

ABSTRACT

KROUSTALIS, CHRISTINA MARIE. Internet Recruitment: Examining the Roles of Information, Attitudes, and Perceived Fit on Applicant Attraction. (Under the direction of Dr. Adam W. Meade).

This study examined how organizational attitudes, which are influenced by attitudes toward Internet recruitment websites, mediate the relationship between organizational attraction and recruitment website content (amounts of job and organization information) and website design (website usability and website aesthetics). The moderating effects of person-organization (P-O) and person-job (P-J) fit were also examined. Participants were Introductory Psychology students who viewed Fortune 500 company websites and responded to questions about the content and design of these websites and their resulting attitudes, fit perceptions, and organizational attraction. Results indicated amounts of job information, organization information, website usability, and website aesthetics were positively correlated with favorable job seeker attitudes toward the recruitment website. Additionally, the amount of job information on a recruitment website interacted with website usability, such that when less job information was presented, website usability played a greater role in positively predicting organizational attitudes. Organizational attitudes were found to mediate the relationship between website content and website design on attraction to the organization. Lastly, P-J fit was found to moderate the mediation of organizational attitudes in the job information-attraction link, such that the amount of job information led to more favorable attitudes only when perceived P-J fit was high. Contrary to study hypotheses, the same moderating effect was not found for P-O fit in the organization information-organizational attitudes-attraction mediation model. Explanations of many of the significant results are

explored through Spence's (1973; 1974) signaling theory. Recommendations for the development of Internet recruitment websites are also provided.

Internet Recruitment: Examining the Roles of Information, Attitudes, and Perceived Fit on
Applicant Attraction

by
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BIOGRAPHY

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Literature Review

Traditional recruitment media typically consists of organizational brochures, newspaper and magazine advertisements, word-of-mouth accounts of job openings, and career fairs (Cober, Brown, Blumental, Doverspike, & Levy, 2000; Herriot & Rothwell, 1981). With the exponential growth in technology in recent years, the Internet has been used as another type of recruitment medium. One survey found that Internet recruitment is being used by over 90% of large U.S. companies (Cober et al., 2000); and that using the Internet is one of the most cost and time efficient ways of attracting and hiring employees (Cappelli, 2001; Cober et al., 2000; Kay, 2000, Marcus, 2001; Millman, 1998). Statistics indicate that U.S. companies' average recruiting costs are \$1,000 to \$8,000 per applicant; however, the average cost of attracting applicants with Internet recruiting has been shown to be as low as \$900 per applicant (Greenburg, 1998).

According to signaling theory (Spence, 1973; 1974), potential applicants may view the design and content of recruitment websites as signals for what it would be like to work for a particular organization. Design features, such as website aesthetics and website usability, provide indirect cues about an organization that can impact job seekers' perceptions regarding the attractiveness of an organization (Williamson, Lepak, & King, 2003; Zusman & Landis, 2002). Allen, Mahto, and Otondo (2007) found job seekers were more attracted to organizations that provided adequate amounts of job information and organization information on their recruitment websites. The authors suggest that, just like website usability and aesthetics, the amount of job and organization information on a recruitment website can also provide signals to job seekers in the early phases of job search.

Allen et al.'s (2007) study was the first study to empirically test the effect of the amount of job and organization information on a recruitment website on attraction to the hiring organization. However, the authors only examined the amount of information on a website and its effects on attraction, without examining the dynamics personal attributes might add. Therefore, one of the main purposes of this study is the examination of the effects of subjective perceptions of person-organization (P-O) and person-job (P-J) fit on the information-attraction link. As Figure 1 illustrates, the author of the current study will examine whether attitudes toward the organization, which are influenced by attitudes toward the recruitment website, mediate the relationship between attraction and recruitment website content and design characteristics (i.e., amount of job and organization information, usability, and aesthetics). The moderating effects of P-O and P-J fit will also be empirically examined.

Types of Internet Recruitment

There are two general methods of Internet recruitment. One method is the use of job boards (e.g., Monster.com), which essentially function like newspaper advertisements on the web. That is, general information about job openings at various organizations are posted in much the same way that organizations post job advertisements in the employment sections of newspapers. While job boards provide a searchable centralized repository for information about available positions, typically they do not provide much additional information over and above that found in traditional recruitment media.

In contrast, a second method of Internet recruitment, dedicated 'careers' sections embedded within organizations' main websites, provide much more information compared to traditional recruitment media and Internet job boards. The 'careers' sections of organizations'

official websites typically not only provide information about current open job positions within the organization, but also information regarding the culture of the organization, organizational policies, mission and value statements, employee testimonials, and information regarding benefits, rewards, and organizational programs and initiatives (Cober et al., 2000). The additional information beyond what is typically provided by traditional recruitment media and job boards may increase viewers' abilities to identify the culture of the organization. If job seekers can gather this type of information from the recruitment website, they can use it to better assess their fit with the organization's culture and how attracted they are to the organization before they make a decision to apply. This will ultimately benefit both the organization and the job seeker.

Website Design and Website Attitudes

Internet recruitment websites may help determine job seekers' first impressions during the early stages of recruitment; therefore, it is important for these websites to be well-designed. Signaling theory (Spence, 1973; 1974) provides a possible explanation for how applicants decide to apply for a job with an organization after viewing recruitment materials. According to signaling theory, when individuals do not have complete data, or are uncertain of the position they should take on a matter, they will draw inferences based on cues from available information. Job seekers often have limited knowledge of organizations and recruitment material may be their primary source of information about the hiring company (Rynes & Miller, 1983). It is possible that variables that do not seem to have a direct connection to a job or organization (e.g., pictures) can become cues or signals for what it

would be like to work for that organization (Rynes, Bretz, & Gerhart, 1991; Turban, 2001; Turban, Forret, & Hendrickson, 1998).

Most preliminary research on Internet recruitment has focused on the relationships of usability and aesthetics of recruitment websites and organizational attraction (e.g., Braddy, Thompson, Wuensch, & Grossnickle, 2003; Cober et al., 2000; Cober, Brown, Levy, Cober, & Keeping, 2003; Coyle & Thorson, 2001; Scheu, Ryan, & Nona, 1999; Williamson et al., 2003; Zusman & Landis, 2002). Website usability refers to individuals' perceptions of how effective and efficient a computer-based tool is in helping them reach their goals (Karat, 1997). Aspects of usability, such as the orientation of the website and the navigational ease of viewing, also relate to organizational attractiveness (Cober et al., 2003; Davis, Bagozzi, & Warshaw, 1989; Venkatesh & Davis, 1996; Williamson et al., 2003; Zusman & Landis, 2002). In fact, Karr (2000) found that 26% of participants chose not to apply for positions in organizations due to the ineffective design of their recruitment websites alone.

To capture the attention of the job seekers, recruitment websites also need to have appealing aesthetic features that invite further exploration (Coyle & Thorson, 2001). Grabbing the attention of the job seeker enhances the likelihood that they will be attracted to and interested in the organization. Aesthetic characteristics generally include visual elements such as attractive colors, pleasing text images and fonts, and multimedia presentations (Braddy et al., 2003; Cober et al., 2000; Williamson et al., 2003). Evoking positive reactions to a recruitment website can prompt a job seeker to further explore the website to gather additional information about the focal organization. The following hypotheses are proposed about the relationship between website design and website attitudes:

Hypothesis 1: Website aesthetics will be positively correlated with favorable job seeker attitudes toward the website.

Hypothesis 2: Website usability will be positively correlated with favorable job seeker attitudes toward the website.

