage of the older generation participants may provide status so they no longer feel the need to earn this while the younger generations may feel that status is a priority as it provides visibility,

which aids progression and marketability (Cennamo, L., & Gardner, D., 2008). Baby Boomer participants also placed importance on organizational purpose alignment in the context of their second career and wanting to work for an organization that gives back at this point in their career. This finding challenges research where no generational differences were found for altruistic values (Twenge et al., 2010). Although there is limited literature on generational differences in Person-Organization fit, theoretical views suggest that the values of an organization's more influential members tend to represent the culture of the organization (Schein, 1992).

P3: Alignment of individual and organizational purpose has lower levels of importance for those who experience economic insecurity.

It was reported and observed among participants the struggle between organizational purpose alignment and economic security, consistently with the younger generations than Baby Boomers. Many Generation Y and Z interview participants placed great importance on organizational purpose. For some, organizational purpose is essential while for others it was more of a bonus and secondary to other attributes such as salary and growth. In fact, the pursuit of purpose as "privilege", second to economic security, emerged among several Millennial participants. However, through follow-on inductive inquiry, those more focused on economic security acknowledged the desire to pursue purpose but noted the economic security barrier. Disparate life experiences encountered by different generations may affect each generation's value for extrinsic rewards (Twenge et al., 2010). With certain levels of success over time, economic security is achieved. Without this barrier, the pursuit of purpose, although not top of mind in all cases, was a consideration for Baby Boomers.

Concept Model: Purpose-fit as a Driver of Employer Attraction

The concept of perceived alignment of individual and organizational purpose in employer attraction is noticeably undefined and absent of focus in the extant literature. Constructs such as Person-Environment fit (PE fit) that originated with Parsons (1909) and Person-Organization fit (PO fit) per Chatman (1989) are firmly established in the extant literature but do not directly represent the synergy of individual and organizational purpose alignment in employer attraction or evaluation of fit. These concepts are broader and include a variety of similarities such as values, qualities, job and organizational characteristics, needs and abilities matching, and goals. Although PE fit represents the compatibility between an individual and work environment that occurs when their characteristics are well matched, and PO fit posits the congruence between the norms and values of organizations and the values of persons, both concepts only indirectly imply organizational purpose alignment in the evaluation of fit to the work environment.

Concluding from the literature and study one findings, this research expands on the concept of PO Fit adapting Cardona, Rey, and Craig's (2019) Purpose Synergy model and propose perceived individual and organizational purpose alignment in the form of a new concept of "Purpose-fit" as a driver of employer attraction. Given the absence of organizational purpose within any of the established "fit" definitions, the emerging importance of organizational purpose, and alignment of organizational and individual purpose of job seekers, I posit that Purpose-fit merits its own distinct investigation and theoretical concept within the "fit" construct.

Before conceptual definition of Purpose-fit, it is important to establish the foundational definition of purpose. Cambridge Dictionary defines purpose as why you do

something or why something exists. Purpose is the reason for which something is done or created; the reason for its existence; something that is believed in and pervades every aspect of our behaviors and attitudes and is a deeply held pervasive belief in a reason for existence (Mercurio, 2017). This general definition aligns with individual purpose versus organizational purpose previously defined in the literature review as the ultimate priority of the organization, its reason for existence (Basu, 2017).

For conceptual definition, Purpose-fit is defined as *the perceived alignment of individual and organizational purpose through evaluation of image and reputation, mission and values, social contribution, and meaningful work by the job seeker or employee of an employer*. Figure 4 illustrates the construct hierarchy relation and conceptual definition of Purpose-fit as a synthesis and congruence of organizational and individual purpose in the context of employer attraction and perceived Person-Organization fit.

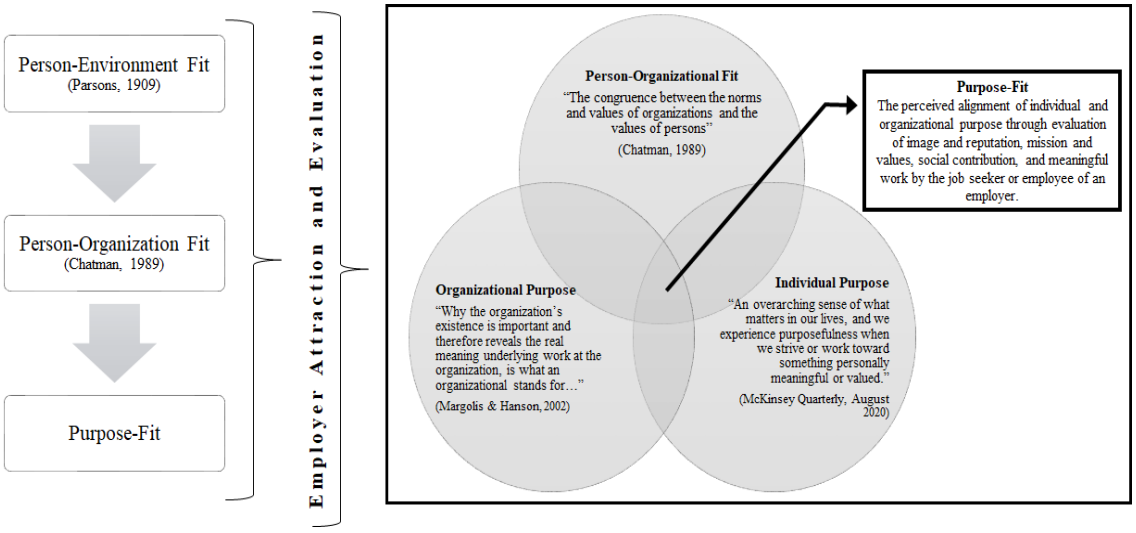

Figure 4. Purpose-fit: Construct Hierarchy and Conceptual Definition

The research model of Purpose-fit as a Driver of Employer Attraction is illustrated in Figure 5. Within this model traditional employer attributes as drivers of employer attraction established in the extant literature are represented to include both extrinsic and intrinsic motivators. In addition, the prevailing concept of Person-Environment fit and sub types of Person-Organization fit and Person-Job fit are also represented as predictors of employer attraction. Purpose-fit is positioned as a new attribute of fit and a driver of employer attraction. The model proposes further that Purpose-fit is moderated by generation and economic security effects as reflected in the findings of this study.

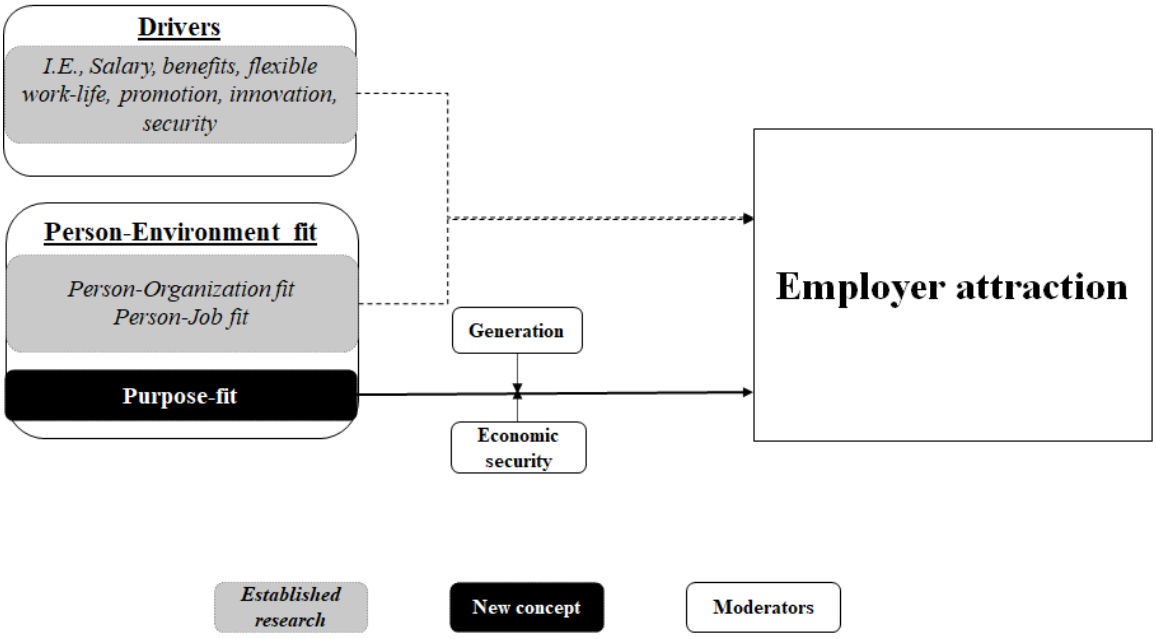

Figure 5. Concept Model 1: Purpose-fit as a Driver of Employer Attraction Moderated by Generation and Economic Security

Limitations and Implications for Future Research

This researcher notes the limitations of the research in the following areas. First, generalizability given the limited number of interview participants, a smaller number of participants from the bookend generations (Generation Z, Baby Boomer), and geographic location density of the participants. The application of the research findings to specialized and nuanced industries and sectors, such as high technology and manufacturing, as well as to ancillary non-professional and specialized fields, such as small businesses, gig economy workers, artisans, and independent consultants, may be challenged. In addition, the global application and cultural implications of the findings may not be generalizable outside of the United States given the context and focus of this study.

Another limitation of the study is the application of Purpose-fit only in employer attraction. A broader application in talent management to include key areas of the employee experience should be considered and are noted for future research and practice.

The range of years in a generational segment could be challenged as to whether the observation is categorically pure to the generation or a dynamic of point in life or career stage. Given the span of years across any given generation segment, it is reasonable to assume a point in life reference (i.e., becoming a parent, homeowner, empty nester, etc.) can crossover generations.

Future research considerations are bountiful. First, expanding the research of Purpose-fit to further test and confirm significance of Purpose-fit to specialized industries, nuanced and ancillary careers, and alternative working arrangements. In addition, the concept of Purpose-fit should be investigated beyond employer attraction as a driver of employee commitment, engagement, motivation, satisfaction, and retention.

Another area of expanded research for the Purpose-fit concept is employer branding and talent strategy, particularly how profiling an organization's purpose in employer branding, value proposition, and talent strategy provides differentiation, competitive advantage, and increased performance for employers.

Finally, a next level of research of Purpose-fit should investigate how this driver interacts with other prevailing drivers of employer attraction, whether there are respective tradeoffs among the drivers, and how Purpose-fit compares in relative importance as a driver of employer attraction for prospective job seekers among various demographic segments. One approach to this type of investigation would be to utilize a choice-based conjoint survey and analysis as a quantitative method to further investigate and validate the proposed concept and findings of this study, provide a robust mixed method approach to the research, provide insights and contributions to employer attraction research, and further practical implications in human resources management, employer branding and marketing.

CHAPTER 4: STUDY TWO

DOES PURPOSE MATTER? A CHOICE-BASED CONJOINT ANALYSIS OF THE ROLE OF PURPOSE-FIT IN EMPLOYER ATTRACTION

Introduction

Study one established the importance of organizational purpose alignment in the evaluation of the attractiveness of employers, supported the development of a new concept of Purpose-fit, and suggested that salience of Purpose-fit is influenced by generation and economic security. The first study also highlighted the importance of people (referral, similarity, diversity, etc.) and opportunity for professional growth and development when evaluating potential employers. Lastly, study one identified a willingness among interview participants to accept less pay as a tradeoff for desired employer attributes, including Purpose-fit – while raising the possibility that the pursuit of purpose is a privilege not available to all.

Although the findings of research study one established among the interview participants that Purpose-fit is as or more important than other drivers defining attractiveness of a potential employer, it was further found that structural inequality, such as economic security, may create a drag on the pursuit of Purpose-fit in that such pursuit can be deemed as "privilege". In current times, the ideation of Purpose-fit is further sensitized, complicated, and heightened for the working professional and prospective job seeker by their experience of their employer's response to the dual social crises of COVID-19 and racial injustice responded to by the Black Lives Matter movement.

In between the conduct of study one (November 2019) and study two (November 2020), our economic and social system suffered two large and unanticipated shocks: the COVID-19 pandemic and the widespread Black Lives Matter social movement in response to racial violence and injustice. Separately and together, these placed great stress on the employer, employees, and the talent management process, highlighted the employers' priorities and values, and provided an opportunity to test the durability of Purpose-fit as a driver in employer attraction.

The rapid spread of COVID-19 led to significant layoffs, furloughs, unemployment, and uncertainty in the workforce and for graduates entering the workforce. Furthermore, the response of corporations in terms of their crisis readiness, their capacity to pivot to a virtual and remote work environment, their care or lack thereof for their employees, and the impact and focus on their social commitments have proven to be highly variable based on industry and employer readiness, ideals, employee well-being focus, and financial survival and prioritization (Colletta, 2021). As employers' response to COVID-19 has had large effects both on the economic security of participants and on participants perception of employers' priorities and values, it seemed critical to include consideration of COVID-19 effects on the job-seekers evaluation of the relative importance of Purpose-fit.

In addition to the COVID-19 pandemic, a second social crisis emerged in the United States with the murder of George Floyd in the custody of Minneapolis, MN, Police on May 25, 2020. This event sparked an unprecedented reaction and renewed widespread calls for racial justice, equity, and reform throughout the United States and many parts of the world. This movement has had a considerable impact on employers and

employee attitudes regarding racial equity and diversity. In response, commitments to racial equity and diversity are surging among employers, some corporations are redefining their brands and reshaping their offerings to remove inappropriate and legacy images or references, and job seekers are scrutinizing employer practices and pronouncements (Bryan, 2021). Again, the events are so widespread and prominent, and thematically they have been so connected to perceptions of purpose and priority, that it seemed important to consider their effects on employee and job seekers' attitudes toward Purpose-fit. Accordingly, study two incorporates an exploratory inquiry into the impact of participants' experience of their employers' response to racial equity and the Black Lives Matter movement on the relative importance of Purpose-fit.

Study two used a choice-based conjoint survey and analysis to explore the relative importance of Purpose-fit compared to other prevailing drivers of employer attraction. This study was designed to further investigate how generation and economic security affect the relative importance of Purpose-fit and tradeoff with other perceived drivers of employer attraction. Further, this study is explicitly designed to explore the willingness to tradeoff salary for various drivers of employer attraction, including Purpose-fit. Finally, study two investigated the effect of a prospective job seeker's experience from their employer's response to social crises on the relative importance of Purpose-fit.

Purpose-fit Conceptual Models and Hypotheses

Refining the concept model from research study one, Figure 6 illustrates the concept model of Purpose-fit as one of several drivers of both employer attraction and willingness to accept less pay (WTALP); it also shows the moderating influence of

generation, economic security, and the employee experience of an employer's response to social crisis.

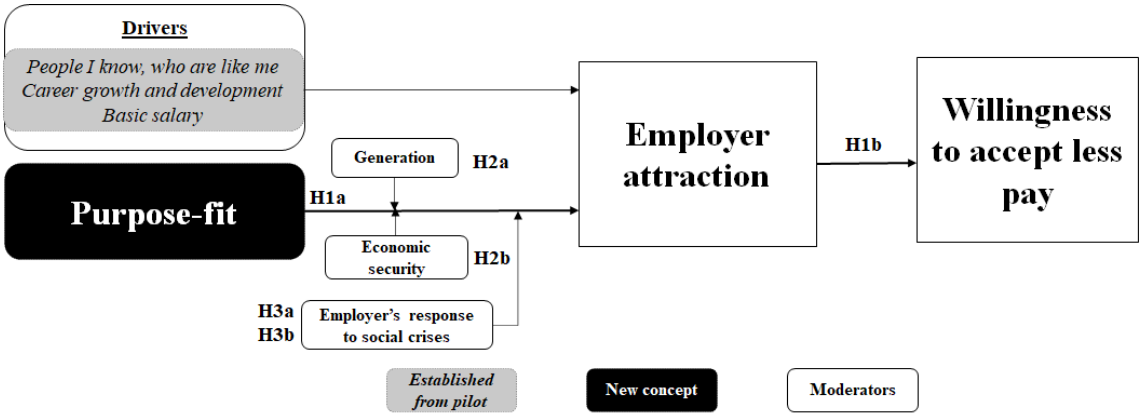

Figure 6. Concept Model 2: Purpose-fit as a Driver of Employer Attraction and Willingness to Accept Less Pay

Hypotheses Development

The notion of tradeoffs in the employer choice literature is relatively unexplored. Much of the quantitative research into employer choice establishes choice preferences through surveys that provide the relative importance value of any given item. Then through factor analysis, the strength of the item is determined with a loading score. Berthon, Ewing, and Hah's (2005) Employer Attractiveness Scale (EmpAt Scale) is a good illustration of 25 employer attractiveness items scored and organized into factors. However, the literature is not well established in the method of ranking or tradeoffs in employer choice decision making and comparing employer attraction items against each other. There are some notable studies (Scheidegger & Müller, 2017; Baum & Kabst, 2013; Garver et al, 2019; Montgomery & Ramus, 2011) that use the conjoint survey and analysis method to investigate job preferences among specific populations. However,

within these studies, any notion of Purpose-fit is absent among drivers of attraction presented for tradeoff and importance ranking. Thus, expanding from study one, hypothesis 1a for research study two is the following:

H1a: Prospective job seekers place equal or greater importance on Purpose-fit over other drivers of employer attraction.

The literatures on Human Resources Management and Millennialism established the concept of the donative labor hypothesis (Leete, 2001) in the context of nonprofit work, public service, and humanitarian organizations, wherein employees "donate" their labor and accept lower wages in exchange for the intrinsic satisfaction they receive for assisting with the achievement of an organization's mission-oriented goals (McGinnis & Ng, 2016). In addition, research studies have established that extrinsic factors such as salary and rewards continue in high relative importance and dominance among job seekers (Berthon & Hah, 2005). Study one identified a stated willingness among many interview participants to accept less pay for other important attributes and needs they have from a prospective employer; this study will test and quantify that tradeoff. Thus, Hypothesis 1b is:

H1b: Prospective job seekers are willing to accept less pay from employers for which they perceive Purpose-fit.

The current labor market in the US is highly diverse with multiple generations at work, each bringing their own expectations of employers. The literature is well established in research on generational differences for employer attraction and employee preferences (Cennamo & Gardner, 2008; Martin & Ottemann, 2015; Parker, Graf, & Igielnik, 2020; Reis & Braga, 2016). Missing from this literature is explicit consideration

of the effect of generation on Purpose-fit as a driver of employer attraction. Study one suggested the importance of Purpose-fit prevailed in all generations at work with varying degrees of emphasis and context. Participants from the younger generations emphasized higher degrees of relative importance and emotion on Purpose-fit as a driver of employer attraction than older generations. However, older generations recognized its importance as well. For Baby Boomers, Purpose-fit was a key driver of employer attraction as participants thought about or reflected on their encore career. Generation X participants noted personal pride they felt being part of an organization that does social good. To build on these findings further, this study tested the existence and magnitude of the expected moderating effect of generation on Purpose-fit. Thus, Hypothesis 2a for this research study is:

H2a: Younger generations (Generations Y, Z) will place higher levels of importance on Purpose-fit as compared to older generations (Generation X, Baby Boomers).

A key finding in study one was the impact of economic security on the pursuit of Purpose-fit among participants interviewed. Characterized by one interviewee as the pursuit of purpose being "privilege", prospective job seekers with economic insecurity may prioritize economic security over the pursuit of Purpose-fit. This is consistent with Maslow's (1943) motivational theory and hierarchy of needs, which posits that people are motivated to achieve certain needs. When one need is fulfilled, they seek to fulfill the next one but only when the lower order need is fulfilled. That is, prospective job seekers with lower order needs, such as the need for food and shelter, may not have the luxury or privilege of pursuing a seemingly higher order need such as Purpose-fit until they realize a certain level of economic security. To build on these findings further, this study tested

the existence and magnitude of the expected moderating effect of economic security on Purpose-fit. Thus, Hypothesis 2b for this research study is:

H2b: Prospective job seekers with economic insecurity place lower levels of importance on Purpose-fit relative to other drivers as compared to participants with economic security.

The next set of hypotheses investigate the impact of an employee's experience with an employer's response to the social crises of the COVID-19 pandemic and racial injustice responded to by Black Lives Matter and this effect on the relative importance of Purpose-fit. Crisis management literature notes that citizens and organizations often cease routine activities during a crisis and take on new crisis response related tasks and responsibilities (Auf der Heide, 1989). New behaviors emerge when crisis-related demands are not met by existing organizations (Stallings & Quarantelli, 1985) and when the communities feel it is necessary to respond to or resolve their crisis situation (Wenger, 1992). Further, during situations of collective stress, individuals and groups become more cohesive and unified (Quarantelli, 1986). Organizations today have been challenged by both crises in terms of economic security and employee well-being, and commitments to improve racial equity.

An employer's response to social crises is an example of signaling theory (Connelly, Certo, Ireland, & Reutzel, 2011) in that an employee's attraction can be influenced by signals the organization sends through their behavior, communications, and/or branding or lack thereof. The experience and information provided serves as signals of the organization's characteristics and of the congruence between their actions and stated values, beliefs, ideals, and purpose (Celani & Singh, 2011). In the context of COVID-19, an employer's response that is favorable towards employee well-being, such

as delaying or staggering layoffs or not requiring employees to work in the office, are signals of the employer's value of people. In the context of Black Lives Matter movement, an employer's response that is favorable in recognizing the significance of the racial injustice crisis, committing to diversity and racial equity, and taking bold action toward change proves a value placed on diversity, people, and equity. Accordingly, Hypotheses 3a and 3b are the following:

H3a: Potential job seekers who have a positive experience of their employer response to COVID-19 will accept less tradeoff for Purpose-fit as compared to those with a negative experience.

H3b: Potential job seekers who have a positive experience of their employer response to Black Lives Matter will accept more tradeoff for Purpose-fit as compared to those with a negative experience.

Methodology

This study used a choice-based conjoint survey and analysis to test the hypotheses and examine Purpose-fit as a driver of employer attraction. The survey was administered in two phases – an initial pilot using a snowball sampling technique and a follow-on random sample panel survey. The quantitative analysis took the form of descriptive, conjoint, ANOVA and multiple regression analyses. The survey, samples, and data analyses are detailed in the following sections.

Survey

A choice-based conjoint survey was administered to investigate the relative importance of and tradeoffs between different drivers of employer attraction among prospective job seeker participants. Conjoint survey is based on discrete choice theory,

which studies how the characteristics of a product or service influence consumers' choices and preferences (Chitturi, 2009). Conjoint analysis and discrete choice experiments are among the most widely used methodologies in both academia and industry for measuring and analyzing the preferences or choices of participants and are preferred to rankings and ratings because they are more realistic and easier to respond to. Conjoint analysis has long been popular in marketing research where it is primarily used to analyze tradeoffs of a consumer's decision among multi-attributed products or services (Green & Srinivasan, 1978). However, use of the methodology has expanded into other areas of choice, preferences, and tradeoffs to include patient choice, student choice, employee choice, and job seeker choice (Baker & McGregor, 2000; Baum & Kabst, 2013; Biesma et al., 2007). In this study, the "product" evaluated are employer profiles. The choice-based conjoint survey presents to participants a group of employer choice sets with specific attributes and requests them to make preference tradeoffs between the choice sets based on the different levels of attributes presented. To choose between employer profile choice sets, participants make implicit decisions about the relative importance of attributes such as geographic location, the compensation package, whether the company's products or services are ethical, advancement potential of the position, etc. Finally, in conjoint survey design, establishing levels or values of attributes to be presented to participants is necessary to calculate the degree to which the strength of the attributes presented influence choice (Montgomery & Ramus, 2011).

The survey had four sections. In the first section, participants chose among employer profile choice sets presenting four employer attributes with two differentiated levels per attribute. The four attributes were identified in study one as most important:

basic salary, opportunity for growth and development, organizational purpose alignment, and whether the company employs people I know or who are like me. Table 10 provides the attributes, definition, and leveling of the employer attributes included in the choice of employer profiles.

Table 10.

Conjoint Survey Employer Attributes: Definition and Attribute Level Scale

Attribute	**Definition**	**Level**
Basic Salary (Salary)	Annual basic salary for full time employment.	Market Competitive or Above Market (+10%)
Opportunity for Growth and Development (Opportunity)	The company provides opportunity for career growth and development (*promotion, training, mentoring, etc.*).	Yes or No
Organizational Purpose Alignment (Purpose-fit)	The company has an organizational purpose that aligns with my personal purpose.	Yes = Aligned or No = Misaligned
Employs People I Know/ or Like Me (People)	People I know, or people who are like me, work at this company.	Yes or No

In the second section, participants were asked outside of the context of employer profile choice sets to specify one of the presented attributes (excluding Salary) as most preferred and select a level of willingness to accept less pay (WTALP) for the preferred employer attribute preference. The levels of WTALP included were -5%, -10%, -15%, >-15%, and not willing to accept less pay. This segment of the survey sought to gauge participant's most desired attribute among the prevailing attributes provided and the level of pay they are willing to accept in sacrifice for their desired attribute.

The third section included questions about the impact of the participant's employer's response to COVID-19 and the Black Lives Matter movement on the relative importance of Purpose-fit. This allowed for an investigation as to whether in times of social crises, an employer's response to the crisis affects an employee's relative importance of Purpose-fit with the employer.

The final section collected demographic data about gender, ethnicity, generation, education level, employment status, job search status, annual basic salary range, economic security, industry, and geographic location. These factors support both descriptive reporting and analysis – for example, exploring the moderating effect of generation and economic security on variations in tradeoffs around Purpose-fit.

The survey is provided in the appendix of this dissertation.

Sample

For this study, the survey was administered to two samples of potential job seekers. The first sample for the pilot study was drawn from the investigator's professional and academic network using both direct outreach and snowball techniques. The sampling resulted in a total of 319 completed responses from working professionals and college students, with some actively seeking employment and some reasonably settled in their current work. Following the pilot and some revisions to the survey instrument, a final conjoint survey was extended to a random sample panel established with the conjoint survey platform (Conjoint.ly), resulting in a total of 129 completed responses. The random sample was drawn from working professionals and prospective job seekers comparable to the overall demographic makeup of the US workforce per the 2019 report by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) on Household Data Annual

Averages for employment status of the civilian noninstitutional population by age (Civilian Labor Force, by Age, Sex, Race, and Ethnicity: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020). Summary descriptive statistics on the pilot and panel samples are provided in table 11.

Table 11.

Pilot and Panel Conjoint Survey Sample Demographics

Gender	Pilot	Panel
Male	35%	50%
Female	64%	50%
Other	1%	0%

Generation	Pilot	Panel
Gen Z	0.32	13%
Gen Y	0.31	47%
Gen X	0.24	25%
Baby Boomer	0.13	11%
Other	0	3%
Non-disclosed	N/A	1%

Ethnicity	Pilot	Panel
Asian	8%	5%
Black	10%	11%
Hispanic	8%	11%
Native American	0%	2%
Two or More	4%	4%
White	67%	65%
Other	2%	0%
Non-disclosed	N/A	2%

Education Level	Pilot	Panel
Some High School	0%	2%
High School	4%	12%
Some College	21%	14%
Associates	8%	13%
Bachelors	27%	30%
Masters	34%	22%
Doctorate	7%	6%
Undisclosed	N/A	1%

Employment Status	Pilot	Panel
Full Time	53%	78%
Part Time	17%	13%
Entrepreneur / Consultant	8%	3%
Gig Worker / Freelancer	1%	2%
Student - not employed	16%	1%
Student - employed	1%	0%
Other	5%	4%

Job Search Status	Pilot	Panel
Employed, actively seeking	30%	20%
Employed, passively seeking	34%	25%
Employed, not seeking	3%	48%
COVID unemployed, actively seeking	12%	4%
Unemployed, actively seeking	19%	2%
Unemployed, not seeking	N/A	0%
Other	5%	N/A

Annual Basic Salary	Pilot	Panel
<$35,000	N/A	13%
Between $35,000-$70,000	N/A	37%
Between $70,001-$100,000	N/A	14%
Between $100,001-$125,000	N/A	16%
Between $125,001-$150,000	N/A	8%
>$150,000	N/A	10%
Non-disclosed	N/A	2%

Financially Responsible for Others	Pilot	Panel
Yes	47%	N/A
No	53%	N/A

Economic Security	Pilot	Panel
Economically secure	N/A	49%
Economically limited	N/A	40%
Economically insecure	N/A	12%

Industry	Pilot	Panel
Accounting, Banking, Finance	10%	15%
Communicatins, Marketing, PR	6%	3%
Education	4%	11%
Government	5%	11%
Healthcare	5%	11%
Hospitality	3%	5%
Human Capital Consulting	6%	0%
Information Technology	8%	10%
Legal	0%	2%
Management Consulting	12%	3%
Non-Profit	15%	3%
Pharmaceutical	3%	0%
Sales	6%	5%
Shipping, Supply Chain	2%	3%
Social Services, Assistance	1%	2%
Other	15%	16%

Data Analysis

Four analyses were conducted for this research study. First, descriptive statistics were performed to provide an overview of participant demographics and overall description of the survey sample and data. Secondly, conjoint analysis from survey participant inputs on the employer choice sets was conducted to provide goodness of fit, relative importance for overall attributes, and related cross tab reporting on sample segments and other additional survey items. The goal of the conjoint analysis is to provide evidence of relative importance of the drivers of employer attraction. Relative importance of a driver is measured by the range of its levels divided by the sum of the ranges across all factors. The conjoint analysis provided statistical tests for all of the hypotheses in this study. Thirdly, one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) statistical analysis was performed to test significance of independent variables' effect on the dependent variable for specific hypotheses. The goal of the ANOVAs is to provide a narrower view testing the significance of individual independent variables and their specific effect on the choice of Purpose-fit. Fourth, a multiple regression analysis was performed to account for variation among the drivers of employer attraction in the model and for further robustness of testing.

Confidence intervals, which are estimates of observed data proposing a range of plausible values and a measure of the degree of certainty, were set, and reported at the standard level of 95% for the descriptive, conjoint, and statistical analyses.

Results from the Pilot Survey

A pilot survey was conducted to test the conjoint survey instrument design and gather initial data for preliminary analysis. The survey was sent to the student

investigator's professional and academic network of working professionals and prospective job seekers for a diverse pilot sample to include representation of all generations at work. A total of 319 completed responses were received from 617 surveys sent, for a response rate of 51.7%. The demographic makeup of participants reported in Table 11 included a mix of student and working professionals and of active and passive job seekers, diversity in self-reported gender and racial identities, and self-reported financial responsibility and industry participation.

Figure 7 shows the relative importance of each driver of employer attraction from the pilot survey. The choice percentage show that 1) Opportunity, at 37%, and Purpose-fit, at 36%, are equal in relative importance as drivers of employer attraction; 2) that Opportunity and Purpose-fit are greatly and significantly more important than Salary, at 16%, and 3) that Salary is slightly, but significantly, more important than People, at 11%. With no overlap in confidence intervals among Purpose-fit, People, and Salary, it can be inferred that these drivers are distinct with respect to relative importance and significantly different. Overlapping confidence intervals between Purpose-fit and Opportunity suggests these attributes are not significantly different.