The Effect of Information on Attitudes

Previous research has shown that the more job and organization relevant information job seekers are given during recruitment, the more attracted they are to the organization (Allen, Van Scotter, & Otondo, 2004; Barber, 1998; Barber & Roehling, 1993; Cable & Judge, 1994; Cable, Aiman-Smith, Mulvey, & Edwards, 2000; Cober et al., 2003; Chapman, Uggerslev, Carroll, Piasentin, & Jones, 2005; Rynes et al., 1991). Similarly, greater amounts of job and organizational information and more detailed information have been found to increase a job seeker's satisfaction and willingness to apply for a job (Feldman & Klaas, 2002; Herriot & Rothwell; Mason & Belt, 1986). By obtaining job and organization information from recruitment materials, job seekers can determine if a good fit exists between the organization, job, and their personal characteristics.

Williamson et al. (2003) found that when viewing Internet recruitment websites, job seekers were most concerned with gathering information about the organization and the job. In turn, job seekers used this information to determine if they would fit well within the organization. Similarly, previous research has found that job seekers use the information provided on organizational recruitment websites (e.g., pictures, employee testimonials) to determine their overall fit with the hiring organization (Braddy, Meade, Michael, & Fleenor, 2009; Dineen, Ash, & Noe, 2002; Kroustalis, 2006). Thus, the job and organization

information provided on Internet recruitment websites may be used as informative signals by prospective applicants in determining their fit and attraction to the organization.

Allen et al. (2007) point out the lack of research of the amounts of job and organization information in the Internet recruitment context. This is surprising considering that a large advantage of Internet recruitment 'careers' websites is the ability to provide much more information about organizational and job attributes compared with more traditional recruitment media. Allen et al. (2007) found that including more organization and job information on a recruitment website makes this recruitment medium more useful to potential applicants. Specifically, the authors found that including this type of information on these websites influences the attitudes individuals have toward the recruitment website and, ultimately, their attraction to the hiring organization. Thus, I offer the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 3: The amount of job information on an organizational recruitment website will be positively correlated with favorable job seeker attitudes toward the website.

Hypothesis 4: The amount of organization information on an organizational recruitment website will be positively correlated with favorable job seeker attitudes toward the website.

Additionally, if signaling theory holds true, website usability and aesthetic appeal should play a greater role influencing organizational attitudes when limited job and organization information are presented on the recruitment website. Similarly, having more job and organization information on a recruitment website may compensate for a less navigable and aesthetically-pleasing website.

Hypothesis 5: The amount of job information presented on a recruitment website will moderate the effect of website usability and aesthetics on organizational attitudes, such that website usability and aesthetics will play a greater role in positively predicting organizational attitudes when less job information is presented.

Hypothesis 6: The amount of organization information presented on a recruitment website will moderate the effect of website usability and aesthetics on organizational attitudes, such that website usability and aesthetics will play a greater role in positively predicting organizational attitudes when less organization information is presented.

Organizational Attitudes and Attraction

Past research has shown the similarities between consumer advertising and recruitment, such that individuals' feelings about advertisements influence their attraction to the products advertised in the same manner recruitment materials influence job seekers' attitudes toward the organization (Barber, 1998; Coulter & Punj, 1999; Muehling & McCann, 1993). As Allen et al. (2007) state, Internet recruitment websites are a form of advertising for jobs within an organization. Thus the attitudes individuals form about a recruitment website should influence their attitudes about the organization itself and, in turn, influence attraction toward the organization.

Several studies that have applied the theory of reasoned action (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980) to consumer information processing have found that the design and content of advertisements produce general attitudes toward advertisements that then influence attitudes toward the organization, and ultimately attraction, intentions to pursue the end-product, and

the act of acquiring the end-product (see Kim & Hunter, 1993a; 1993b for a review). Similarly, Allen et al. (2004) found that recruitment information communicated through different media influenced organizational attitudes and subsequent intentions and behaviors to pursue employment. Specifically, Allen et al. found that attitudes toward the organization mediated the relationship between recruitment media antecedents (e.g., organizational image, information, credibility) and ultimate attraction to the organization.

Additional meta-analytic evidence has shown that attitudes-mediated models of job choice antecedents and organizational attraction fit better than models with direct effects of these antecedents on attraction (Chapman et al., 2005). However, Chapman et al. (2005) compared attitudes-mediated models to intentions-mediated models, in which job choice antecedents were directly related to both attitudes and intentions, and found that some antecedents fit better in the intentions-mediated models. Allen et al. (2007) took this into account when studying recruitment message antecedents (including organizational familiarity and image and job and organizational information). The authors found that the attitudes-mediated model fit better with every antecedent except job information. Job characteristics and job information included on recruitment media directly affected employment intentions over a poorer-fitting mediated model. To better understand the effects of recruitment media and organizational attitudes on attraction in the Internet recruitment realm, it is proposed:

Hypothesis 7: Website attitudes will be positively correlated with attitudes toward the organization.

Hypothesis 8a: Attitudes toward the organization will mediate the relationship between amount of organization information and attraction to the organization.

Hypothesis 8b: Attitudes toward the organization will mediate the relationship between website usability and attraction to the organization.

Hypothesis 8c: Attitudes toward the organization will mediate the relationship between website aesthetics and attraction to the organization.

To further explore Allen et al.'s (2007) findings that job information directly affected employment intentions over a poorer-fitting mediated model, the following research question is proposed:

Research Question 1: Do attitudes toward the organization partially or fully mediate the relationship between amount of job information and organizational attraction?

Fit Perceptions and Attraction

One of the biggest contributions of this study is the inclusion of the interactions of person and environment characteristics on attraction to the organization. Allen et al. (2007) state that a useful follow-up to their study would detail how personal characteristics might interact with the information provided on a recruitment website to influence attraction to the organization. This study expands upon Allen et al.'s (2007) model by empirically examining how person-organization (P-O) and person-job (P-J) fit, as perceived by job applicants, affects the information-attraction link.

Person-environment fit generally refers to the compatibility between individual and work environment characteristics (Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005). Person-environment fit encompasses a variety of manifestations (e.g., person-organization fit, person-job fit); and fit between an employee and the work environment has been shown to increase the likelihood of maximum work efficiency (e.g., Tziner, 1987). The person-

environment fit literature highlights Schneider's (1987) attraction aspect of his attraction-selection-attrition model and Byrne's (1971) similarity-attraction paradigm, suggesting that people are attracted to organizations which have characteristics congruent with their own. There are many benefits of fit for both the organization and employees, including decreased turnover (e.g., Bretz & Judge, 1993; O'Reilly, Chatman, & Caldwell, 1991; Schneider, 1987), increased performance (e.g., Schneider, 1987; Tziner, 1987), pro-social behaviors (e.g., O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986), and positive attitudes (e.g., Chatman, 1991; Dawis & Lofquist, 1984; Meglino, Ravlin, & Adkins, 1989).

Person-organization fit. One of the most commonly examined aspects of person-environment fit is person-organization (P-O) fit. Perceived P-O fit can be defined as individuals' overall judgments of how compatible they are with an organization (Judge & Cable, 1997; Kristof, 1996; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). This congruence can be perceived through shared values (Chatman, 1989; Kristof, 1996; Verquer, Beehr, & Wagner, 2003), goals (Vancouver & Schmitt, 1991; Witt & Nye, 1992) and personality-climate compatibility (Christiansen, Villanova, & Mikulay, 1997; Ryan & Schmitt, 1996). P-O fit has been found to strongly influence organizational commitment, intentions to quit, and organizational satisfaction on the job (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). Prior to entry into the organization, P-O fit perceptions have a strong influence on organizational attraction, job acceptance rates, and acceptance intentions (Chapman et al., 2005; Kristof-Brown et al. 2005).

Because perceived P-O fit is a measure of an individual's perceived congruence with the organization, the organizational information that is provided on an Internet recruitment website may allow potential applicants to determine whether their personal characteristics fit

well with the organization's characteristics. This study will be the first to empirically examine the dynamic interactions P-O fit perceptions may have with the amount of organizational information provided on a recruitment website and its effect on attraction. It is proposed:

Hypothesis 9: P-O fit will moderate the mediation effect of organizational attitudes in the organization information-attraction link, such that the amount of organization information leads to more favorable attitudes only when perceived P-O fit is high.