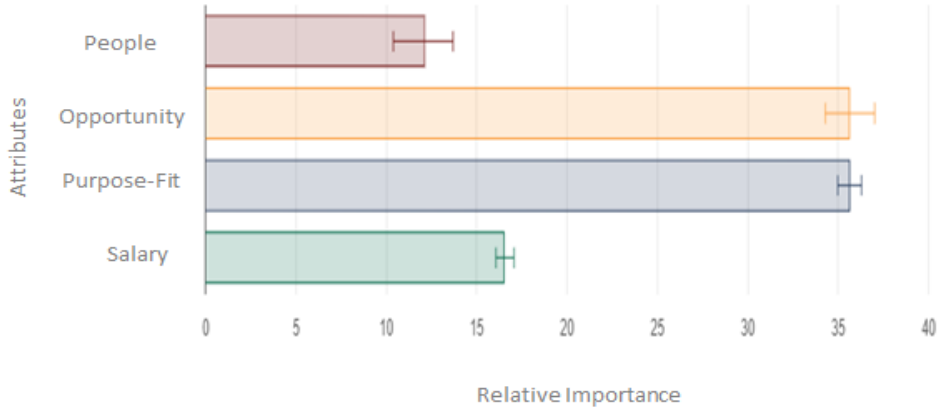

Figure 7. Pilot Survey: Relative Importance of Attributes with Confidence Intervals

From the analysis, it was further determined that the pilot sample contained a level of sampling error as it derived from the student investigator's network and is not representative of a cross-section of the US labor force. It was further determined that control items in the survey testing economic security and employer experience with COVID-19 and Black Lives Matter needed to be revised and strengthened to improve measurement of these important moderating variables. Adjustments were made to the sampling approach to be more random and representative of the US labor force. Further, modifications were made to the survey questionnaire to strengthen measurement of items for a follow-on conjoint survey administered to a random sample panel provided by the survey platform, Conjoint.ly.

Panel Survey Analysis

A follow-on survey to the pilot utilized a panel sample established by the survey platform, Conjoint.ly. The makeup of the survey sample consisted of working professionals and prospective job seekers across all generations. Participants were pre-screened to generate a panel of participants that matches the demographics of the workforce in the United States as reported by the 2019 Bureau of Labor Statistics report on Household Data Annual Averages for employment status of the civilian noninstitutional population by age (Civilian Labor Force, by Age, Sex, Race, and Ethnicity: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020). As a guide for establishing the random sample, based on the BLS report, the civilian labor in 2019 consisted of 53% male and 47% female; 77% white, 13% Black, 17% Hispanic, and 10% two or more races; 15% Generation Z, 25% Generation Y, 40% Generation X, and 20% Baby Boomer.

Based on the design of the conjoint survey, the Conjoint.ly platform estimated a sample size of 100 completed responses. To allow for sub-segment analysis, and to provide an extra buffer, it was determined to extend the sample to 125. A total of 129 completed responses were received, from 203 invitations, for a 64% response rate.

Prior to analysis, variables were readied for statistical tests. Dichotomous variables were created for Employment Status (1-employed, 0-not employed), Gender (1-male, 0 not-male), Ethnicity (1-minority, 0-majority), and Job Search Status (1-seeking, 2-non-seeking). Also, it was determined to remove the variables of Industry and Geography (US State) as there were too many coefficients within these variables to analyze given the relatively small sample size. information specific to this research study as scoped.

For the continuous and categorical variables, tests were then conducted for normality, skewness, and kurtosis. The descriptive tests proved some variability in the standard deviation of the variables with some variables more clustered toward the mean while others have greater spread from the mean. Most variables fell within acceptable thresholds for skewness (-1 to 1) and kurtosis (-2 to 2) (Hair, 2009), but Generation required log10 transformation to fall within these ranges. With a skewness of 1.28, The Most Attractive Attribute falls out of the acceptable skewness range but well within the accepted range of kurtosis values; it was decided to use this variable without transformation. Table 12 summarizes the variables.

Table 12.

Panel Conjoint Survey – Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive Statistics									
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Attribute Preference	128	1	3	1.39	0.605	1.298	0.214	0.650	0.425
WTALP	128	1	5	2.83	1.593	0.275	0.214	-1.513	0.425
COVID ER EXP	129	1	4	1.88	0.777	0.307	0.213	-0.978	0.423
BLM ER EXP	129	1	3	2.01	0.593	-0.002	0.213	-0.091	0.423
Log10Generation	128	0.00	0.78	0.353	0.185	-0.214	0.214	0.114	0.425
Education	128	1	7	4.49	1.516	-0.384	0.214	-0.779	0.425
Annual Salary Range	126	1	6	2.98	1.531	0.652	0.216	-0.659	0.428
Economic Security	129	1	3	2.37	0.685	-0.635	0.213	-0.700	0.423
People	129	-2.029	1.082	-0.687	0.636	0.290	0.213	-0.042	0.423
Opportunity	129	-2.881	0.320	-1.551	0.928	0.257	0.213	-1.102	0.423
Purpose-fit	129	-2.600	0.925	-1.108	0.912	0.093	0.213	-1.086	0.423
Salary	129	-0.990	1.858	0.616	0.614	-0.229	0.213	-0.503	0.423

To confirm the rough normality of the distribution, histograms were produced on all independent variables excluding the dichotomous variables, which resulted in generally normal distribution and distribution curves for all variables. Distribution curves for all key variables in this study are reflected in histogram charts in Figure 8.

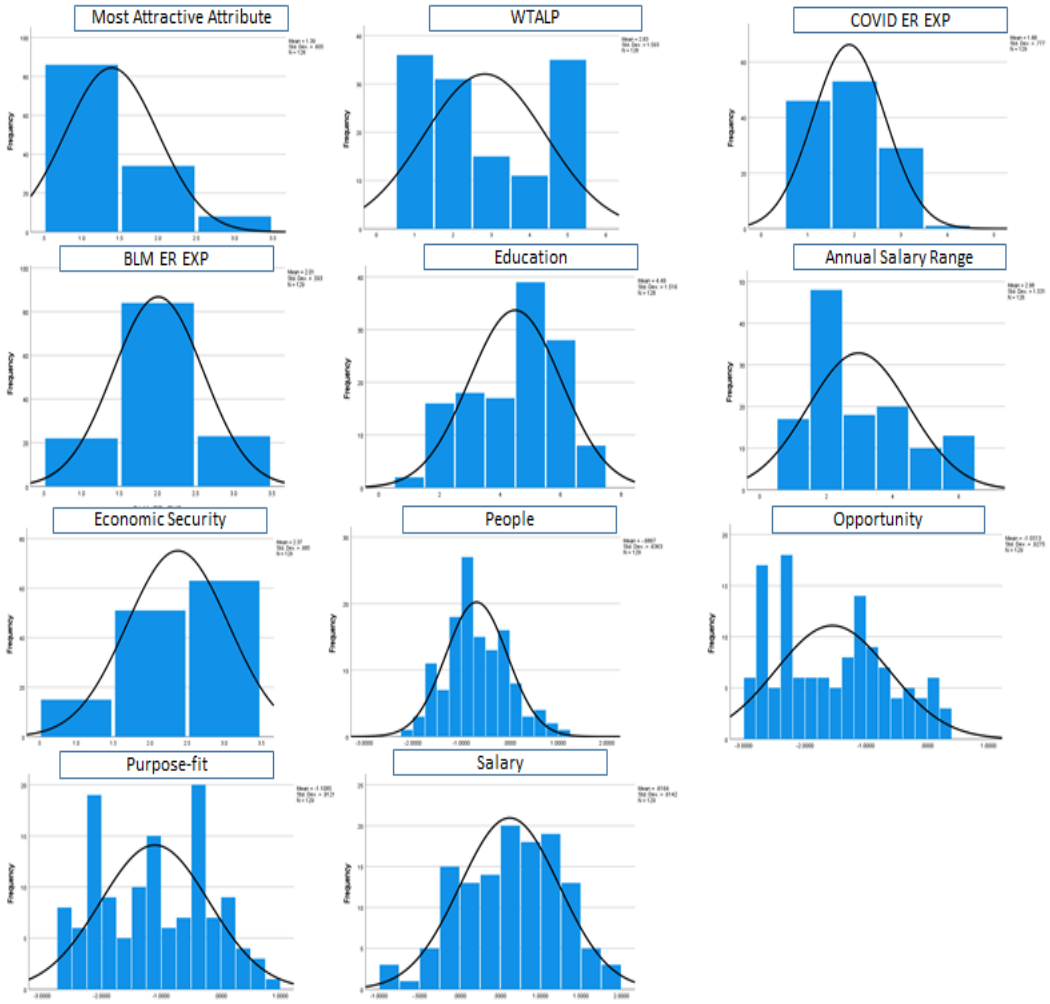

Figure 8. Panel Survey: Variable Histograms

A test of correlation between independent and dependent variables revealed multiple examples of correlation based on Pearson's *r* coefficient value (between ± 0.50 and ± 1). Of particular interest in relation to the hypothesis tests, statistically significant correlations ($p < 0.05$) showed relationships between Willingness to Accept Less Pay and Economic Security, as well as the Economic Security and Purpose-fit. Table 13 reports the correlations between variables.

Table 13.

Panel Conjoint Survey – Correlations

Correlations (n=129)																						
		Employment Status	Job Search Status	Attribute Preference	WTALP	COVID ER EXP	COVID Effect Job Search	COVID Effect Purpose	BLM ER EXP	BLM Effect Job Search	BLM Effect Purpose	Gender	Ethnicity	Generation	Education	Annual Salary Range	Economic Security	People	Opportunity	Purpose-fit	Salary
Employment Status	Pearson Correlation	--																			
Job Search Status		0.018	--																		
Attribute Preference		0.075	-0.068	--																	
WTALP		0.168	-0.041	-0.036	--																
COVID ER EXP		0.116	-0.114	0.080	0.085	--															
COVID Effect Job		.198*	-.415**	-0.003	0.004	0.169	--														
COVID Effect Purpose		-0.052	-0.171	-0.022	0.025	0.059	0.098	--													
BLM ER EXP		-0.039	0.013	0.013	0.018	.256**	0.113	0.022	--												
BLM Effect Job Search		0.165	-.382**	-0.032	-0.073	.237**	.607**	.218*	.179*	--											
BLM Effect Purpose		0.140	-0.112	-0.047	-0.049	0.140	.210*	.454**	.251**	.274**	--										
Gender		0.023	.209*	-0.052	0.010	-0.031	-0.067	-0.095	-0.013	-0.019	0.022	--									
Ethnicity		-.187*	0.131	0.022	-0.108	-0.079	-.211*	0.003	-0.092	-0.047	-0.155	-.303**	--								
Log10Generation		-0.022	-0.110	-0.044	0.033	-0.110	.188*	0.033	-0.029	.215*	0.006	.221*	-.185*	--							
Education		.195*	0.005	0.043	0.010	0.073	0.106	0.166	0.044	0.114	0.172	0.062	-.203*	-0.083	--						
Annual Salary Range		0.149	.213*	-0.025	0.107	0.072	-0.069	-0.031	0.161	-0.104	0.055	.203*	-0.099	-0.097	.424**	--					
Economic Security		.182*	-.260**	0.080	-.178*	0.023	.188*	.253**	0.089	.337**	.186*	-0.064	-0.161	0.093	.283**	0.170	--				
People		0.032	0.104	-0.065	0.037	0.070	0.035	-0.114	0.068	-0.031	-.220*	-0.126	0.143	-0.108	-.228**	-0.156	-0.126	--			
Opportunity		-0.002	.182*	0.107	-0.073	0.025	-.226**	-0.115	-0.032	-.292**	-0.170	-0.071	0.134	-.215*	-0.147	0.014	-0.170	.585**	--		
Purpose-fit		-0.120	0.173	-0.083	0.045	-0.031	-.239**	-0.143	-0.054	-.295**	-.190*	-0.031	.201*	-0.123	-.206*	0.024	-.193*	.369**	.717**	--	
Salary		0.098	-0.012	-0.070	-0.116	-0.144	0.026	0.005	0.016	0.005	.269**	0.052	-.237**	0.040	0.131	0.040	0.088	-.464**	-.541**	-.462**	--

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

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

Testing for multicollinearity to determine similarity in independent variables which could result in strong correlation and thus break assumptions of further statistical testing was also performed. A variable inflation factor (VIF) was used to determine multicollinearity. The results proved all VIFs below even the conservative cutoff of 5 (Ringle et al., 2015) with the highest value at a moderate level of 3.72. Multicollinearity is therefore not a concern.

McFadden's pseudo-R^2 was used as a conditional logit analysis of qualitative choice behavior and measure for the internal validation of the conjoint analysis model. *R*-squared is the percentage of the response variable variation that is explained by a linear model or rather the explained variation as a percentage of total variation. *R*-squared values are always between 0 and 1 where 0 indicates that the model explains none of the variability and 1 indicates that the model explains all the variability. These numbers are often interpreted in terms of percentages. In the context of a conjoint survey, strong goodness of fit (pseudo- R^2 value of over 65%) indicates that participants have clear preferences for features whereas weak goodness of fit (pseudo- R^2 value of under 45%) suggests that participants' choices are more arbitrary (*What Is Goodness of Fit?*, 2019). This statistic is provided as an outcome of the conjoint survey platform and reported McFadden's pseudo-R^2 measure of 48% proving the model a moderate for goodness of fit and accounting for 48% of total variation in the model.

Results and Hypothesis Testing

Results of the panel survey are presented per the following outcomes of the conjoint analysis and statistical tests for each hypothesis of this study.

H1a: Prospective job seekers place equal or greater importance on Purpose-fit over other drivers of employer attraction.

Figure 9 shows the relative importance of each attribute related to employer attraction. The conjoint analysis indicates three significantly distinct levels of relative importance with Opportunity most important at 39%; Purpose-fit proving next in importance at 28%; and People (17%) and Salary (16%) in last in relative importance.

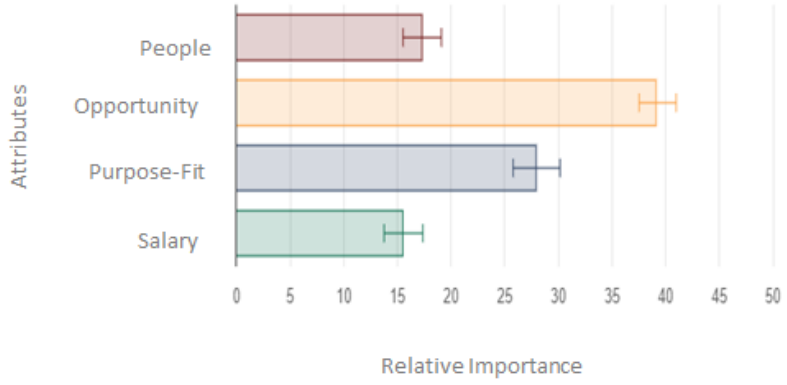

Figure 9. Panel Survey: Relative Importance of Attributes with Confidence Intervals

With no overlap in confidence intervals among Opportunity and Purpose-fit, it can be inferred that these drivers are distinct with respect to relative importance and significantly different. Further, this test validates the hypothesis in that job seekers place equal or greater importance on Purpose-fit over other drivers of employer attraction. In this case, job seekers place greater importance of Purpose-fit over People and Salary.

H1b: Prospective job seekers are willing to accept less pay from employers for which they perceive Purpose-fit.

In the investigation of Willingness to Accept Less Pay (WTALP) participants were asked to choose the most attractive attribute for their prospective employer of choice. Participants chose Opportunity (67%) as the most attractive attribute followed by Purpose-fit (27%) and People (6%). Then participants were asked what is their WTALP for the desired attribute chosen. WTALP proved highest among 73% of participants at the -5% and -10% levels and 27% of participants report willingness to accept -15% or more in pay. Although all attribute choices prove a WTALP, participants who chose Purpose-fit reported a higher WTALP. Figure 10 illustrates the willingness to accept less pay and most desired attribute choice among the survey participants.

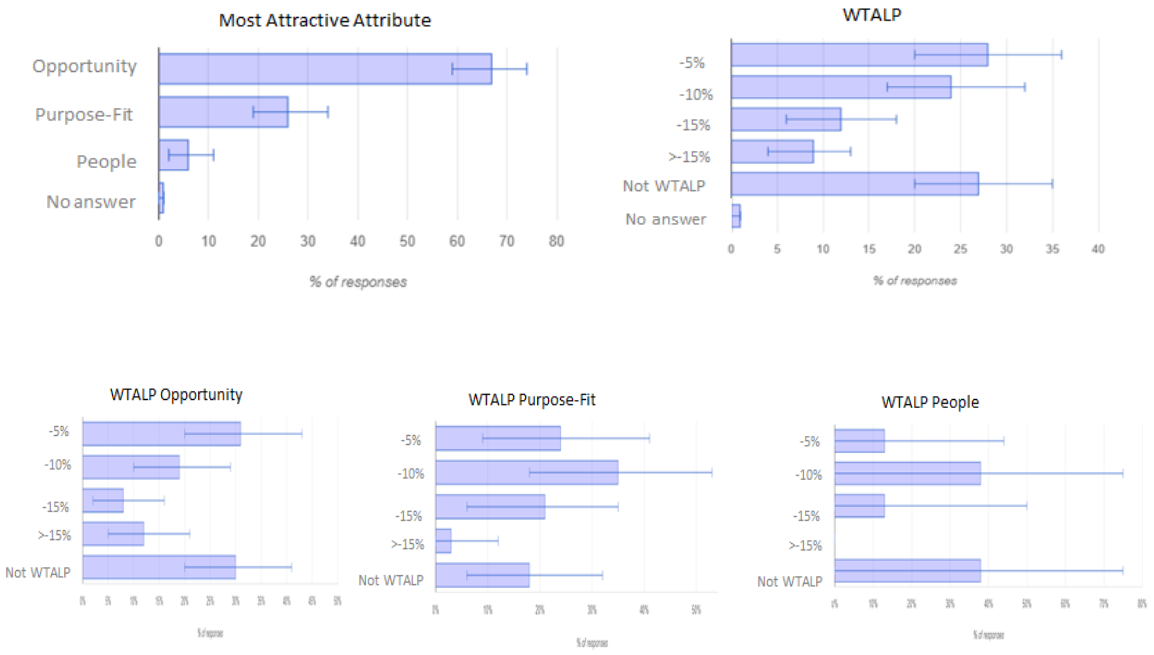

Figure 10. Panel Survey: Willingness to Accept Less Pay for Desired Attribute with Confidence Intervals

Given no overlapping confidence intervals in the Most Attractive Attribute, it can be inferred that the attributes are distinct with respect to relative importance and significantly different. With overlapping confidence intervals within the levels of WTALP, it can be inferred that there is less of a true difference between the levels of this variable.

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare the effect of WTALP on Purpose-fit (F[4,123] = 3.573, p=.009; effect size through η^2=0.104). The ANOVA results reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative, showing that there is a significant effect of WTALP on Purpose-fit at the p<.05 level. The standard error is small (*std. error* = 0.809), proving a more accurate sample estimate of the population mean. The effect size is relatively small (η^2 =0.104), indicating that there was only a small difference between means. As the model is significant, there is an observed effect of WTALP on Purpose-fit. A Tukey post hoc test revealed that WTALP was nearing statistical significance (but not significant at the p<.05 level) between levels -5% and -15% (p=.056) and levels -5% and .-15% (p=.065). There was no statistically significant difference between the other WTALP levels in the group reporting p>.05.

H2a: *Younger generations (Generations Y, Z) will place higher levels of importance on Purpose-fit as compared to older generations (Generation X, Baby Boomers).*

The conjoint analysis on the effect of generation on Purpose-fit is provided in Figure 11 illustrating relative importance of the employer attributes by generation segment. Relative importance of Purpose-fit proves marginally higher in older generations (Generation X, Baby Boomer) as compared to younger generations (Generations Y, Z) and exceeds relative importance of People and Salary for all

generation segments. Opportunity proves the highest relative importance in all generations among the participants.

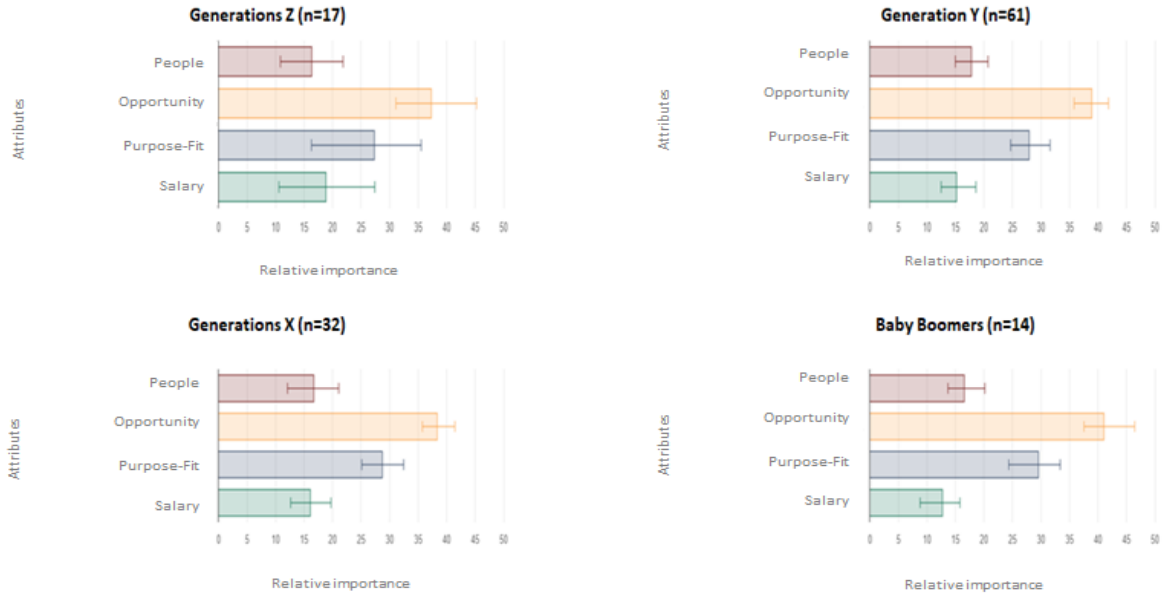

Figure 11. Panel Survey: Attribute Relative Importance by Generation with Confidence Intervals

Overlapping confidence intervals among variables vary depending on generational segment. Attributes within the Generation segment that have not no overlapping confidence intervals with other variables are distinct with respect to relative importance and significantly different. Overlapping confidence intervals for attributes within the segment are not distinct enough from one another.

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare the effect of generation on Purpose-fit ($F[4,123] = 2.547$, $p = .043$; effect size through $\eta^2=0.077$). The ANOVA results reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative, showing that there is a statistical significance effect of generation on Purpose-fit. The standard error is small (*std. error* = 0.0809), proving a more accurate sample estimate of the population mean.

The effect size is relatively small (η^2 =0.077), indicating that there was only a small difference between means. As the model is significant, there is an observed effect of generation on Purpose-fit. A Tukey post hoc test revealed there was no statistically significant difference between the generation segments with all groups reporting p>.05.

These tests confirm the moderating effect of generation on Purpose-fit with significance and variability of relative importance from the conjoint analysis, and significance of effect from the ANOVA. Sample size of the generational subsegment of Generation Z (n=17) maybe affecting the overlapping confidence intervals.

H2b: Prospective job seekers with economic insecurity place lower levels of importance on Purpose-fit relative to other drivers as compared to participants with economic security.

Conjoint results on the effect of economic security on Purpose-fit are illustrated in Figure 12 showing relative importance of the employer attributes for the segment of participants reporting as economically secure in comparison with those reporting economically insecure. The conjoint shows minimal variation in the results comparing the relative importance of employer attributes by economic security segment. Therefore, it is estimated that economic security does not influence the relative importance of Purpose-fit.

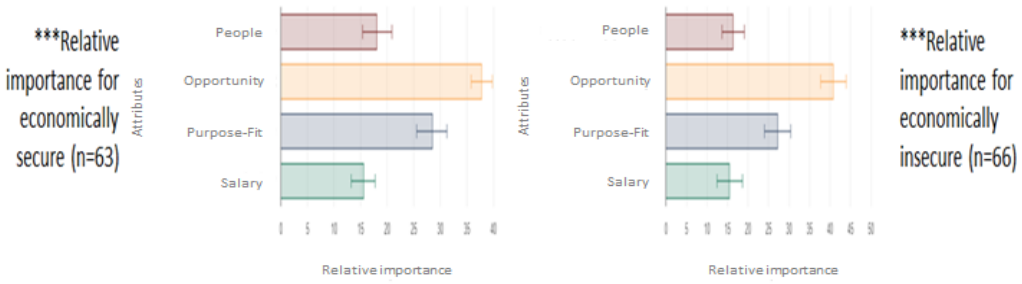

Figure 12. Panel Survey: Attribute Relative Importance Based on Economic Security with Confidence Intervals

Attributes within the Economic Security segment with no overlapping in confidence intervals with other variables are distinct with respect to relative importance and significantly different. Overlapping confidence intervals for attributes within the segment are not distinct enough from one another.

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare the effect of economic security on Purpose-fit ($F[2,126] = 2.577$, $p = .082$; effect size through η^2=0.039). The ANOVA results failed to reject the null hypothesis and not accept the alternative, showing that there is not a significant effect of economic security on Purpose-fit. The standard error is small (*std. error* = 0.0803), proving a more accurate sample estimate of the population mean. The effect size is relatively small (η^2 =0.039), indicating that there was only a small difference between means. As the model is insignificant, there is not an observed effect of economic security on Purpose-fit.

These tests confirm there is no effect of economic security on Purpose-fit with no significance of relative importance from the conjoint analysis or significance of effect from the ANOVA. These results are in opposition with the findings from study one and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs.

H3a: Potential job seekers who have a positive experience of their employer response to COVID-19 will accept less tradeoff for Purpose-fit as compared to those with a negative experience.

Participants reporting a positive COVID-19 employer experience (n=29 or 22%) reported higher relative importance of Purpose-fit and are more willingness to accept less pay (WTALP) for their employer attribute preference, including Purpose-fit. Participants in this segment reported as mostly full time employed (83%) and not considering other

employers (52%). In addition, these participants reported moderate relative importance (30%) and stated desired preference (34%) for Purpose-fit as well as a higher WTALP (83%) for their desired attribute as compared to 76% for WTALP among participants that reported negative employer experience with COVID-19 (n=46 or 35%). Figure 13 illustrates the attribute relative importance and WTALP for the COVID-19 employer experience.

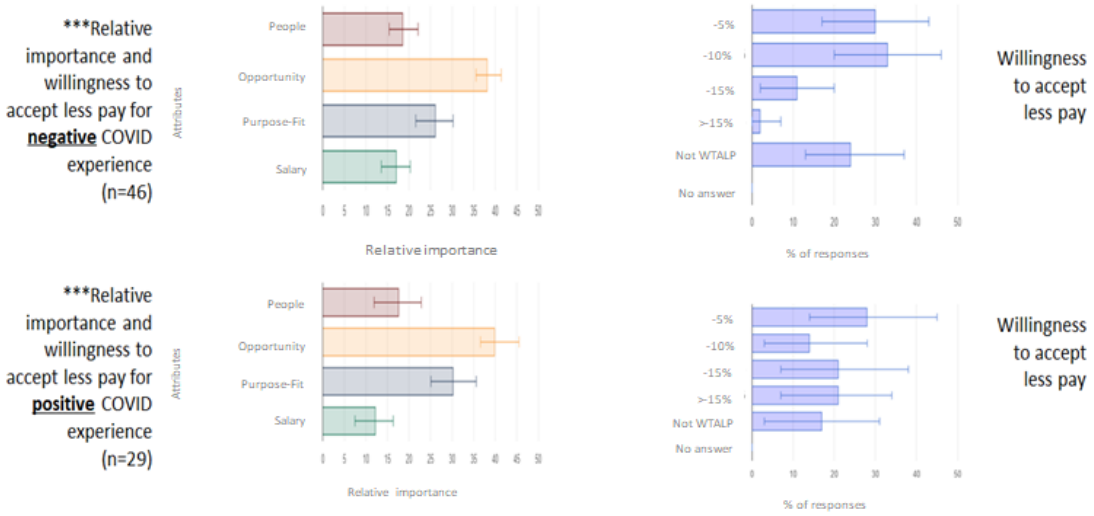

Figure 13. Panel Survey: Employer Experience with COVID-19 – Attribute Importance and Willingness to Accept Less Pay with Confidence Intervals

Attributes within the COVID-19 Employer Experience segment that have no overlapping confidence intervals with other variables are distinct with respect to relative importance and significantly different. Overlapping confidence intervals for attributes within the segment are not distinct enough from one another. WTALP proves less significant with overlapping confidence intervals.

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare the effect of COVID-19 employer experience on the choice of Purpose-fit ($F[3,125] = 0.573$, $p = .634$; effect size

through η^2=0.014). The ANOVA results failed to reject the null hypothesis and not accept the alternative, showing that there is not a significant effect from COVID-19 employer experience on Purpose-fit. The standard error could not be calculated due to size limit of a subgroup. However, the effect size is relatively small (η^2 =0.014), indicating that there was only a small difference between means. As the model is insignificant, there is not an observed effect on Purpose-fit from the COVID-19 employer experience.

The conflicting outcomes between the conjoint analysis and ANOVA infer partial support for hypothesis H3a. The conjoint analysis results show distinction of the effect of employer experience on Purpose-fit where a positive reporting experience proves higher relative importance and indicate a moderating effect as compared to the ANOVA test which may be a result of sample size of the segments reporting on COVID-19 employer experience.

H3b: Potential job seekers who have a positive experience of their employer response to COVID-19 will accept more tradeoff for Purpose-fit as compared to those with a negative experience.

Participants who reported a positive Black Lives Matter employer experience (n=23 or 18%) reported higher relative importance on Purpose-fit and were more willing to accept less pay for their attribute preference, including Purpose-fit. Participants in this segment reported as mostly full time employed (74%) and not considering other employers (35%). In addition, these participants reported moderate relative importance (29%) and stated desired preference (30%) for Purpose-fit as well as a higher WTALP (91%) for the desired attribute as compared to 82% WTALP among participants that report negative employer experience with Black Lives Matter (n=23 or 17%). Figure 14

illustrates the attribute relative importance and WTALP for the BLM employer experience.

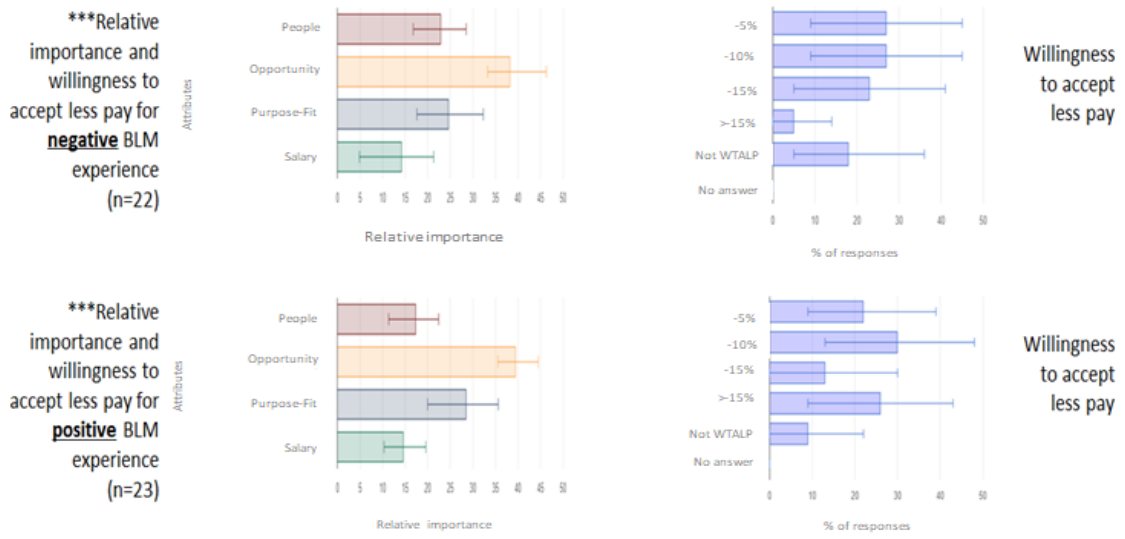

Figure 14. Panel Survey: Employer Experience with Black Lives Matter – Attribute Importance and Willingness to Accept Less Pay with Confidence Intervals

Attributes within the Black Lives Matter Employer Experience segment that have no overlapping confidence intervals with other variables are distinct with respect to relative importance and significantly different. Overlapping confidence intervals for attributes within the segment are not distinct enough from one another. WTALP proves less significant with overlapping confidence intervals.