Person-job fit. Perceived P-J fit is defined as individuals' judgment of the congruence between their personal characteristics and job characteristics (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). This type of person-environment fit is typically characterized by either a congruency between demands-abilities or supplies-values (Edwards, 1991). Demands-abilities fit refers to a perceived compatibility between an individual's knowledge, skills, and abilities and those required by the job. Supplies-values fit refers to situations in which the job meets an individual's needs, desires, or preferences. Previous research on P-J fit has found that when potential applicants perceive P-J fit between their characteristics and the characteristics of the job, there is an increase in job and organization attraction, intent to hire, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment, and a decrease in intentions to turnover (Chapman et al., 2005; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). Similar to P-O fit, perceptions of P-J fit may interact with the inclusion of adequate amounts of job information on an Internet recruitment website. Therefore, it is proposed:

Hypothesis 10: P-J fit will moderate the mediation of organizational attitudes in the job information-attraction link, such that the amount of job information leads to more favorable attitudes only when perceived P-J fit is high.

Study 1

The primary purpose of Study 1 was to assess which Fortune 500 company websites would be chosen for Study 2. Results of Study 1 ensured variability in the amounts of job and organizational information and website usability and aesthetics found on the organizational websites used in Study 2.

Method

Participants

Participants were 610 undergraduate students at a large southeastern university. The sample was 53% female, with a mean age of 18.8. Seventy-eight percent of participants were Caucasian, 10% were African-American, 2% were Hispanic, and 6% were Asian-American. Four percent of participants did not indicate their race. The breakdown of class standing was as follows: 63% freshman, 27% sophomores, 7% juniors, and 2% seniors. Thirty-nine percent of respondents indicated they had previously searched for a job on the Internet. Three percent of participants were currently searching for a job/career at the time of the study, 25% of participants indicated they would be looking for a job/career in 1-2 years, 56% of participants stated they would be looking for a job/career in 3-4 years, and 16% of participants intended to look for a job/career in 5+ years. Participants indicated they spent an average of 18.9 hours on the Internet per week.

Design and Procedure

Data collection took place in online sessions that lasted approximately 30 minutes. As participants clicked on the homepage of the study, they were given instructions for the experiment and were asked to complete an informed consent form. Participants were then asked to assume they were job seekers who had just graduated from college and were asked to review the homepages and ‘careers’ sections of 2 of 24 Fortune 500 companies’ organizational websites.

Each participant was randomly assigned to view 2 of the 24 websites and was told to search for a job of his or her choosing within the organization. Participants were asked to base all responses on what was seen on the organizations’ websites only. Participants were asked to view both the homepages of the Fortune 500 company websites and also the ‘careers’ portions of the Fortune 500 company websites. No manipulations were made to the websites; participants viewed the actual websites and searched for real job openings in the companies whose websites they viewed.

Fortune 500 company websites were chosen by the author of the study through careful search and consideration of lists of Fortune 500 companies. The author of the study examined 100 Fortune 500 company websites and rated degrees of high/low content and design features. The 12 highest and the 12 lowest rated websites were chosen for inclusion in Study 1. Participants had unlimited time to search their assigned websites. After participants viewed the organizational websites, they were directed to a series of questionnaires to assess their perceptions of the amounts of job and organizational information, attitudes toward the website and toward the organization, website aesthetics and usability, perceived P-O and P-J

fit, and their attraction to the organization. Several control variables were also measured, including organizational familiarity, organizational image, attractiveness of benefits offered by the organization, attractiveness of the industry the organization was in, and prior organizational attitudes. In addition, participants completed questionnaires on demographic variables and general questions about their Internet use.

Measures

Amount of Job Information. To assess participants' perceptions of amount of job information on the Fortune 500 company websites, a three-item measure from Allen et al.'s (2007) scale of job information was used ($\alpha = .75$ in this sample). Participants responded to Likert-type questions on a seven-point scale ranging from 1 = *not much at all* to 7 = *a very great amount* (see Appendix A).

Amount of Organization Information. To assess participants' perceptions of amount of organization information on the Fortune 500 company websites, a four-item measure from Allen et al.'s (2007) scale of organization information was used ($\alpha = .77$). Participants responded to Likert-type questions on a seven-point scale ranging from 1 = *not much at all* to 7 = *a very great amount* (see Appendix B).

Attitudes toward the Website. In order to assess participants' attitudes toward the organizational websites they viewed, Chen and Wells' (1999) three-item measure of website attitudes was used ($\alpha = .96$). Participants responded to Likert-type questions on a seven-point scale ranging from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree* (see Appendix C).

Attitudes toward the Organization. Participants' attitudes toward the organization were assessed with Allen et al.'s (2004) five-item measure of attitudes toward the

organization which the authors adapted from a survey of affective responses developed by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975; see Appendix D; $\alpha = .94$). Each participant responded to the questions on a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = *very negative* to 7 = *very positive*.

Perceived P-O Fit. Perceived P-O fit was examined as the participants' overall self-reported perception of fit with the organization. Participants' perceived P-O fit was measured with a three-item questionnaire taken from Cable and Judge (1996; see Appendix E; $\alpha = .75$). The response scale ranged from 1 = *not at all* to 7 = *completely*.

Perceived P-J Fit. Perceived P-J fit was assessed with a five-item measure developed by Lauver and Kristof-Brown (2001; $\alpha = .91$). The five items assessed different conceptualizations of P-J fit, including perceived congruence of skills, abilities, and personality with the job (see Appendix F). The response scale ranged from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*.

Website Usability. Website usability was assessed with Williamson et al.'s (2003) four-item measure of ease of use ($\alpha = .91$). Each item was measured on a seven-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree* (see Appendix G).

Website Aesthetics. Eight aesthetic items were developed based on Cober et al.'s (2003) measure of website style ($\alpha = .87$). All items were based on a seven-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree* (see Appendix H).

Organization Attraction. In order to assess participants' attraction to the organization whose recruitment website they viewed, a five-item measure was used (taken from Highhouse, Lievens, & Sinar, 2003; $\alpha = .91$), with a seven-point response scale (1 = *strongly disagree*; 7 = *strongly agree*). See Appendix I for the items assessing organization attraction.

Control Variables. Organizational familiarity, attractiveness of organizational benefits, attractiveness of the industry the organization is in, prior attitudes toward the organization, and organizational image were all used as control variables in the study (see Appendix J).

Data Analysis

A series of regression equations were used to test Hypotheses 1-6. For Hypotheses 1-4, the predictors were website aesthetics (H1), website usability (H2), amount of job information (H3), and amount of organizational information (H4), and the criterion was the participants' attitudes toward the website. Correlations were not possible as control variables (organizational familiarity, attractiveness of organizational benefits, attractiveness of the industry, prior attitudes toward the organization, and organizational image) were entered into each equation first. In subsequent equations, the control variables plus the predictor were entered, to test each hypothesis separately. Hypotheses 5-6 were analyzed using regression to test the interaction between website design (i.e., aesthetics and usability) and content (i.e., amount of job and organizational information) on website attitudes. A correlation was used to examine Hypothesis 7, whether website attitudes were positively correlated with organizational attitudes.

Hypotheses 8a-8c and Research Question 1 were conducted with mediated regression analyses to determine if attitudes toward the organization mediate the relationships between job information, organization information, website usability, and website aesthetics on attraction to the organization. To determine if full mediation exists, Baron and Kenny's (1986) procedure was followed, where (1) job information, organization information, website

usability, and website aesthetics must be significantly correlated with organizational attraction, (2) job information, organization information, website usability, and website aesthetics must be significantly correlated with attitudes toward the organization, (3), attitudes toward the organization affect attraction to the organization, and (4) when the influence of attitudes to the organization are held constant, a nonsignificant effect should be found between job information, organization information, website usability, and website aesthetics and attraction. To further test Research Question 1, partial mediation was assessed for the relationship between the amount of job information and attraction.