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare the effect of Black Lives Matter employer experience on choice of Purpose-fit ($F[2,126] = 2.637$, $p = .076$; effect size through $\eta^2=0.040$). The ANOVA results failed to reject the null hypothesis and cannot accept the alternative, showing that there is not a significant effect between Black Lives Matter employer experience and Purpose-fit. The standard error is small (*std. error* = 0.0803), proving a more accurate sample estimate of the population mean. The effect size

is relatively small (η^2 =0.040), indicating that there was only a small difference between means. As the model is insignificant, there is not an observed effect from Black Lives Matter employer experience on Purpose-fit.

Similar to COVID-19 employer experience effect, the conflicting outcomes between the conjoint analysis and ANOVA infer partial support for the hypothesis. The conjoint analysis results show distinction of the effect of the Black Lives Matter employer experience on choice of Purpose-fit where a positive reporting experience proves higher relative importance and indicates a moderating effect as compared to the ANOVA test which may be a result of sample size of the segments reporting on Black Lives Matter employer experience. Further, in defense of partial support, the ANOVA resulted in approaches significance at p=.076.

Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

A stepwise multiple linear regression analysis was conducted to account for variation among the drivers of employer attraction in the model. With the intent to test the effect of Purpose-fit on employer attraction, for this model, Willingness to Accept Less Pay (WTALP) was used as a proxy for employer attraction for the dependent variable.

Prior to running the regression analysis, statistic tests were rerun against the data variables to test for normality, skewness and kurtosis, correlation, and multicollinearity. The same data variables listed for the previously run normality tests were retested. Results of the normality tests were consistent with results previously reported. Similarly, test results concluded with VIFs between 1.06 and 3.21 well below the cutoff range cutoff of 5 (Ringle et al., 2015) that multicollinearity was not a concern.

The histogram of standardized residuals indicated that the data contained approximately normally distributed errors, as did the normal P-P plot of standardized residuals, which showed points that were not completely on the line, but close. The scatterplot of standardized predicted residuals showed that the data met the assumptions of homogeneity of variance and linearity. The histogram, P-P plot, and scatterplot from the multiple linear regression analysis is illustrated in Figure 15.

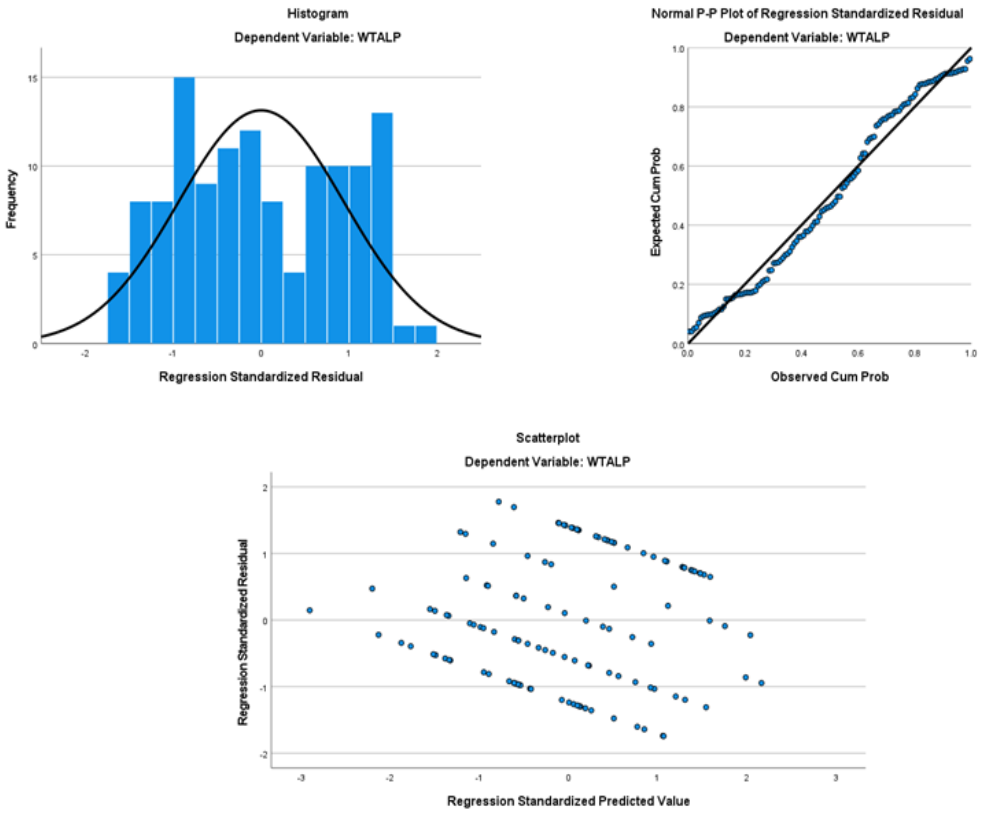

Figure 15. Multiple Linear Regression: Histogram, P-P Plot, and Scatterplot

After testing for and confirming no abnormalities in the regression data in outliers, collinearity, independent errors, normally distributed errors, homoscedasticity, linearity, and non-zero variances, the multiple linear regression analysis was performed. All control variables were placed in step one in the model; these included employment

status, job search status, attribute preference, gender, generation, ethnicity, education, annual salary range, economic security, industry, and employer experience with COVID-19 and Black Lives Matter. The second step of the model included the addition of employer attributes of People and Opportunity. The third step of the model included the addition of Purpose-fit. The result of the stepwise multiple linear regression is as follows.

Table 14.

Multiple Linear Regression: Willingness to Accept Less Pay

Multiple Linear Regression - Willingness to Accept Less Pay[a]									
Variable	**Model 1**			**Model 2**			**Model 3**		
	B	S.E.	Sig.	B	S.E.	Sig.	B	S.E.	Sig.
Employment Status	1.110	0.512	*__0.032__	1.080	0.517	*__0.038__	1.252	0.510	*__0.015__
Job Search Status	-0.466	0.312	0.138	-0.430	0.314	0.173	-0.440	0.307	0.154
Attribute Preference	-0.083	0.233	0.724	-0.014	0.237	0.952	0.131	0.239	0.585
COVID ER EXP	0.037	0.203	0.857	0.026	0.203	0.898	0.012	0.198	0.951
BLM ER EXP	-0.028	0.254	0.914	-0.080	0.256	0.756	-0.057	0.251	0.821
Gender	-0.227	0.316	0.474	-0.222	0.316	0.483	-0.251	0.309	0.418
Ethnicity	-0.257	0.331	0.438	-0.260	0.331	0.435	-0.369	0.327	0.261
Log10Generation	0.377	0.820	0.646	0.193	0.831	0.817	0.059	0.814	0.942
Education	-0.031	0.108	0.777	-0.038	0.110	0.727	-0.014	0.108	0.900
Annual Salary Range	0.182	0.107	0.091	0.208	0.109	0.058	0.190	0.106	0.076
Economic Security	-0.764	0.233	**__0.001__	-0.804	0.234	**__0.001__	-0.794	0.229	**__0.001__
People				0.273	0.285	0.339	0.357	0.281	0.206
Opportunity				-0.306	0.197	0.123	-0.733	0.259	**__0.005__
Purpose-fit							0.569	0.230	*__0.01__
Constant	3.689	1.028	**__0.0005__	3.553	1.033	**__0.001__	3.233	1.018	**__0.002__
R^2	0.140			0.159			0.204		
$R^2_{Adjusted}$	0.056			0.060			0.101		
F	1.663			1.599			1.99		
sig F	0.091			0.096			*__0.025__		
F change	1.663			1.21			6.106		
Sig of F change	0.091			0.302			*__0.015__		

a. Dependent Variable: WTALP

* Coefficient is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

** Coefficient is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

The multiple linear regression analysis was conducted to evaluate the prediction of WTALP from Employment Status, Job Search Status, Attribute Preference, COVID-19 employer experience, Black Lives Matter employer experience, gender, ethnicity, generation, education, annual salary range, economic security, People, Opportunity, and Purpose-fit. Neither model 1 nor model 2 provided a statistically significant explanation of the variance observed. Only in model 3, when Purpose-fit was added (F change 6.106 significant at the $p<0.05$ level), does the F statistic become significant (F = 1.99, significant at the p<.05 level), indicating that the model explains the observed variance significantly better than would a randomly constructed model. The significance of the model is consistent with H1b, that "prospective job seekers are willing to accept less pay from employers for which they perceive Purpose-fit." And to the extent that WTALP is a good proxy for employer attractiveness, the significance of the *F change* is consistent with H1a, that "prospective job seekers place equal or greater importance on Purpose-fit over other drivers of employer attraction."

The adjusted R^2 for model 3 increased by 4 points with the addition of Purpose-fit. Adjusted R^2 increases only when a new independent variable introduced in the model is significant and improves the model more than would be expected by chance. With the addition of Purpose-fit, the increased adjusted R^2 value of 0.101 confirms Purpose-fit adds value to the model and that 10% of the variation in WTALP is accounted for by the model, leaving another 90% of the variance in WTALP to be accounted for by other factors.

The results of the multiple linear regression analysis revealed all variables with exception to Purpose-fit not to be statistically significant predictors to the model ($p<.05$).

However, the results of the multiple linear regression analysis revealed a statistically significant association with Purpose-fit. Controlling for all other variables in the model, the regression coefficient [$B = 0.569$, $p<.05$] associated with Purpose-fit suggests that Purpose-fit increases WTALP by approximately 2.84% which account for 0.569 percent of the increment in WTALP (5%). Given the significant *F change* when adding Purpose-fit at this stage significantly improved the prediction of the model. This is consistent with H1b in that "prospective job seekers are willing to accept less pay from employers for which they perceive Purpose-fit."

In review of the coefficients for the multiple linear regression, the regression coefficients [$B = 1.252$, $p<.05$] associated with Employment Status, [$B = -0.794$, $p<.05$] associated with Economic Security, and [$B = -0.733$, $p<.05$] associated with Opportunity contributed significantly to the explanation of variance in WTALP offered by the complete model. Given the beta coefficient for Economic Security is negative, the interpretation states that for every unit increase in Economic Security, WTALP will decrease by the beta coefficient value * the increment of WTALP. Said differently, when Economic Security increases, WTALP decreases. The negative and significant effect of Economic Security on WTALP confirms this model as consistent with the result of study two in that prospective job seekers are WTALP despite economic insecurity. Although a puzzling result, one explanation of this relationship is that as a prospective job seeker's Economic Security decreases due to prolonged unemployment, WTALP increases as the job seeker becomes more desperate for employment and more WTALP to secure a job. The effect of Economic Security on WTALP merits further investigation in future research.

The significance of Opportunity on WTALP supports both the findings from study one and study two in that participants are WTALP for desired employer attributes, including Opportunity. The beta coefficient for Opportunity is also negative. The interpretation states that for every unit increase in Opportunity, WTALP will decrease by the beta coefficient value * the increment of WTALP. Said differently, when Opportunity increases, WTALP decreases. The significant effect of Opportunity on WTALP confirms this model as consistent with the result of study two in that prospective job seekers are WTALP for desired employer attributes. The negative relationship of Opportunity effect on WTALP is equally puzzling. One explanation of this relationship is that employee's more focused on Opportunity and career growth, are also focused on compensation growth and therefore less WTALP.

Other key variables related to the hypotheses of this study did not contribute significantly to the explanation of variance in WTALP offered by the complete model to include regression coefficients [B = .012, p>.05] associated with COVID-19 Employer Experience, [B = -0.057, p>.05] associated with Black Lives Matter Employer Experience, and [B = .059, p>.05] associated with Generation. The coefficients associated with COVID-19 and Black Lives Matter employer experience proving not significant to the WTALP model contrast with findings from the conjoint survey where participants reporting a positive employer experience also show a higher WTALP than participants reporting a negative employer experience. The coefficient associated with Generation proving not significant to the model of WTALP is consistent with the findings from the conjoint survey where generation was not tested for significant effect

with WTALP but rather effect on Purpose-fit where it was found to be statistically significant of $p<.05$.

The multiple linear regression analysis further proves the relative importance of Purpose-fit in employer attraction providing statistically significant prediction of WTALP, a proxy of employer attraction, of $p<.05$ ($p=.034$). Although no significant effect from generation and employer experience with both COVID-19 and Black Lives Matter was evident in the multiple linear regression analysis, the model reinforced the dyadic relation between Economic Security with Purpose-fit and with WTALP. Economic Security's negative relationship and significant correlation with Purpose-fit and WTALP suggests as economic security decreases, the relative importance of Purpose-fit and WTALP increases. This result is consistent with results from the conjoint analysis where participants reported a WTALP for preferred employer attributes, including Purpose-fit, despite economic insecurity.

Discussion

A key significant finding for this study is that Purpose-fit, defined as the alignment of individual and organizational purpose, matters as a driver of employer attraction among prospective job seekers across all generations at work and despite economic status with varying levels of importance and emphasis. Among the attributes tested in the conjoint survey which were informed by a prior qualitative study, Purpose-fit proved a higher relative importance value than the attributes of People and Salary. Purpose-fit proved relative importance across all generations at work with higher levels of relative importance in older generations (Generation X, Baby Boomers) therefore

proving generation having statistically significant moderating effect on the relative importance of Purpose-fit.

A second key finding is the participant's willingness to accept less pay (WTALP) for their desired attribute of choice, including Purpose-fit. Participants who chose Purpose-fit as their prevailing employer attribute of choice (n=34) reported the highest level of WTALP (82%). In addition, WTALP proved statistically significant in predicting relative importance of Purpose-fit. All generations and demographic groups reported tradeoff of salary for Purpose-fit despite economic insecurity. Therefore, economic security did not prove to affect the relative importance of Purpose-fit. Further, participants reporting as economically insecure not only reported higher relative importance of Purpose-fit over People and Salary, but also reported a lower WLTAP, which may be in part due to their economic insecurity. Non-minority and economically secure participants placed higher relative value on Purpose-fit than other groups suggesting although economic security does not constrain their pursuit of Purpose-fit, it is estimated the more traditionally privileged demographic segments placed more relative importance on Purpose-fit. This finding challenges Maslow's Motivational Theory and Hierarchy of Needs which posits that people are motivated to achieve higher level needs when lower order basic needs are fulfilled. Although this finding aligns with a key finding from study one that the pursuit of Purpose-fit may be privilege, economic security did not prove statistically significant in predicting relative importance of Purpose-fit.

The third key finding in this study relates to the effect of the participant's COVID-19 and Black Lives Matter employer experience on the relative importance of Purpose-fit and WTALP. The analysis suggested that an employer's response to the

social crisis of COVID-19 impacts the relative importance of Purpose-fit among participants. Participants in this segment were more WTALP for their desired attribute of preference and reported as less active in seeking a new employer as compared to participants reporting a negative COVID-19 employer experience. Participants reporting positive Black Lives Matter employer experience shared similar results of higher relative importance of Purpose-fit, more WTALP, and less active in seeking a new employer as compared to participants reporting a negative Black Lives Matter employer experience.

Further, in cases of negative employer experience with COVID-19, the relative importance of Salary was heightened and more emphasized. This suggests in times of economic uncertainty, basic needs are more emphasized. However, the relative importance of Salary for participants in this segment was lower than the relative importance of Purpose-fit. Additionally, in cases of negative employer experience with Black Lives Matters, the relative importance of People was heightened and more emphasized. This suggests that in this times of racial injustice and inequity, the importance of similarity is more emphasized. However, the relative importance of People for participants in this segment was lower than the relative importance of Purpose-fit.

The results of this study also provide insight into the importance and application of Purpose-fit in the future of work. With notable levels of reported relative importance for Purpose-fit, higher levels reported in older generations at work, and employer experience from social crises affecting relative importance of Purpose-fit, WTALP, and retention, Purpose-fit stands out not only as an important driver of employer attraction across all generations at work, but also a differentiated and nascent dyadic that can

position employers competitively in the war for talent in the ever challenging and complex future of work.

This study resulted in a consistency across measures of significance for the various analyses conducted. The conjoint analysis established notable relative importance descriptively and statistically for Purpose-fit as a driver of employer attraction with higher levels of relative importance than People and Salary. Two hypotheses (H1b, H2a) proved statistical significance in the effects of WTALP and generation on Purpose-fit. The multiple linear regression analysis also proved Purpose-fit as a statistically significant predictor of WTALP, a proxy for employer attraction, above all control variables and other employer attributes tested in the model (Opportunity, People).

In addition, two hypotheses resulted in approaching statistical significance suggesting there is a possible effect from economic security and employer experience with Black Lives Matter on Purpose-fit. The outcome of economic security not having a statistically significant effect of Purpose-fit is in opposition of study one but consistent with findings on WTALP among participants despite economic security. Additional studies further testing economic security and the social crises employer experience effects on Purpose-fit would prove valuable to better understand the relationships between these variables on employer attraction and WTALP.

There are unexpected findings from this study. Most notable was the dominate relative importance of Opportunity as compared to other employer attributes tested across all demographics and segments of the sample population. Despite the proven relative importance of Purpose-fit and higher reported values as compared with Salary and People, Purpose-fit competes with the attribute of Opportunity across all segments of the

sample. This finding on the dominance of Opportunity as a driver of employer attraction is consistent with findings from study one where the theme of Grow and Develop Career and Experience was among the key themes and desired attributes of the interview participants.

The relative importance of People was less emphasized in study two as compared to study one. However, the relative importance of People was notably higher in the random sample panel survey (17%) than the pilot survey (11%). Similarly, the attribute of Salary proved lowest in relative importance and was less emphasized in study two as compared to study one, yet equal in relative importance in the panel survey and pilot survey samples. These findings may be a result of sample bias in the respective studies where study one participants and the pilot survey for study two drew primarily from the student investigator's professional and academic network through snowball sampling as compared to the panel survey from study two that was randomly sampled from the conjoint survey platform. It is also possible that findings were skewed due to the effects of the pandemic, job insecurity, and heightened awareness of racial injustice. Despite any anomaly or potential sampling bias, Purpose-fit, as a relatively new and untested concept in the prevailing literature and research, proved noteworthy results from this study in terms of relative importance for all generations at work, with reported levels of WTALP, and relative importance over People and Salary despite economic insecurity.

Questions that remain from the study include the following. 1). Does the relative importance of Purpose-fit vary by other demographic segments such as industry, career stage, point in life (versus generation), occupation, and national culture? 2). Is there differentiation in the relative importance of Purpose-fit between active employees at

work and that of active job seekers? 3). Does the relative importance of Purpose-fit for self-reported active job seekers signal the lack of Purpose-fit with their current employer and provides an indication of the application of the Purpose-fit concept for employee retention? 4). Do participants with positive employer experience in COVID-19 and Black Lives Matter also report Purpose-fit with their current employer prior to and after the social crisis and employer response?

In summary of the discussion and key findings, as a newly established concept, Purpose-fit matters as an important driver of employer attraction among prospective job seekers. The relative importance of Purpose-fit is moderated by generation and participants place relative importance on Purpose-fit despite economic insecurity at a level above other prevailing employer attributes of People and Salary. Participants across generations and economic security report a WTALP for their attribute of preference, including Purpose-fit. Further, in current uncertain times of the dual social crises of the COVID-19 pandemic and racial injustice responded by the Black Lives Matter movement, participants that reported positive employer experience with COVID-19 and Black Lives Matters also reported higher relative importance of Purpose-fit, more WTALP, and lower levels of active employer search. This suggests that employers operating in response to social crises that align with employee interests and concerns may increase Purpose-fit, attraction of prospective job seekers, and reduce attrition risk with their employees.

Implications for Research

Future research considerations on Purpose-fit as a driver of employer attraction are abundant and exciting given the nascent stage of this new concept. First, expanding

the research of Purpose-fit into specialized industries, nuanced and ancillary careers, and alternative working arrangements will further test and confirm the significance of the concept in additional dimensions of the future of work. The concept of Purpose-fit should be further investigated beyond employer attraction as a driver of employee commitment, engagement, motivation, satisfaction, performance, and retention. Another area of expanded research of the Purpose-fit concept is employer branding in talent strategy, particularly how profiling organizational purpose for Purpose-fit in an employer brand, value proposition, and talent strategy provides differentiation, competitive advantage, and increased attraction, performance, and commitment for employers.

Expansion on findings regarding the donative labor hypothesis and WTALP should be further investigated. This investigation should evaluate the level of WTALP for prevailing factors that drive employer attraction and job offer acceptance. This investigation should explore WTALP by industry and occupation as well as career stage. As this research only scratched the surface on the influence of economic security on employer attraction and challenges traditional assumptions, further investigation in these areas will prove not only insightful but invaluable to human resource and talent management functions as well as employer branding and marketing strategies.

An additional recommendation for further research is a specialized focus on the importance of Purpose-fit for the emerging workforce of Generation Z. This research has shown similarity as well as differentiation in this generation segment which often gets coupled with Generation Y (Millennials) in Millennialism. Given their emergent status and low prevalence in extant research, expansion of this research with specific

application on Generation Z would be a timely and practically valued proactive contribution.

A related recommendation is research on whether personality type, as it pertains to work identity, affects the relative importance of Purpose-fit. Certain workers self-identify with their work, their employer, and commit to a higher integration of work and personal life than others. Such individuals have a personality described by Dhanesh (2019) as hypermodern – defined as one of intense focus on the self and individual pleasure and paradoxically counterbalanced by values placed on human rights, charity, and sustainability. Dhanesh further described the hypermodern individual to care more and be attracted to purpose-led organizations. Investigation of Purpose-fit against personality types in the context of work and the future of work would be a notable study as the boundaries of work and personal life continue to blur and blend in our society.

A further opportunity to extend the research of Purpose-fit is to expand the investigative inquiry to develop a scale for Purpose-fit for greater validity and reliability. The scope of this research did not pursue the creation of a Purpose-fit scale of reliable and related items for measuring Purpose-fit. Such a scale would not only further validate the concept but could be applied in further research studies.

A final recommendation is to further investigate the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and Black Lives Matter movement not only on Purpose-fit for employer attraction, but also for employee engagement and motivation, productivity, and retention to inform new strategies in talent management, employer branding, diversity planning, and employee engagement. Specific to COVID-19, given the prevalence of working from home as a result and intervention of the pandemic and an acceleration of digital

transformation, many organizations are struggling with productivity, transformation, change management, engagement, and talent planning for the post pandemic future of work and what that will look like and all the associated challenges and opportunities. Further investigation on Purpose-fit as a driver of attraction and engagement for post pandemic planning is timely and of importance.

Specific to Black Lives Matters, an accelerated and overdue emphasis on the importance of racial equity, diversity, and inclusion in the workplace has emerged in recent times. Employers are investing considerably in diversity, equity, and inclusion training and programming in response with limited visioning on the sustainability and long-term outcomes on competitive positioning and performance. Further investigation on Purpose-fit for authentic evaluation of diversity and equity in talent attraction, management, and retention is also timely and of the essence.

Limitations

One notable limitation from the study is the generalizability of the findings across all employees and generations at work, for broader application across varying and nuanced industries and professions, and cultural application of the concept model and findings across organizational and national cultures. Although the sample for this study set out to mirror the demographic profile of the US population of employees at work, the sample met all the demographics approximates within a margin of error with the exception of generation and is limited in comparison to the sizable population and diversity of employment markets and situations.

An additional limitation of this study is the validity of the insights drawn from the self-reported economic security status. These findings may be questioned due to construct

validity given the limited number of items in the survey instrument and limited sample size of participants on these items for generalizability.

A further limitation from this study includes validity of the insights drawn from the influence of COVID-19 and Black Lives Matter on the relative importance of Purpose-fit. These findings may be questioned due to construct validity given the limited number of items in the survey instrument and limited sample size of participants on these items for generalizability.

A final limitation of this study is the validity of the insights drawn overall on the relative importance of Purpose-fit given the limited number of employer attributes were investigated in comparison in the conjoint survey and analysis.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

Conclusions

This research study proposes and validates the new concept of Purpose-fit as a driver of employer attraction, moderated by generation and societal crises, and resulting in a willingness to accept less pay (WTALP).

The interview themes teased out during study one suggested that organizational purpose is an important part of employer attraction, is an under-the-surface, higher-order need that competes with the more basic needs (such as compensation) and varies in level of relative importance based on generation and perception of economic security. These themes were combined with the literature to articulate and define a new concept of Purpose-fit. Purpose-fit is the perceived alignment of individual and organizational purpose and is shaped by job seekers' evaluation of organizational image, reputation, mission, values, and social contribution, as well as the meaningfulness of the work on offer.

In study 2, a choice-based conjoint survey and analysis further tested the relative importance of Purpose-fit and examined the tradeoff between Purpose-fit and other key employer attributes. Purpose-fit competed with Opportunity (the opportunity for professional growth and development) as the leading driver of employer attraction, and participants chose Purpose-fit over People (working with like-minded peers) and Salary. These baseline findings were moderated by generation, with older generations reporting a greater preference for Purpose-fit, contrary to extant literature. Older generations draw on their employment and life experience, are reflective and consider the impact of their

work, careers, and legacy, and look to give back in later or encore careers as mentors or wisdom workers. Research on generation, point in career, and point in life effects on the relative importance of Purpose-fit will expand and strengthen this key outcome and provide practical contribution as careers are extending with the aging of the workforce in the future of work (SHRM, 2013).

Interestingly, Purpose-fit was *not* moderated by economic security, contrary to some participants' comments in study one. Indeed, regardless of economic security, participants reported a WTALP for desired employer attributes, including Purpose-fit, and participants who reported Purpose-fit as the most attractive attribute also reported *more* WTALP in order to secure Purpose-fit highlighting not only the relative importance of Purpose-fit over Salary, but also above economic security among several participants. Those who reported Purpose-fit as the most attractive attribute also reported less interest in seeking other employment at the time of this study. That is, for some, Purpose-fit not only increases attraction but is also a driver of employee retention.

The role of People in employer attraction proved problematic. Study one concluded that job seekers place a high value on connections and referrals and people they know when evaluating employers. Study two concluded that People ranked higher than salary, but less than Purpose-fit or Opportunity. That is, People seemed to play a secondary role. It could be that the role of People is important as a mechanism of connection – e.g., through trusted referrals – or a signal of possible similarities and fit but is not as major of an attractor as Purpose-fit and Opportunity. Consistent with Byrne's (1971) similarity attraction theory, people are more attracted to similar individuals rather than dissimilar individuals and job seekers place more importance and are therefore more

attracted to organizations where employees have similar characteristics. Future research on this key theme should focus to disentangle the various roles people play in employer attraction such as similarity attraction for job seekers, a mechanism in employer branding strategy (similar to diversity), and signaling of culture, environment, etc.

Finally, the twin crises of COVID-19 and racial injustice responded to by the Black Lives Matter movement provided an additional exploratory test of the relative importance of Purpose-fit. Study 2 concluded a positive experience with an employers' response to COVID-19 or Black Lives Matters reinforced the relative value of Purpose-fit, increased WTALP, and decreased the number of participants reporting an active job search. But when an employer's response was viewed as negative, perhaps resulting in furlough or termination or less emphasis on racial equity, there was the opposite effect: participants reported lower relative importance of Purpose-fit, decreased WTAP, and increase in participants reporting active in a job search. These findings are consistent with the crisis management literature where during situations of collective stress, individuals and groups become more cohesive and unified (Quarantelli, 1986) and citizens and organizations often take on new crisis response related tasks and responsibilities (Auf der Heide, 1989).

In full, this research concludes with a new concept of Purpose-fit as a driver of employer attraction, moderated by generation and social crises, and results in a WTALP despite economic insecurity.

Contributions

Contributions of this research are academic, methodological, and practical. From an academic perspective, there is limited existing research or literature on alignment of

organizational and individual purpose as (i) a driver of employer attraction, (ii) moderated by generation and social crises, or iii) resulting in a WTALP. This research introduces the new concept of Purpose-fit into the pantheon of components of Person-Environment fit (Cable & DeRue, 2002), Person-Organization Fit (Kristof, 1996), and Perceived fit (Chapman et al., 2005; Uggerslev, Fassina, & Kraichy, 2012).

The concept of Purpose-fit provides foundation for research combining psychology, organizational development and behavior, human resources and talent management, and employer branding as they affect employees' attraction to employers (or employers' attractiveness to prospective employees). That is, as illustrated in Figure 16, there is scope for investigation of the ways in which the Purpose-fit concept plays out across the full continuum of employment from attraction to engagement to performance and retention.

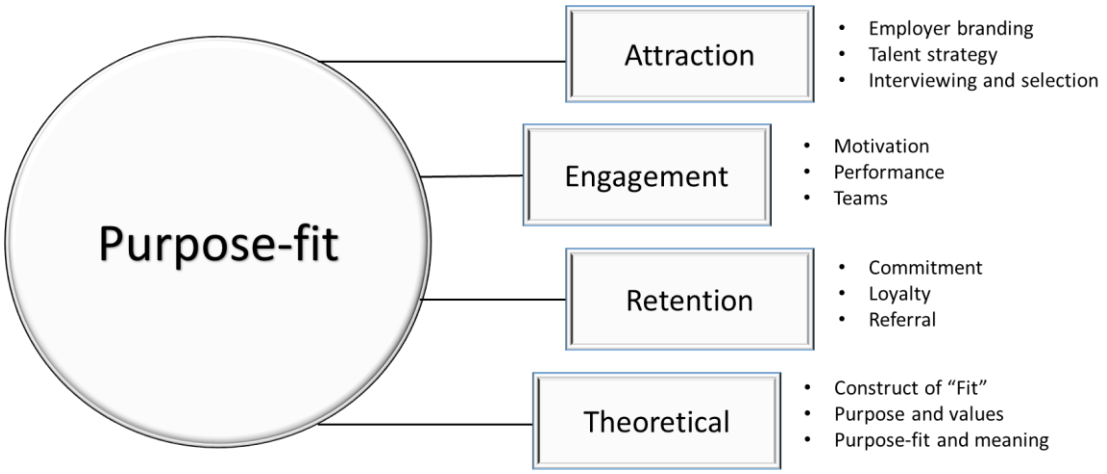

Figure 16. Scholarly Leadership Research Agenda for Purpose-fit

For example, either a discrete or robust follow-on research study can explore the role of Purpose-fit in the various stages of the employee life cycle to include i) the degree

to which Purpose-fit influenced an employee's initial employer attraction, offer acceptance, and overall WTALP, ii) the degree to which Purpose-fit alignment still exists for the employee, iii) how Purpose-fit drives the employee's motivation and engagement, and iv) the degree to which Purpose-fit retains the employee over and above other factors of retention.

An additional academic contribution of this research is the notion that times of social crises and uncertainty increases the relative importance and need for emphasis of Purpose-fit. As the post pandemic phase of COVID-19 approaches and racial injustice awareness continues to emerge in the collective conscious, employees are looking for more than a paycheck and the relative importance and pursuit of Purpose-fit will increase as a driver of employer attraction and differentiation. Further uncharted territory lies ahead in the field of human resources management and crisis management regarding the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the Black Lives Matter movement on employees and employers. The era of COVID-19 and racial injustice responded to by the Black Lives Matter movement have left lasting impressions on employers and prospective employees. The near-term future of post pandemic and continued social inequality will sustain a degree of crisis and uncertainty for employers and employees. Research in organizational resilience, transformation, and job seeker preference in post social crisis with a focus on Purpose-fit will further expand the value and relative importance of this concept beyond that of employer attraction. Results from this research provide a springboard for scholarly leadership and partnership in these nascent research areas.

The methodological contribution of this research is the mixed method approach combining a qualitative pre-test with a choice-based conjoint survey in the field of

Human Resources. Applying a choice-based conjoint survey and analysis in a mixed methodology has not been broadly applied in employer attraction research. The application of conjoint analysis, a methodology primarily used in marketing and product development, further expands the integration of human resources management and marketing research.