Hypotheses 9-10 were conducted with moderated mediation analyses. Following Muller, Judd, and Yzerbyt's (2005) steps, the predictor was amount of information, the moderator was perceived P-O and P-J fit, the mediator was organizational attitudes, and the criterion was attraction to the organization. Specifically, analyses of Hypotheses 9-10 tested whether the indirect effect of amount of information on attraction via organizational attitudes is higher when perceived fit is high. To test for moderated mediation, a series of regression analyses were conducted. In the first equation, *attraction* to the organization was regressed on amount of information, fit, and the interaction between the two. In the second equation, *attitudes* towards the organization were regressed on amount of information, fit, and the interaction between the two. In the third equation, attraction to the organization was regressed on amount of information, fit, organizational attitudes, and the interactions between the predictor (amount of information) and the moderator (perceived fit) and between the moderator (perceived fit) and the mediator (organizational attitudes). The criteria for moderated mediation are met when the predictor in the first and second equations and the

interaction between the mediator and the moderator in the third equation are significant (Muller et al., 2005). To reduce the occurrence of multicollinearity between the fit variables and information variables, these variables were centered prior to computing the interaction terms by subtracting the variable's mean from each case's value (Cohen, Cohen, West, & Aiken, 2003).

Results

Descriptive statistics and correlations between the predictor and criterion variables are shown in Table 1. A series of regression equations were used to analyze Hypotheses 1-4 which examined whether website design (i.e., website aesthetics and website usability) and website content (i.e., amount of job information and organization information) were correlated with website attitudes. After controlling for organizational familiarity, attractiveness of organizational benefits, attractiveness of the organization's industry, prior attitudes toward the organization, and organizational image, results were found to be significant, thus supporting Hypotheses 1-4 (see Tables 2-5).

Moderated regression analyses were used to test Hypotheses 5-6, which examined the interaction between amounts of job information and website design (i.e., aesthetics and usability) and amounts of organization information and website design (i.e., aesthetics and usability) on organizational attitudes. All three main effects in the regression equation used to test Hypothesis 5 were found to be significant, while only the main effects for organizational information and usability were significant for Hypothesis 6. No significant interactions were found for Hypothesis 5, which examined the interaction between amounts of job information and website design (i.e., aesthetics and usability); thus, Hypothesis 5 was not supported.

Partial support was found for Hypothesis 6, where the interaction between amount of organizational information and website usability was found to be significant (see Tables 6-7 for results). To further probe the significant interaction, values for amount of organization information were taken at 1 SD above and 1 SD below the mean (see Figure 2). As predicted, when the amount of organization information was lower on a recruitment website, website usability played a greater role in positively predicting organizational attitudes.

Hypothesis 7, which examined if attitudes toward the website were positively correlated with organizational attitudes, was found to be supported ($r = .53, p < .01$). Four separate mediated regression analyses were used to test Hypotheses 8a-8c and Research Question 1, which examined if organizational attitudes mediated the relationship between amounts of job information (RQ1), amounts of organization information (H8a), website usability (H8b), and website aesthetics (H8c) on attraction to the organization. Baron and Kenny's (1986) procedure was followed, where (1) job information, organization information, website usability, and website aesthetics must be significantly correlated with organizational attraction, (2) job information, organization information, website usability, and website aesthetics must be significantly correlated with attitudes toward the organization, (3), attitudes toward the organization affect attraction to the organization, and (4) when the influence of attitudes to the organization are held constant, a nonsignificant effect should be found between job information, organization information, website usability, and website aesthetics and attraction. After controlling for potential confounds and meeting the above criteria of Baron and Kenny's (1986) procedure, full mediation was found for Hypotheses 8a-

8c and Research Question 1 (see Table 8). Sobel (1982) tests indicated the mediation was significant for all four hypothesized effects.

Moderated mediation analyses (Muller et al., 2005) were used to test Hypotheses 9-10, which examined whether P-O and P-J fit moderated the relationship between amounts of job and organization information and the mediator, organizational attitudes, on attraction. Hypothesis 9 examined if P-O fit moderated the relationship between the amount of organizational information (predictor) and organizational attitudes (mediator). In the first and second equations, amount of organization information did not significantly predict attraction, $\beta = .13$, $t(1128) = 1.31$, $p = .19$ but did significantly predict organizational attitudes, $\beta = .49$, $t(1122) = 6.14$, $p < .01$. In the third equation, P-O fit and organizational attitudes interacted to significantly predict attraction to the organization, $\beta = .68$, $t(1103) = 3.64$, $p < .01$. Because all three criteria for finding support for moderated mediation were not met, Hypothesis 9 was not supported.

Hypothesis 10 examined if P-J fit moderated the relationship between the amount of job information (predictor) and organizational attitudes (mediator). In the first and second equations, amount of job information significantly predicted attraction, $\beta = .19$, $t(1124) = 2.20$, $p = .03$ and organizational attitudes, $\beta = .45$, $t(1119) = 5.47$, $p < .01$. In the third equation, P-J fit and organizational attitudes interacted and did not significantly predict attraction to the organization, $\beta = .16$, $t(1100) = .85$, $p = .39$. Thus, Hypothesis 10 was not supported.

Study 2

One of the main goals of Study 1 was to determine which sub-set of organizational websites used in Study 1 would be retained for use in Study 2. The decision of which websites to retain were based on the 5 highest and 5 lowest rated websites on amounts of job and organization information, website usability, and aesthetics used in Study 1. These 10 websites were included in Study 2 (see Table 9). Descriptive analyses of Study 1 websites for retention in Study 2 were examined to ensure variability among job and organization information, website usability, and website aesthetics across Fortune 500 company websites.

Method

Participants

Participants were 294 undergraduate students at a large southeastern university. The sample was 37% female, with a mean age of 19.2. Seventy-eight percent of participants were Caucasian, 10% were African-American, 1% were Hispanic, and 7% were Asian-American. Three percent of participants did not indicate their race. The breakdown of class standing was as follows: 65% were freshman, 24% were sophomores, 8% were juniors, and 2% were seniors. Forty-two percent of respondents indicated they had previously searched for a job on the Internet. Seven percent of participants were currently searching for a job/career at the time of the study, 25% of participants intended to look for a job/career in 1-2 years, 58% of participants intended to look for a job/career in 3-4 years, and 11% of participants intended to look for a job/career in 5+ years. Participants indicated they spent an average of 18.6 hours on the Internet per week.

Design and Procedure

The design and procedure of Study 2 was exactly as in Study 1, with the only difference being the total amount of websites used in Study 2. In Study 2, the five Fortune 500 company websites rated highest and the five rated lowest on amounts of job and organization information, website usability, and aesthetics from Study 1 were retained for Study 2. The Fortune 500 company websites used in Study 2 were chosen to ensure variability among the content and design of websites.

Participants had unlimited time to search their assigned websites. After participants viewed the organizational websites, they were directed to a series of questionnaires to measure their perceptions of the amounts of job and organizational information, attitudes toward the website and toward the organization, website aesthetics and usability, perceived P-O and P-J fit, and their attraction to the organization. Several control variables were also measured, including organizational familiarity, organizational image, attractiveness of benefits offered by the organization, attractiveness of the industry of the organization, and prior attitudes toward the organization whose website they viewed. In addition, participants completed questionnaires on demographics and general questions about their Internet use. No manipulations were made to the Fortune 500 company websites.

Measures and Analyses

The same measures and control variables used in Study 1 were used in Study 2 (see appendices A-J). The same data analysis employed in Study 1 was used in Study 2.