From a practical perspective, this research will be valuable to any business that is competing in the war for talent and will provide insight into recruitment and talent strategy, employer branding, and corporate communications. For example, for organizations revisiting their organizational purpose statements, this research provides insight to the importance of stated organizational purpose for external audiences, employer branding, and talent attraction as well as other adjacent signaling benefits for the organization's brand and image.

Similarly, insights from this research can be applied in organizational programming for diversity, equity, and inclusion. In particular, findings related to the relative importance of People in the job search process as well as the positive employer experience in Black Lives Matters on Purpose-fit, WTALP, and job search intention are notable findings to inform attraction, culture, and retention practices for a diverse array of talent.

Finally, although the focus of this research was not on the relative importance of Opportunity as a key driver of employer attraction, both the pilot and panel surveys and analyses proved high relative importance and significance of this attribute, the significance of which should not be ignored. This finding provides key insights similar to that of Purpose-fit for Human Resources and Talent Management for employer branding,

differentiation, and competitive talent strategy. Employers who are able to not only provide but market their opportunities for professional development and career growth, will be competitively positioned for talent attraction across all generations at work. Further, as employers approach their digital transformation in the future of work, Opportunity for professional development and career growth will not only be of key value and importance for job seekers and employees, but also employers in advancing the necessary and evolving skills required to compete and succeed in the future of work.

Practitioner View of Contribution

As the principal investigator and HR Executive with over 25 years of human resources and talent management experience, I find the research findings and insights to be notable and of importance and great interest to my field of research and profession. Of particular interest is the integration of research findings in application to the area of talent strategy and employer branding. For many years, the notion of organizational purpose has been primarily associated with mission-based, charitable, and non-profit organizations, or public service. A more contemporary association has been with Millennial affinity for corporate social responsibility. Purpose-fit as an emerging driver of employer attraction is a valuable insight for talent acquisition, employer brand and marketing, talent management, and corporate strategy. Providing an employer choice and brand that highlights an organizational social purpose and values that align with the job seekers can differentiate an employer among their competitors for critical talent in a globally competitive market. With the knowledge and evidence of Purpose-fit emerging as an important driver of employer attraction, nuanced by generation, affected but not limited by economic security, and resulting in a WTALP, talent managers and marketing

professionals are in a more informed and competitive position to design talent strategies and employer branding campaigns to attract the talent needed to achieve their purpose and objectives.

Another valuable insight to the fields of human resources and talent management from this research is the importance placed on People. The role of People in the job search and employer evaluation process is dynamic and considerable from referrals to social identity association to culture signaling and familiarity preference. From a talent management perspective, leveraging this insight into practice will better position the organization for talent attraction. Practices that are informed by this insight may include diversity, equity, and inclusion programs, employee referrals, sourcing and interviewing, and employer branding. The role of the recruiter, hiring manager, and interview committee play an important part of not just the evaluation of the candidate, but also provide the culture and image signals to the candidate and affect the overall candidate experience and employer evaluation. The candidate experience is an emerging area often overlooked in this field and gaining considerable focus in the globally competitive market.

An additional insight from the research to the field of human resources and talent management is the notion of purpose as privilege. This is a particularly complicated characterization but important talent management consideration. If the pursuit of purpose is seen as privilege among some job seekers, then the appeal of organizational purpose in any employer branding strategy will first fall short or be met with skepticism by the economically insecure and second, limit equity in employment opportunity and diversity. Understanding the perception of purpose as privilege places importance on the diversity

of talent attraction strategies versus a single strategy on organizational purpose alignment alone. It is not that Purpose-fit does not matter to the economically insecure as this research has proven otherwise, it is that Purpose-fit may be a higher order need and "nice to have" for some candidates until other basic needs are met. Study two reported that despite economic insecurity, job seekers place relative importance on Purpose-fit with a WTALP. Adapting talent attraction strategies on Purpose-fit with other attributes of importance such as People, diversity, and culture will provide a more diverse and successful talent strategy for all generations, ethnicities, economic positions, and critical talent emerging in the future of work.

Finally, there is strategic opportunity for academics and practitioners to partner on a Purpose-fit research, thought leadership, and consulting agenda that bridges the gap between academics and practitioners, advances academic research, and enhances performance, engagement, and competitive advantage. Such opportunities include previously noted expansion of Purpose-fit concept in talent management (attraction, selection, engagement, performance, and retention), application to nuanced industries and work situations (gig workers, artisans, entertainers, etc.), and organizational behavior practices such as change management, business transformation, leadership development, and diversity and inclusion.

REFERENCES

Achor, S., Reece, A., Rosen Kellerman, G., & Robichaux, A. (2018). 9 Out of 10 people are willing to earn less money to do more meaningful work. Harvard Business Review online, 6 November 2018.

Albinger, H. S., & Freeman, S. J. (2000). Corporate social performance and attractiveness as an employer to different job seeking populations. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *28*(3), 243-253.

Alnıaçık, E., & Alnıaçık, Ü. (2012). Identifying dimensions of attractiveness in employer branding: effects of age, gender, and current employment status. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *58*, 1336-1343.

Ambler, T., & Barrow, S. (1996). The employer brand. *The Journal of Brand Management, 4*(3), 185-206.

Auf der Heide, E. (1989). Disaster response: principles of preparation and coordination. In *Disaster response: Principles of preparation and coordination*. Canada. CV Mosby Company.

Backhaus, K. B., Stone, B. A., & Heiner, K. (2002). Exploring the relationship between corporate social performance and employer attractiveness. *Business and Society, 41*(3), 292.

Baker, W. M., & McGregor, C. C. (2000). Empirically assessing the importance of characteristics of accounting students. *Journal of Education for Business*, *75*(3), 149-157.

Baum, M., & Kabst, R. (2013). Conjoint implications on job preferences: The moderating role of involvement. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *24*(7), 1393-1417.

Basu, S. (2017). *Corporate purpose: Why it matters more than strategy* (Vol. 1). Taylor & Francis.

Beechler, S., & Woodward, I. C. (2009). The global "war for talent". *Journal of International Management, 15*(3), 273-285.

Behling, O., Labovitz, G., & Gainer, M. (1968). College recruiting-theoretical base. *Personnel Journal*, *47*(1), 13-19.

Bellou, V., Rigopoulou, I., & Kehagias, J. (2015). Employer of choice: does gender matter?. *Gender in Management: An International Journal*.

Berthon, P., Ewing, M., & Hah, L. L. (2005). Captivating company: dimensions of attractiveness in employer branding. *International journal of advertising*, *24*(2), 151-172.

Biesma, R. G., Pavlova, M., Van Merode, G. G., & Groot, W. (2007). Using conjoint analysis to estimate employer's preferences for key competencies of master level Dutch graduates entering the public health field. *Economics of Education Review*, *26*(3), 375-386.

Brown, W. A., & Yoshioka, C. F. (2003). Mission attachment and satisfaction as factors in employee retention. *Nonprofit Management and Leadership, 14*(1), 5-18. doi:10.1002/nml.18

Bryan, J. (2021, February 3). *How 2020 accelerated conversations on diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace*. https://www.gartner.com/smarterwithgartner/how-2020-accelerated-conversations-on-diversity-equity-and-inclusion/

Byrne, D. (1971). *The attraction paradigm*. New York: Academic Press.

Cable, D. M., & DeRue, D. S. (2002). The convergent and discriminant validity of subjective fit perceptions. *Journal of applied psychology*, *87*(5), 875.

Cable, D., & Edwards, J. R. (2009). The value of value congruence. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *94*(3), 654-677.

Cable, D. M., & Judge, T. A. (1996). Person–organization fit, job choice decisions, and organizational entry. *Organizational behavior and human decision processes*, *67*(3), 294-311.

Cable, D. M., & Judge, T. A. (1997). Interviewers' perceptions of person–organization fit and organizational selection decisions. *Journal of Applied psychology*, *82*(4), 546.

Cable, D. M., & Turban, D. B. (2001). Establishing the dimensions, sources, and value of job seekers' employer knowledge during recruitment. In *Research in personnel and human resources management*. Emerald Group Publishing Limited.

Cable, D. M., & Turban, D. B. (2003). The value of organizational reputation in the recruitment context: A Brand-Equity perspective. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 33*(11), 2244-2266.

Cardona, P., Rey, C., & Craig, N. (2019). Purpose-driven Leadership. In *Purpose-driven Organizations* (pp. 57-71). Palgrave Macmillan, Cham.

Carless, S. A. (2005). Person-job fit versus person-organization fit as predictors of organizational attraction and job acceptance intentions: A longitudinal study. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology, 78*(3), 411-429.

Catano, V. M., & Morrow Hines, H. (2016). The influence of corporate social responsibility, psychologically healthy workplaces, and individual values in attracting millennial job applicants. *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science/Revue canadienne des sciences du comportement*, *48*(2), 142.

Celani, A., & Singh, P. (2011). Signaling theory and applicant attraction outcomes. *Personnel review*.

Cennamo, L., & Gardner, D. (2008). Generational differences in work values, outcomes and person-organisation values fit. *Journal of managerial psychology*.

Chapman, D. S., Uggerslev, K. L., Carroll, S. A., Piasentin, K. A., & Jones, D. A. (2005). Applicant attraction to organizations and job choice: a meta-analytic review of the correlates of recruiting outcomes. *Journal of applied psychology*, *90*(5), 928.

Chatman, J. A. (1989). Improving interactional organizational research: A model of person-organization fit. *Academy of management Review*, *14*(3), 333-349.

Chitturi, P. (2009). Choice Based Conjoint Analysis of Quality-of-Life Attributes. The Journal of Human Resource and Adult Learning, Vol. 5, Num.1.

Coldwell, D. A., Billsberry, J., Van Meurs, N., & Marsh, P. J. (2008). The effects of person–organization ethical fit on employee attraction and retention: Towards a testable explanatory model. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *78*(4), 611-622.

Colletta, J. (2021). How employers respond to coronavirus | HRExecutive.com. Retrieved 7 February 2021, from https://hrexecutive.com/hr-tech-number-of-the-day-employer-response-to-covid/

conemillennialcsrstudy. (2015). CSR&MILLENNIALS. https://conemillennialcsr.com

Conjoint.ly. (2019, November 29). *What is goodness of fit?* https://conjointly.com/faq/what-is-goodness-of-fit/

Connelly, B. L., Certo, S. T., Ireland, R. D., & Reutzel, C. R. (2011). Signaling theory: A review and assessment. *Journal of management*, *37*(1), 39-67.

Costanza, D. P., Badger, J. M., Fraser, R. L., Severt, J. B., & Gade, P. A. (2012). Generational differences in work-related attitudes: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, *27*(4), 375-394.

Deloitte. (2018, September 21). *Deloitte's purpose.* https://www2.deloitte.com/bd/en/pages/about-deloitte/articles/gx-purpose-positive-enduring-impact-that-matters.html

Devendorf, S. A., & Highhouse, S. (2008). Applicant–employee similarity and attraction to an employer. *Journal of occupational and organizational psychology*, *81*(4), 607-617.

Dhanesh, G. S. (2020). Who cares about organizational purpose and corporate social responsibility, and how can organizations adapt? A hypermodern perspective. *Business Horizons*, *63*(4), 585-594

Eagly, A. H., & Karau, S. J. (1991). Gender and the emergence of leaders: A meta-analysis. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, *60*(5), 685.

Ericksen, M. K. (1997). Using self-congruity and ideal congruity to predict purchase intention: A European perspective. *Journal of Euromarketing*, *6*(1), 41-56.

Garver, M., Goffnett, S. P., Divine, R., Williams, Z., & Davis, C. (2019). Analysis of the Job Preferences for Undergraduate Supply Chain Students. *Operations and Supply Chain Management: An International*, *12*(1).

Goodman, L. A. (1961). Snowball sampling. *The annals of mathematical statistics*, 148-170.

Green, P. E., & Srinivasan, V. (1978). Conjoint analysis in consumer research: issues and outlook. *Journal of consumer research*, *5*(2), 103-123.

Greenhaus, J. H., & Callanan, G. A. (Eds.). (2006). *Encyclopedia of career development* Sage Publications.

Gyori, C., & Kazakova, T. (2019). *Purpose-driven leadership for the 21st century: How corporate purpose is fundamental to reimagining capitalism.* Unpublished manuscript. Retrieved from https://www.thegeniusworks.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Leaders-on-Purpose.pdf

Hair, J. F. (2009). Multivariate data analysis.

Henderson, R., & Van den Steen, E. (2015). Why do firms have" purpose"? The firm's role as a carrier of identity and reputation. *American Economic Review*, *105*(5), 326-30.

Highhouse, S., Lievens, F., & Sinar, E. F. (2003). Measuring attraction to organizations. *Educational and psychological Measurement*, *63*(6), 986-1001.

Highhouse, S., Thornbury, E. E., & Little, I. S. (2007). Social-identity functions of attraction to organizations. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, *103*(1), 134-146.

Hinkle, R. K., & Choi, N. (2009). Measuring Person–Environment Fit: A further validation of the perceived fit scale. *International journal of Selection and Assessment*, *17*(3), 324-328.

Hollensbe, E., Wookey, C., Hickey, L., George, G., & Nichols, C. V. (2014). Organizations with purpose.

Jones, D. A., Willness, C. R., & Madey, S. (2014). Why are job seekers attracted by corporate social performance experimental and field tests of three signal-based mechanisms? *Academy of Management Journal, 57*(2), 383-404.

Kristof, A. L. (1996). Person-organization fit: An integrative review of its conceptualizations, measurement, and implications. *Personnel psychology*, *49*(1), 1-49.

Kristof-Brown, A. L., Zimmerman, R. D., & Johnson, E. C. (2005). Consequences of individuals' fit at work: A meta-analysis OF person–job, person–organization, person–group, and person–supervisor fit. *Personnel psychology*, *58*(2), 281-342.

Leete, L. (2001). Whither the nonprofit wage differential? Estimates from the 1990 census. *Journal of Labor Economics*, *19*(1), 136-170.

Lievens, F., & Highhouse, S. (2003). The relation of instrumental and symbolic attributes to a company's attractiveness as an employer. *Personnel psychology*, *56*(1), 75-102.

Lievens, F., Van Hoye, G., & Anseel, F. (2007). Organizational identity and employer image: Towards a unifying framework. *British Journal of Management*, *18*, S45-S59.

Maignan, I., Ferrell, O. C., & Hult, G. T. M. (1999). Corporate citizenship: Cultural antecedents and business benefits. *journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, *27*(4), 455-469.

Margolis, S. (2019). *Purpose-driven companies make a contribution to society.* https://sheilamargolis.com/2019/11/purpose-driven-companies/

Margolis, S. L., & Hansen, C. D. (2002). A model for organizational identity: Exploring the path to sustainability during change. *Human Resource Development Review*, *1*(3), 277-303.

Martin, T. N., & Ottemann, R. (2015). Generational workforce demographic trends and total organizational rewards which might attract and retain different generational employees. *Journal of Behavioral and Applied Management, 16*(16(2)), 91.

Maslow, A. H. (1943). A theory of human motivation. *Psychological review*, *50*(4), 370.

McGinnis Johnson, J., & Ng, E. S. (2016). Money talks or millennials walk: The effect of compensation on nonprofit millennial workers sector-switching intentions. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, *36*(3), 283-305.

Meister, J. (2012). Corporate social responsibility: A lever for employee attraction & engagement. *Leadership*, *11*, 03AM-48.

Mercurio, Z. (2017). *The invisible leader: Transform your life, work, and organization with the power of authentic purpose*. Advantage.

Michaels, E., Handfield-Jones, H., & Axelrod, B. (2001). *The war for talent*. Harvard Business Press.

Molina, A. D. (2016). Value congruence. *Global Encyclopedia of Public Administration, Public Policy, and Governance*, 1-7.

Montgomery, D. B., & Ramus, C. A. (2011). Calibrating MBA job preferences for the 21st century. *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, *10*(1), 9-26.

Montgomery, N. (Ed.). (2019). *Perspectives on Purpose: Leading Voices on Building Brands and Businesses for the Twenty-first Century*. Routledge.

Ng, E. S., Schweitzer, L., & Lyons, S. T. (2010). New generation, great expectations: A field study of the millennial generation. *Journal of business and psychology*, *25*(2), 281-292.

Nolan, K. P., & Harold, C. M. (2010). Fit with what? The influence of multiple self-concept images on organizational attraction. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, *83*(3), 645-662.

Park, S. M., & Word, J. (2012). Serving the mission: Organizational antecedents and social consequences of job choice motivation in the nonprofit sector. *International Review of Public Administration*, *17*(3), 169.

Parker, K., Graf, N., & Igielnik, R. (2020, May 30). *Generation Z looks a lot like Millennials on key social and political issues*. Pew Research Center's Social & Demographic Trends Project. https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/2019/01/17/generation-z-looks-a-lot-like-millennials-on-key-social-and-political-issues/

Quarantelli, E. L. (1986). Research findings on organizational behavior in disasters and their applicability in developing countries.

Reis, G. G., & Braga, B. M. (2016). Employer attractiveness from a generational perspective: Implications for employer branding. *Revista de Administração (São Paulo)*, *51*(1), 103-116.

Ringle, C. M., Wende, S., & Becker, J. M. (2015). SmartPLS 3. *Boenningstedt: SmartPLS GmbH*.

Rynes, S. L., & Barber, A. E. (1990). Applicant attraction strategies: An organizational perspective. *Academy of Management. the Academy of Management Review, 15*(2), 286.

Saldaña, J. (2009). An introduction to codes and coding. *The coding manual for qualitative researchers*, *3*.

Scheidegger, N., & Müller, A. (2017). Adaptive Conjoint Analysis of Professionals' Job Preferences. *International Journal of Economics and Management Engineering*, *11*(9), 2264-2270

Schein, E. (1992). Organisational Culture and Leadership 2nd edition Jossey-Bass. *San Francisco, CA*.

Schneider, B. (1981). *An Interactionist Perspective on Organizational Effectiveness*. MICHIGAN STATE UNIV EAST LANSING DEPT OF PSYCHOLOGY.

Society for Human Resource Management. (2013). SHRM workplace forecast: The top workplace trends according to HR professionals. Retrieved from

http://www.shrm.org/ research/futureworkplacetrends/ documents/13-0146%20workplace_ forecast_full_fnl.pdf

Stallings, R. A., & Quarantelli, E. L. (1985). Emergent citizen groups and emergency management. *Public administration review*, *45*, 93-100.

Steger, M. F., Dik, B. J., & Duffy, R. D. (2012). Measuring meaningful work: The work and meaning inventory (WAMI). *Journal of career Assessment*, *20*(3), 322-337.

Tajfel, H., Turner, J. C., Austin, W. G., & Worchel, S. (1979). An integrative theory of intergroup conflict. *Organizational identity: A reader*, *56*(65), 9780203505984-16.

Tsai, W. C., & Yang, I. W. F. (2010). Does image matter to different job applicants? The influences of corporate image and applicant individual differences on organizational attractiveness. *International Journal of Selection and Assessment*, *18*(1), 48-63.

Twenge, J. M., Campbell, S. M., Hoffman, B. J., & Lance, C. E. (2010). Generational differences in work values: Leisure and extrinsic values increasing, social and intrinsic values decreasing. *Journal of management*, *36*(5), 1117-1142.

Überschaer, A., Baum, M., Bietz, B. T., & Kabst, R. (2016). The contingencies of person-organization fit perceptions. *Journal of Managerial Psychology.*

Uen, J. F., Ahlstrom, D., Chen, S., & Liu, J. (2015). Employer brand management, organizational prestige and employees' word-of-mouth referrals in Taiwan. *Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources*, *53*(1), 104-123.

Uggerslev, K. L., Fassina, N. E., & Kraichy, D. (2012). Recruiting through the stages: A meta-analytic test of predictors of applicant attraction at different stages of the recruiting process. *Personnel Psychology, 65*(3), 597-660.

US Bureau Of Labor Statistics. (2020, September 1). *Civilian labor force, by age, sex, race, and ethnicity: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.* https://www.bls.gov/emp/tables/civilian-labor-force-summary.htm

Wang, Q., Weng, Q., McElroy, J. C., Ashkanasy, N. M., & Lievens, F. (2014). Organizational career growth and subsequent voice behavior: The role of affective commitment and gender. *Journal of vocational behavior*, *84*(3), 431-441.

Weeks, K. P., & Schaffert, C. (2019). Generational differences in definitions of meaningful work: A mixed methods study. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *156*(4), 1045-1061.

Wei, Y. C., Chang, C. C., Lin, L. Y., & Liang, S. C. (2016). A fit perspective approach in linking corporate image and intention-to-apply. *Journal of Business Research*, *69*(6), 2220-2225.

Wenger, D. E. (1992). *Emergent and volunteer behavior during disaster: research findings and planning implications*. Texas A & M University. Hazard Reduction & Recovery Center.

Yu, K. Y. T. (2014). Person–organization fit effects on organizational attraction: A test of an expectations-based model. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, *124*(1), 75-94.

APPENDIX

CHOICE-BASED CONJOINT SURVEY

Conjoint.ly survey platform: https://conjointly.com/

Panel survey link: https://run.conjoint.ly/study/112235/054cctjh7k

I. Welcome

NOTE: This survey must be completed in the following secured browsers: Chrome, Firefox, Tencent QQ browser, Edge, Opera.

Welcome to this research study and thank you for participating in this survey. This survey is part of a doctoral dissertation research on employer attraction conducted by doctoral candidate, Bucky Fairfax of the Executive Doctorate in Business Administration program within the Fox School of Business at Temple University .

This survey will require ***no more than 15 minutes*** of your time. I appreciate your participation and full completion of this survey. Your participation is anonymous. Results will not be identifiable of participants.

Please proceed to the next page of the survey to review Participant Consent in order to begin the survey.

Thank you.

II. Participant Consent

By selecting "CONTINUE" you are consenting to participate in this survey and for your inputs to be used in the data analysis and reporting for the stated doctoral dissertation and possible follow-on publishing. It is estimated this survey will take approximately **15 minutes** to complete. Your participation in the survey is completely anonymous and all data will be confidentially managed. No personally identifiable information collected will be associated with your identity or as a participant in the survey.

Data from this survey will be maintained by the student investigator through the duration of the dissertation and will be deleted from record by December 2021. Information obtained will be utilized for data analysis and reporting purposes of the doctoral dissertation and possible future publishing.

Anonymous survey data and reporting will be shared with individuals and organizations that conduct or watch over this research only where applicable and required, including:

- People who work with the research sponsor
- The Institutional Review Board (IRB) that reviewed this research

- Temple University Fox School of Business program management

This research and results may be published post dissertation. However, all data collected is anonymous and results will only be shared in aggregate reporting. All data and reporting will be held confidential for this dissertation and publication pursuits. No identifying information will be collected or reported.

Loss of confidentiality is a risk of participating in the study. I will protect your information from disclosure to others to the extent required by law. However, I cannot promise complete secrecy. You may withdraw from the survey at any point in time. Once you complete the survey, your data will be recorded and analyzed along with all other participant inputs.

This research is being overseen by an Institutional Review Board ("IRB"). An IRB is a group of people who perform independent review of research studies. You may talk to them at (215) 707-3390 or irb@temple.edu if:

- You have questions, concerns, or complaints that are not being answered by the research team.
- You are not getting answers from the research team.
- You cannot reach the research team.
- You want to talk to someone else about the research.
- You have questions about your rights as a research subject.

If you have any questions regarding the research or information management protocol, please contact me at bucky.fairfax@temple.edu or Temple IRB at irb@temple.edu.

By selecting continue you acknowledge consent to participate in this survey.

III. Employment and Job Search

a. What is your professional status?
   i. Full Time Employment
   ii. Part Time Employment
   iii. Entrepreneur / Consultant
   iv. Gig Worker / Freelancer
   v. Student - not employed
   vi. Student - employed (full or part time)
   vii. None of above: ✕ None of the above

b. Which of the following best describes your job search status?
   i. Currently employed and actively seeking new employment.
   ii. Currently employed and passively seeking new employment.
   iii. Currently employed and not seeking new employment.
   iv. Currently unemployed due to COVID-19 and seeking employment.
   v. Current unemployed not related to COVID-19 and seeking employment.

vi. Current unemployed and not seeking employment.

IV. Employer Attributes

In this section of the survey, you will be presented a series of employers and asked to choose one employer over another (or none) based on the following attributes.

Attribute	Definition	Level
Basic Salary	Annual basic salary for full time employment.	Market Competitive or Above Market (+10%)
Growth and Development	The company provides opportunity for career growth and development (*promotion, training, mentoring, etc.*)	Yes or No
Organizational Purpose Alignment	The company has an organizational purpose that aligns with my personal purpose	Yes = Aligned or No = Misaligned
People	People I know, or people who are like me, work at this company.	Yes or No

V. Employer Choice Sets

This section will present employer profile choice sets (Employer A, B, C). Please review each employer carefully and select the one employer **you are most attracted to** based on the attributes and values presented. You may also choose none of the above.

Select "Continue" below to review the first-choice set. Make your employer selection then press "Continue" to advance to the next choice set.

There are 6 employer choice sets to review in total (one per screen).

Which of the following employer profile is most attractive to you?

	Employer A	Employer B	Employer C
People I Know or Like Me	No	No	Yes
Growth and Development	Yes	No	No
Organizational Purpose Alignment	Aligned with Purpose	Misaligned with Purpose	Aligned with Purpose
Salary	Above Market (+10%)	At Market	Above Market (+10%)
	CHOOSE	CHOOSE	CHOOSE

Go back

✖ NONE OF THE ABOVE

Which of the following employer profile is most attractive to you?

	Employer A	Employer B	Employer C
People I Know or Like Me	No	No	Yes
Growth and Development	No	No	Yes
Organizational Purpose Alignment	Aligned with Purpose	Misaligned with Purpose	Aligned with Purpose
Salary	Above Market (+10%)	At Market	At Market
	CHOOSE	✓ CHOOSE	CHOOSE

Go back

✖ NONE OF THE ABOVE

Which of the following employer profile is most attractive to you?

	Employer A	Employer B	Employer C
People I Know or Like Me	No	Yes	Yes
Growth and Development	No	Yes	Yes
Organizational Purpose Alignment	Aligned with Purpose	Misaligned with Purpose	Misaligned with Purpose
Salary	Above Market (+10%)	At Market	Above Market (+10%)
	CHOOSE	CHOOSE	✓ CHOOSE

Go back

✖ NONE OF THE ABOVE

Which of the following employer profile is most attractive to you?

	Employer A	Employer B	Employer C
People I Know or Like Me	No	No	Yes
Growth and Development	Yes	No	Yes
Organizational Purpose Alignment	Misaligned with Purpose	Misaligned with Purpose	Aligned with Purpose
Salary	Above Market (+10%)	At Market	Above Market (+10%)
	CHOOSE	✓ CHOOSE	CHOOSE

Go back

✖ NONE OF THE ABOVE

Which of the following employer profile is most attractive to you?

	Employer A	Employer B	Employer C
People I Know or Like Me	No	Yes	Yes
Growth and Development	Yes	No	No
Organizational Purpose Alignment	Aligned with Purpose	Misaligned with Purpose	Aligned with Purpose
Salary	At Market	Above Market (+10%)	At Market
	CHOOSE	CHOOSE	✓ CHOOSE

Go back

✖ NONE OF THE ABOVE

VI. Salary Sacrifice

This next section will ask about your willingness to give up some level of salary for desired attributes important to you in your employer choice.

a. Looking at the list below, select the one attribute that is **most** attractive to you when choosing an employer ?
   i. The company offers opportunity for growth and development
   ii. The company's organizational purpose aligns with my individual purpose.
   iii. The company employs people I know or people like me.

b. Based on the employer attribute selected most important to you, how much less compensation would you accept by an employer for this attribute?
   i. -5%

ii. -10%
iii. -15%
iv. >-15%

VII. Social Crises

The social crises of the COVID-19 pandemic and racial injustice movement of Black Lives Matter at the time of this survey cannot be ignored in context of this research.

Please answer the following questions regarding your employer experience related to these social crises.

a. How has the COVID-19 pandemic affected your current employee experience?
   i. Negative effect on my current employee experience.
   ii. No effect on my current employee experience.
   iii. Positive effect on my current employee experience.

b. How has your COVID-19 pandemic experience influenced your interest in seeking new employment?
   i. I am actively seeking new employment at this time.
   ii. The pandemic has had no influence on my seeking new employment at this time.
   iii. I am choosing to remain at my current employer at this time.

c. How has the COVID-19 pandemic affected the relative importance of organizational purpose in your employer preference?
   i. Significantly decreased the importance of organizational purpose in my preference of employer.
   ii. Moderately decreased the importance of organizational purpose in my preference of employer.
   iii. No effect on the importance of organizational purpose in my preference of employer.
   iv. Moderately increased the importance of organizational purpose in my preference of employer.
   v. Significantly increased the importance of organizational purpose in my preference of employer.

d. How has the Black Lives Matter movement affected your current employee experience?
   i. Negative effect on my current employee experience.
   ii. No effect on my current employee experience.
   iii. Positive effect on my current employee experience.

e. How has your experience with Black Lives Matter influenced your interest in seeking new employment?

i. I am actively seeking new employment at this time.
ii. Black Lives Matter has had no influence on my seeking new employment at this time.
iii. I am choosing to remain at my current employer at this time.

f. How has the Black Lives Matter movement affected the relative importance of organizational purpose in your employer preference?
   i. Significantly decreased the importance of organizational purpose in my preference of employer.
   ii. Moderately decreased the importance of organizational purpose in my preference of employer.
   iii. No effect on the importance of organizational purpose in my preference of employer.
   iv. Moderately increased the importance of organizational purpose in my preference of employer.
   v. Significantly increased the importance of organizational purpose in my preference of employer.

VIII. Demographic Questions

Please complete the following demographic questions. Your response is anonymous. No personally identifiable information will be collected or reported.

a. What is your gender?
   i. Male
   ii. Female
   iii. Non-Binary
   iv. Do not wish to disclose

b. What generation do you identify with?
   i. Generation Z: Born 1995-2012
   ii. Generation Y: Born 1977-1994
   iii. Generation X: Born 1966-1976
   iv. Baby Boomer: Born 1944-1965
   v. Do not wish to disclose
   vi. None of above: ✕ None of the above

c. What is your ethnicity?
   i. Asian
   ii. Black
   iii. Hispanic
   iv. Native American
   v. Two or More Races
   vi. White
   vii. Other

viii. Do not wish to disclose

d. What is your highest level of education completed?
    i. Some High School
    ii. High School
    iii. Some college
    iv. Associates
    v. Bachelors
    vi. Masters
    vii. Doctorate
    viii. Do not wish to disclose

e. How do you rate your overall economic stability?
    i. Economically insecure: unable to meet all basic financial needs in a given month without financial support or assistance.
    ii. Economically limited: able to meet most basic financial needs in a given month however, unable to handle a major unexpected expense without financial support or assistance.
    iii. Economically secure: able to meet all basic financial needs in a given month and handle most unexpected major expenses without financial support or assistance and without concern.

f. What industry do you currently work in? If you do not currently work, what is your desired industry?
    i. Accounting, Banking, Finance
    ii. Communications, Marketing, Public Relations
    iii. Education
    iv. Government
    v. Healthcare
    vi. Hospitality
    vii. Human Capital Consulting
    viii. Information Technology
    ix. Legal
    x. Management Consulting, Professional Services
    xi. Non-Profit, Charity
    xii. Pharmaceuticals
    xiii. Sales
    xiv. Shipping, Supply Chain
    xv. Social Services and Assistance
    xvi. *None of above:* ✕ *None of the above*

g. What state do you currently reside in the United States?
    i. Alpha List of States and District of Colombia
    ii. None of the above