Results

Descriptive statistics and correlations between the predictor and criterion variables are shown in Table 10. A series of regression equations were used to analyze Hypotheses 1-4 which examined whether website design (i.e., website usability and website aesthetics) and website content (i.e., amount of job information and organization information) were related to website attitudes. After controlling for organizational familiarity, attractiveness of organizational benefits, attractiveness of the industry of the organization, prior attitudes toward the organization, and organizational image, Hypotheses 1-4 were supported (see Tables 11-14).

Moderated regression analyses were used to test Hypotheses 5-6, which examined the interaction between amounts of job information and website design (i.e., aesthetics and usability) and amounts of organization information and website design (i.e., aesthetics and usability) on organizational attitudes. The main effects of job information and website usability on organizational attitudes were found to be significant for Hypothesis 5, while only the main effect for website usability on organizational attitudes was found to be significant for Hypothesis 6. Partial support was found for Hypothesis 5, as only the interaction between amount of job information and website usability was found to be significant (see Table 15; no support was found for the interaction between amount of job information and website aesthetics). To probe the interaction, values of amount of job information were taken at 1 SD below and 1 SD above the mean (see Figure 3). As predicted, when the amount of job information was lower on a recruitment website, website usability played a greater role in positively predicting organizational attitudes.

Partial support was also found for Hypothesis 6, where the interaction between amount of organizational information and website usability was found to be significant (see Table 16). To further probe the significant interaction found for Hypothesis 6, values for amount of organization information were taken at 1 SD above and 1 SD below the mean (see Figure 4). As predicted, when the amount of organization information was lower on a recruitment website, website usability played a greater role in positively predicting organizational attitudes.

Hypothesis 7, which examined if attitudes toward the website were positively correlated with organizational attitudes, was found to be significant ($r = .75, p < .01$). Mediated regression analyses were used to test Hypotheses 8a-8c and Research Question 1, which examined if organizational attitudes mediated the relationship between amounts of job information (RQ1), amounts of organization information (H8a), website usability (H8b), and website aesthetics (H8c) on attraction to the organization. Baron and Kenny's (1986) procedure was followed, where (1) job information, organization information, website usability, and website aesthetics must be significantly correlated with organizational attraction, (2) job information, organization information, website usability, and website aesthetics must be significantly correlated with attitudes toward the organization, (3), attitudes toward the organization affect attraction to the organization, and (4) when the influence of attitudes to the organization are held constant, a nonsignificant effect should be found between job information, organization information, website usability, and website aesthetics and attraction. After controlling for all potential confounds and meeting the above criteria of Baron and Kenny's (1986) procedure, partial mediation was found for Research

Question 1 and H8a and full mediation was found for H8b-H8c. Thus, Hypotheses 8a-8c were supported and organizational attitudes were found to partially mediate the relationship between amount of job information and attraction (see Table 17). Sobel (1982) tests indicated the mediation was significant for all four analyses.

Moderated mediation analyses (Muller et al., 2005) were used to test Hypotheses 9-10, which examined whether P-O and P-J fit moderated the relationship between amounts of job and organization information and the mediator, organizational attitudes, on attraction. Hypothesis 9 examined if P-O fit moderated the relationship between the amount of organizational information (predictor) and organizational attitudes (mediator). In the first and second equations, amount of organization information did not significantly predict attraction, $\beta = .08$, $t(537) = .61$, $p = .54$ and did significantly predict organizational attitudes, $\beta = .35$, $t(537) = 3.16$, $p < .01$. In the third equation, P-O fit and organizational attitudes interacted and did not significantly predict attraction to the organization, $\beta = .36$, $t(525) = 1.13$, $p = .26$. Because all three criteria for finding support for moderated mediation were not met, Hypothesis 9 was not supported.

Hypothesis 10 examined if P-J fit moderated the relationship between the amount of job information (predictor) and organizational attitudes (mediator). In the first and second equations, amount of job information significantly predicted attraction, $\beta = .14$, $t(540) = 2.30$, $p = .02$ and organizational attitudes, $\beta = .43$, $t(535) = 7.77$, $p < .01$. In the third equation, P-J fit and organizational attitudes interacted to significantly predict attraction to the organization, $\beta = .42$, $t(526) = 3.20$, $p < .01$, fulfilling all three criteria for moderated mediation. Thus, Hypothesis 10 was supported.

To decompose the relationship in Hypothesis 10, a median split was used to divide two groups of P-J fit scores ($M_{dn} = 5.00$) to test separate mediation equations. For high P-J fit, amount of job information significantly predicted attraction to the organization, $\beta = .23$, $t(207) = 6.91$, $p < .01$ and organizational attitudes, $\beta = .50$, $t(209) = 17.10$, $p < .01$, in separate regression equations. When amount of job information and organizational attitudes were entered into a single model to predict attraction, job information was not significant, $\beta = .01$, $t(208) = .39$, $p = .71$, while organizational attitudes remained significant, $\beta = .42$, $t(208) = 11.80$, $p < .01$, suggesting full mediation. A Sobel test indicated the mediation was significant ($z = 9.47$, $p < .01$).

For low P-J fit scores, amount of job information significantly predicted attraction to the organization, $\beta = .26$, $t(296) = 7.01$, $p < .01$ and organizational attitudes, $\beta = .27$, $t(330) = 4.90$, $p < .01$, in separate regression equations. When amount of job information and organizational attitudes were entered into the model to predict attraction to the organization, the influence of job information decreased but remained significant, $\beta = .18$, $t(327) = 3.31$, $p < .01$ and organizational attitudes remained significant, $\beta = .37$, $t(329) = 6.72$, $p < .01$, suggesting partial mediation. A Sobel test indicated the mediation was significant ($z = 4.0$, $p < .01$). These findings support the hypothesized relationship in that the mediated relationship of amount of job information-organizational attitudes-attraction is stronger for individuals reporting high P-J fit over those reporting low P-J fit.

Discussion

The use of the Internet for employee recruitment practices has increasingly become the norm for most large organizations. This study sought to expand upon Allen et al.'s (2007) study which was the first to examine the effect of *amount* of Internet recruitment website job and organization information on attraction to the organization. This study expanded on Allen et al.'s efforts by examining the effects of person-organization (P-O) and person-job (P-J) fit on the information-attraction link. Additionally, this study was the first to examine the interaction between recruitment website design features and content features, and the mediation of organizational attitudes in the relationship between recruitment website design and content and attraction. To further solidify what qualities of a recruitment website attract applicants, replication of Allen et al.'s (2007) findings regarding website content were also examined.

Hypothesized Effects

As the results of Hypotheses 1-4 indicate for both Study 1 and Study 2, Internet recruitment website content (i.e., amounts of job and organization information) and website design (website aesthetics and usability) were predictive of attitudes toward the recruitment website. These findings replicate Allen et al.'s (2007) initial findings on recruitment website content, giving further indication that the information that is provided on recruitment websites, as well as design characteristics, influence website attitudes. Support of these hypotheses are consistent with past research in the consumer psychology and recruitment literature, where individuals' attitudes toward advertisements have been among the best predictors of their effectiveness (e.g., Brown & Stayman, 1992). Attitudes formed toward

advertisements are positively associated with further exploration of the advertisement source (Olney, Holbrook, & Batra, 1991), and more information provided on a website influences website attitudes (Allen et al., 2004; Allen et al., 2007). These results further delineate the importance of effective website design and the inclusion of ample content on recruitment websites.

Partial support was found for Hypotheses 5-6 in both Study 1 and Study 2, which examined the interaction between recruitment website content and design on attitudes toward the organization. In Study 1, amount of organization information was found to interact with website usability, such that when less organization information was presented on a recruitment website, website usability played a greater role in predicting organizational attitudes. In Study 2, amounts of both job and organization information were found to interact with website usability, such that when less information (both job and organization) was presented on a recruitment website, website usability played a greater role in predicting organizational attitudes. While it was hypothesized that website design (i.e., both usability and aesthetics) should play a greater role in predicting organizational attitudes when less job and organization information is present, hypotheses were not supported for website aesthetics.

These results may be indicative of the poor economic conditions we are currently experiencing. That is, website aesthetics might not be as important in times of economic uncertainty and rampant job loss, while information about the organization and job (e.g., benefits, compensation), regardless of the aesthetic design of the organization's website, may be more important to job seekers. Website usability may play a greater role than website

aesthetics in the design of the website during poor economic conditions due to the accessibility of information. That is, if viewers can find information with ease, more favorable organizational attitudes may result.

Consistent with Allen et al.'s (2007) research, support for Hypothesis 7 was found in both studies, indicating attitudes toward the recruitment website are positively correlated with attitudes toward the organization. This effect was particularly strong in Study 2 ($r = .75$). Hypotheses 8a-8c supported an organizational attitudes-mediated model between recruitment website content and design and attraction to the organization. Meta-analytic evidence has shown that attitudes-mediated models of job choice antecedents and organizational attraction are better fitting models than the direct effects of these antecedents on attraction (Chapman et al., 2005). In Study 1 and 2, support was found for the mediated relationship of website content/design-organizational attitudes-attraction. However, Study 2 results for website content (i.e., organization information) indicated partial mediation. Partial mediation findings are consistent with the support found for previous hypothesized effects regarding amounts of information positively predicting website attitudes and the correlation of website attitudes and organizational attitudes. Additionally, the results for Hypotheses 8a-8c provide further support for the better-fitting attitudes-mediated models in relation to job antecedents and attraction found in previous recruitment research (Chapman et al., 2005).

To further examine Allen et al.'s (2007) finding that attitudes-mediated models were better fitting in the job antecedent-attraction link for all variables except job information, a research question was proposed to determine if organizational attitudes partially or fully mediated the relationship between amount of job information and organizational attraction.

Support was found for a fully mediated model in Study 1 and a partially mediated model in Study 2. These results support Allen et al.'s (2007) and Chapman et al.'s (2005) findings that attitudes-mediated models fit better than direct effect models in recruitment research with certain job antecedents, such as amount of job information. Additional research should continue to examine direct effects models versus attitudes-mediated models for these variables and others to determine which produce a better-fitting model.

No support was found for Hypothesis 9, which hypothesized P-O fit would moderate the relationship between the amount of organization information on a recruitment website and organizational attitudes in the organization information-attraction link. However, support was found for Hypothesis 10 in Study 2, which hypothesized P-J fit would moderate the mediation effect of organizational attitudes in the job information-attraction link. Further decomposition of the relationship showed when P-J fit was high, a stronger mediated relationship of job information-organizational attitudes-attraction was found than when P-J fit was lower (where partial mediation was found to exist). These results are consistent with findings which indicate job information might play a greater role than organizational information on recruitment websites.

General Trends

Overall, there were a number of general trends found throughout the results of this study. The first general trend is that website content and website design continue to be important factors in the development of Internet recruitment websites. These findings indicate that organizations should pay close attention to the information presented on their

recruitment websites, as well as the design of these websites, as these variables are likely to influence job seekers' attitudes and ultimate attraction to the organization.

Another general trend found throughout this study, as past research has suggested (Chapman et al., 2005), is that attitudes-mediated models of job choice antecedents and organizational attraction are better fitting than direct effect models of these antecedents. However, Chapman et al. (2005) point out some antecedents fit better in direct effect models and Allen et al. (2007) found this to be true for job information. Future research should continue to test attitudes-mediated models in the Internet recruitment realm.

Lastly, there was a trend such that website aesthetics were less important than the information provided on a recruitment website and the ease of accessibility of that information. It appears that job seekers in this study are more concerned about properties of the job (e.g., compensation, benefits), organization, and the ease of finding information than aesthetically-pleasing colors and fonts used in the design of the website.

Limitations and Future Research

Results of this study provide further insight into the relationships between organizations' websites and viewers' perceptions; however, some limitations should be noted. The young sample of Introductory Psychology students may have limited results in that participants may not have taken the task as seriously as an actual job seeker.

Additionally, the young age of the participants, coupled with the fact that many are not currently seeking a career and will not be seeking one for 1-5 years, may have limited the generalizability of the study.

The participants' lack of experience in the workplace may have limited results related to fit perceptions. Without experience in multiple workplaces, many of the participants may not have known what they prefer in a job or whether they would fit well within an organization. Having the experience of working with different organizations, and exposure to different organizational cultures and jobs allows individuals to more accurately assess what they do and do not value in the workplace. Although the participants in the study may have lacked experience in the workplace, they were very familiar with the Internet, as participants indicated they spent an average of approximately 18-19 hours/week on the Internet. Additionally, many organizations aim their recruitment at younger applicant pools. Thus, participants in this study are aligned with the population of workers that many large organizations are targeting.

An additional limitation is the use of all self-report measures in the study. Correlations between study variables may have been inflated due to common source bias. Future studies may use different types of sources to measure study variables (e.g., objective measures in addition to self-report).

A benefit of the current research is that actual Fortune 500 company websites were used which increases the realism of the study. However, the tradeoff for this increased realism is a lack of experimental control. Thus, no solid cause-and-effect conclusions can be drawn from the study. Likewise, the fact that only Fortune 500 company websites were used may have limited the generalizability to larger organizations. However, use of actual Fortune 500 company websites allowed for more fidelity to the study and allowed for meaningful control variables, such as organizational familiarity and organizational image, to be

measured. Results of this study increase the external validity of past studies that have examined Internet recruitment website characteristics via random assignment to fictional websites and have found similar results (e.g., Braddy et al., 2009). Correspondingly, the internal validity of this study is bolstered by the similarity in findings of this research and these past randomized trial studies.

In future research, additional attention should be paid to the relative importance of recruitment website content variables. That is, future research could examine whether organizational information is more important than job information, or what *types* of organization versus job information are important. Additionally, future research can also examine interactions of personal variables that might influence this relationship, such as sense of job security.

To solidify cause-and-effect relationships, manipulations should be made in future studies to determine if website content and website design causally affect organizational attitudes, website attitudes, and attraction. Results from these types of studies will allow organizations to more fully understand what types of content and design should be included on their Internet recruitment websites to attract job seekers to the organization. In addition, other outcome variables than organizational attraction may be studied in future research. Stopping research at the measure of organizational attraction does not allow examinations of how early recruitment practices impact post-hire outcomes (e.g., performance, turnover). Lastly, follow-up studies should use actual job seekers to increase participant motivation and should be conducted when economic conditions improve to see if similar results are found in a healthy economy.

Conclusions

The use of technology in the workplace has impacted all areas of work. Moreover, technical innovations have provided advantageous avenues for enhancing organizational recruitment practices. With this technological growth, however, comes the need to understand how technology can best enhance traditional organizational practices such as recruitment. Enhancing recruitment practices through the use of the Internet can provide beneficial outcomes for both the organization and job seeker. However, additional research is needed to fully understand how recruitment websites impact potential job applicants. This study has taken an initial step in that process by examining how recruitment website content and design influence website attitudes, organizational attitudes, and ultimately attraction to the organization. Additionally, moderating and mediating effects of variables were examined to try to understand the complex decision-making processes of job seekers. Continuing research of this kind can help organizations understand how to technologically enhance their current practices in the most effective and efficient way possible.

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Table 1.

Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations Among Study 1 Variables

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1. Familiarity	3.75	1.99	-													
2. Benefits	4.64	1.33	.13*	-												
3. Industry	4.32	1.50	.12*	.58*	-											
4. Prior Attitudes	4.23	1.18	.29*	.34*	.39*	-										
5. Organization Image	4.74	.99	.11*	.46*	.46*	.37*	-									
6. Job Info	4.48	1.27	.12*	.50*	.34*	.19*	.41*	-								
7. Org. Info	4.69	1.09	.15*	.46*	.35*	.18*	.52*	.64*	-							
8. Usability	5.39	1.27	.15*	.36*	.28*	.15*	.40*	.44*	.52*	-						
9. Aesthetics	5.22	1.04	.16*	.36*	.32*	.17*	.45*	.37*	.47*	.61*	-					
10. Web Attitudes	5.38	1.33	.17*	.44*	.42*	.22*	.48*	.56*	.59*	.62*	.58*	-				
11. Organization Attitudes	5.19	1.18	.23*	.54*	.56*	.47*	.66*	.49*	.53*	.51*	.51*	.69*	-			
12. P-O Fit	4.53	.94	.09*	.41*	.42*	.30*	.51*	.32*	.37*	.34*	.33*	.43*	.53*	-		
13. P-J Fit	4.13	1.39	.22*	.36*	.43*	.29*	.37*	.28*	.28*	.27*	.28*	.39*	.45*	.39*	-	
14. Attraction	3.79	1.48	.12*	.50*	.61*	.30*	.40*	.31*	.32*	.23*	.23*	.41*	.51*	.46*	.59*	-

* $p < .01$

Table 2.

Study 1 Regression Analyses Predicting Attitudes Toward the Website in H1

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β
Control variables			
Familiarity	.08	.02	.11
Benefits	.20	.03	.20**
Industry	.15	.03	.17**
Prior Attitudes	-.07	.03	-.06*
Organization Image	.44	.04	.32**
$R^2 = .32$			
Control + Predictor			
Familiarity	.05	.02	.07**
Benefits	.13	.03	.13**
Industry	.13	.03	.15**
Prior Attitudes	-.03	.03	-.03
Organization Image	.23	.04	.17**
Aesthetics	.52	.03	.41**
$R^2 = .44$			
$\Delta R^2 = .12^{**}$			

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Table 3.

Study 1 Regression Analyses Predicting Attitudes Toward the Website in H2

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β
Control variables			
Familiarity	.08	.02	.11
Benefits	.20	.03	.20**
Industry	.15	.03	.17**
Prior Attitudes	-.07	.03	-.06*
Organization Image	.44	.04	.32**
$R^2 = .32$			
Control + Predictor			
Familiarity	.04	.02	.06**
Benefits	.10	.03	.10**
Industry	.13	.02	.15**
Prior Attitudes	-.03	.03	-.03
Organization Image	.26	.04	.19**
Usability	.49	.03	.46**
$R^2 = .49$			
$\Delta R^2 = .17^{**}$			
* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$			

Table 4.

Study 1 Regression Analyses Predicting Attitudes Toward the Website in H3

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β
Control variables			
Familiarity	.08	.02	.11
Benefits	.20	.03	.20**
Industry	.15	.03	.17**
Prior Attitudes	-.07	.03	-.06*
Organization Image	.44	.04	.32**
$R^2 = .32$			
Control + Predictor			
Familiarity	.06	.02	.09**
Benefits	.05	.03	.05
Industry	.15	.03	.16**
Prior Attitudes	-.05	.03	-.05
Organization Image	.33	.04	.24**
Job Info	.39	.03	.37**
$R^2 = .42$			
$\Delta R^2 = .10^{**}$			

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Table 5.

Study 1 Regression Analyses Predicting Attitudes Toward the Website in H4

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β
Control variables			
Familiarity	.08	.02	.11
Benefits	.20	.03	.20**
Industry	.15	.03	.17**
Prior Attitudes	-.07	.03	-.06*
Organization Image	.44	.04	.32**
$R^2 = .32$			
Control + Predictor			
Familiarity	.04	.02	.06**
Benefits	.08	.03	.08*
Industry	.14	.03	.15**
Prior Attitudes	-.02	.03	-.01
Organization Image	.23	.04	.17**
Organization Info	.50	.03	.41**
$R^2 = .43$			
$\Delta R^2 = .11^{**}$			

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Table 6.

Study 1 Regression Analyses Predicting Attitudes Toward the Organization in H5

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β
Control variables			
Familiarity	.05	.01	.09**
Benefits	.15	.02	.17**
Industry	.15	.02	.19**
Prior Attitudes	.16	.02	.16**
Organization Image	.51	.03	.43**
$R^2 = .57$			
Control + Predictors			
Familiarity	.03	.01	.06**
Benefits	.07	.02	.08**
Industry	.15	.02	.18**
Prior Attitudes	.18	.02	.18**
Organization Image	.37	.03	.31**
Job Info	.39	.08	.42**
Aesthetics	.29	.09	.26**
Usability	.21	.07	.23**
JI x Usability	.04	.02	.30
JI x Aesthetics	.02	.02	.15
$R^2 = .64$			
$\Delta R^2 = .07^{**}$			

Note. JI = Job Information; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Table 7.

Study 1 Regression Analyses Predicting Attitudes Toward the Organization in H6

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β
Control variables			
Familiarity	.05	.01	.09**
Benefits	.15	.02	.17**
Industry	.15	.02	.19**
Prior Attitudes	.16	.02	.16**
Organization Image	.51	.03	.43**
$R^2 = .57$			
Control + Predictors			
Familiarity	.03	.01	.05*
Benefits	.07	.02	.08**
Industry	.14	.02	.18**
Prior Attitudes	.19	.02	.19**
Organization Image	.37	.03	.30**
Organization Info	.34	.09	.32**
Usability	.35	.10	.31**
Aesthetics	.12	.08	.13
OI x Usability	.05	.02	.40*
OI x Aesthetics	.01	.02	.06
$R^2 = .64$			
$\Delta R^2 = .07^{**}$			

Note. OI = Organization Information; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Table 8.

Mediated Regression Analyses for Study 1 Variables

Variables	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β
JI-Attract	.45	.02	.46**
JI-OrgAtt	.52	.03	.55**
JI-Attract ^a	.05	.05	.05
OI-Attract	.38	.05	.32**
OI-OrgAtt	.66	.03	.63**
OI-Attract ^a	.02	.06	.01
Use-Attract	.27	.03	.23**
Use-OrgAtt	.48	.02	.51**
Use-Attract ^a	.04	.04	.04
Aes-Attract	.33	.04	.23**
Aes-OrgAtt	.58	.03	.51**
Aes-Attract ^a	.05	.04	.03

Note. JI = Job Information; OI = Organization Information; Use = Website Usability; Aes = Website Aesthetics; Attract = Organization Attraction; OrgAtt = Organizational Attitudes.

^a = Controlling for Organizational Attitudes; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Table 9.

Descriptive Statistics for Study 1 Websites

Variables	Job Info		Org. Info		Website Aesthetics		Website Usability	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Website 1	4.66	1.16	4.70	.87	5.31	.81	5.80	.95
Website 2	4.41	.86	4.42	.90	5.40	.86	5.66	1.06
Website 3	4.70	.96	4.74	.94	5.45	.77	5.81	1.10
Website 4	4.35	1.06	4.85	.84	5.60	.72	5.80	1.11
Website 5	4.63	1.17	4.78	.97	5.93	1.04	5.34	.96
Website 6*	3.84	.98	3.86	1.00	4.77	.91	4.11	.98
Website 7	4.22	1.33	4.57	1.03	5.24	.93	5.41	1.05
Website 8	4.42	1.07	5.00	.73	5.25	.94	5.68	.92
Website 9*	5.06	.98	5.10	.98	5.94	.84	5.83	1.00
Website 10	4.02	1.03	4.68	.96	5.18	.99	5.50	1.16
Website 11	4.45	1.16	4.77	1.06	5.45	.98	5.49	1.23
Website 12	4.53	1.33	4.49	1.06	5.18	1.02	5.52	1.08
Website 13	5.05	1.19	4.81	1.17	5.06	1.04	5.19	1.38
Website 14*	5.15	1.03	5.04	1.10	5.90	.99	5.83	1.01
Website 15*	5.07	1.00	5.03	.97	5.63	.98	5.81	.97
Website 16	4.54	1.49	4.85	1.19	5.08	1.36	5.08	1.36
Website 17	4.63	1.41	4.58	1.19	5.30	1.08	5.15	1.38
Website 18*	3.91	.98	3.89	.99	4.86	1.01	4.41	.96
Website 19*	4.02	1.20	3.98	1.19	4.94	1.04	4.90	1.10
Website 20	4.48	1.39	4.52	1.54	5.35	1.17	5.39	1.39
Website 21*	4.01	1.18	4.00	1.04	4.53	.93	4.52	.96
Website 22*	4.18	1.00	4.03	1.01	4.88	.96	5.01	.99
Website 23*	5.15	.94	5.12	.98	5.67	1.02	5.77	1.01
Website 24*	5.01	.85	5.05	1.00	5.85	1.01	5.61	.96

* indicates websites retained for Study 2

Table 10.

Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations Among Study 2 Variables

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1. Familiarity	3.16	1.76	-													
2. Benefits	4.39	1.33	.12*	-												
3. Industry	4.12	1.54	.20*	.54*	-											
4. Prior Attitudes	3.99	1.11	.31*	.29*	.41*	-										
5. Organization Image	4.55	1.09	.18*	.42*	.47*	.39*	-									
6. Job Info	4.32	1.34	.20*	.51*	.27*	.23*	.45*	-								
7. Organization Info	4.58	1.21	.23*	.49*	.36*	.29*	.57*	.68*	-							
8. Usability	5.15	1.44	.15*	.48*	.33*	.22*	.49*	.52*	.59*	-						
9. Aesthetics	5.10	1.13	.19*	.47*	.33*	.20*	.48*	.42*	.59*	.69*	-					
10. Web Attitudes	5.18	1.46	.14*	.52*	.38*	.21*	.51*	.61*	.65*	.69*	.62*	-				
11. Organization Attitudes	4.92	1.26	.26*	.50*	.53*	.41*	.68*	.55*	.63*	.59*	.56*	.75*	-			
12. P-O Fit	4.41	.96	.15*	.38*	.43*	.28*	.56*	.32*	.45*	.40*	.40*	.45*	.57*	-		
13. P-J Fit	4.03	1.34	.18*	.38*	.51*	.32*	.34*	.26*	.31*	.30*	.27*	.33*	.44*	.38*	-	
14. Attraction	3.68	1.42	.22*	.46*	.62*	.35*	.41*	.32*	.32*	.29*	.24*	.37*	.51*	.43*	.68*	-

* $p < .01$

Table 11.

Study 2 Regression Analyses Predicting Attitudes Toward the Website in H1

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β
Control variables			
Familiarity	.04	.03	.05
Benefits	.40	.05	.36**
Industry	.03	.04	.03
Prior Attitudes	-.07	.05	-.05
Organization Image	.47	.05	.35**
$R^2 = .37$			
Control + Predictor			
Familiarity	.01	.03	.01
Benefits	.26	.04	.23**
Industry	.02	.04	.02
Prior Attitudes	-.04	.05	-.03
Organization Image	.29	.05	.22**
Aesthetics	.53	.05	.41**
$R^2 = .49$			
$\Delta R^2 = .12^{**}$			

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Table 12.

Study 2 Regression Analyses Predicting Attitudes Toward the Website in H2

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β
Control variables			
Familiarity	.04	.03	.05
Benefits	.40	.05	.36**
Industry	.03	.04	.03
Prior Attitudes	-.07	.05	-.05
Organization Image	.47	.05	.35**
$R^2 = .37$			
Control + Predictor			
Familiarity	.01	.03	.02
Benefits	.20	.04	.18**
Industry	.03	.04	.03
Prior Attitudes	-.05	.04	-.04
Organization Image	.24	.05	.18**
Usability	.51	.04	.51**
$R^2 = .54$			
$\Delta R^2 = .17^{**}$			
* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$			

Table 13.

Study 2 Regression Analyses Predicting Attitudes Toward the Website in H3

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β
Control variables			
Familiarity	.04	.03	.05
Benefits	.40	.05	.36**
Industry	.03	.04	.03
Prior Attitudes	-.07	.05	-.05
Organization Image	.47	.05	.35**
$R^2 = .37$			
Control + Predictor			
Familiarity	.00	.03	.00
Benefits	.19	.05	.17**
Industry	.08	.04	.09*
Prior Attitudes	-.07	.05	-.06
Organization Image	.32	.05	.24**
Job Info	.44	.04	.41**
$R^2 = .48$			
$\Delta R^2 = .11^{**}$			

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Table 14.

Study 2 Regression Analyses Predicting Attitudes Toward the Website in H4

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β
Control variables			
Familiarity	.04	.03	.05
Benefits	.40	.05	.36**
Industry	.03	.04	.03
Prior Attitudes	-.07	.05	-.05
Organization Image	.47	.05	.35**
$R^2 = .37$			
Control + Predictor			
Familiarity	.00	.023	.00
Benefits	.24	.04	.21**
Industry	.04	.04	.04
Prior Attitudes	-.04	.05	-.03
Organization Image	.21	.05	.15**
Organization Info	.55	.05	.46**
$R^2 = .49$			
$\Delta R^2 = .12^{**}$			
* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$			

Table 15.

Study 2 Regression Analyses Predicting Attitudes Toward the Organization in H5

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β
Control variables			
Familiarity	.08	.02	.11**
Benefits	.17	.03	.18**
Industry	.13	.03	.16**
Prior Attitudes	.07	.04	.07*
Organization Image	.58	.04	.50**
$R^2 = .56$			
Control + Predictors			
Familiarity	.05	.02	.07*
Benefits	.01	.03	.01
Industry	.14	.03	.18**
Prior Attitudes	.09	.04	.08**
Organization Image	.41	.04	.35**
Job Info	.44	.11	.48**
Aesthetics	.19	.12	.17
Usability	.29	.09	.33**
JI x Aesthetics	.01	.03	.09
JI x Usability	.04	.02	.38*
$R^2 = .65$			
$\Delta R^2 = .09^{**}$			

Note. JI = Job Information; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Table 16.

Study 2 Regression Analyses Predicting Attitudes Toward the Organization in H6

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β
Control variables			
Familiarity	.08	.02	.11**
Benefits	.17	.03	.18**
Industry	.13	.03	.16**
Prior Attitudes	.07	.04	.07*
Organization Image	.58	.04	.50**
$R^2 = .56$			
Control + Predictors			
Familiarity	.05	.02	.07*
Benefits	.01	.03	.02
Industry	.13	.03	.16**
Prior Attitudes	.11	.04	.10**
Organization Image	.37	.04	.32**
Organization Info	.22	.12	.21
Aesthetics	.17	.14	.15
Usability	.44	.11	.51**
OI x Aesthetics	.06	.03	.48
OI x Usability	.07	.02	.58**
$R^2 = .65$			
$\Delta R^2 = .09**$			

Note. OI = Organization Information; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; $R^2 = .74$

Table 17.

Mediated Regression Analyses for Study 2 Variables

Variables	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β
JI-Attract	.44	.02	.46**
JI-OrgAtt	.46	.02	.49**
JI-Attract ^a	.09	.03	.08*
OI-Attract	.44	.04	.32**
OI-OrgAtt	.58	.03	.53**
OI-Attract ^a	.09	.04	.07*
Use-Attract	.39	.02	.40**
Use-OrgAtt	.52	.03	.59**
Use-Attract ^a	.04	.05	.04
Aes-Attract	.30	.05	.24**
Aes-OrgAtt	.63	.04	.56**
Aes-Attract ^a	.09	.06	.07

Note. JI = Job Information; OI = Organization Information; Use = Website Usability; Aes = Website Aesthetics; Attract = Organization Attraction; OrgAtt = Organizational Attitudes.

^a = Controlling for Organizational Attitudes; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

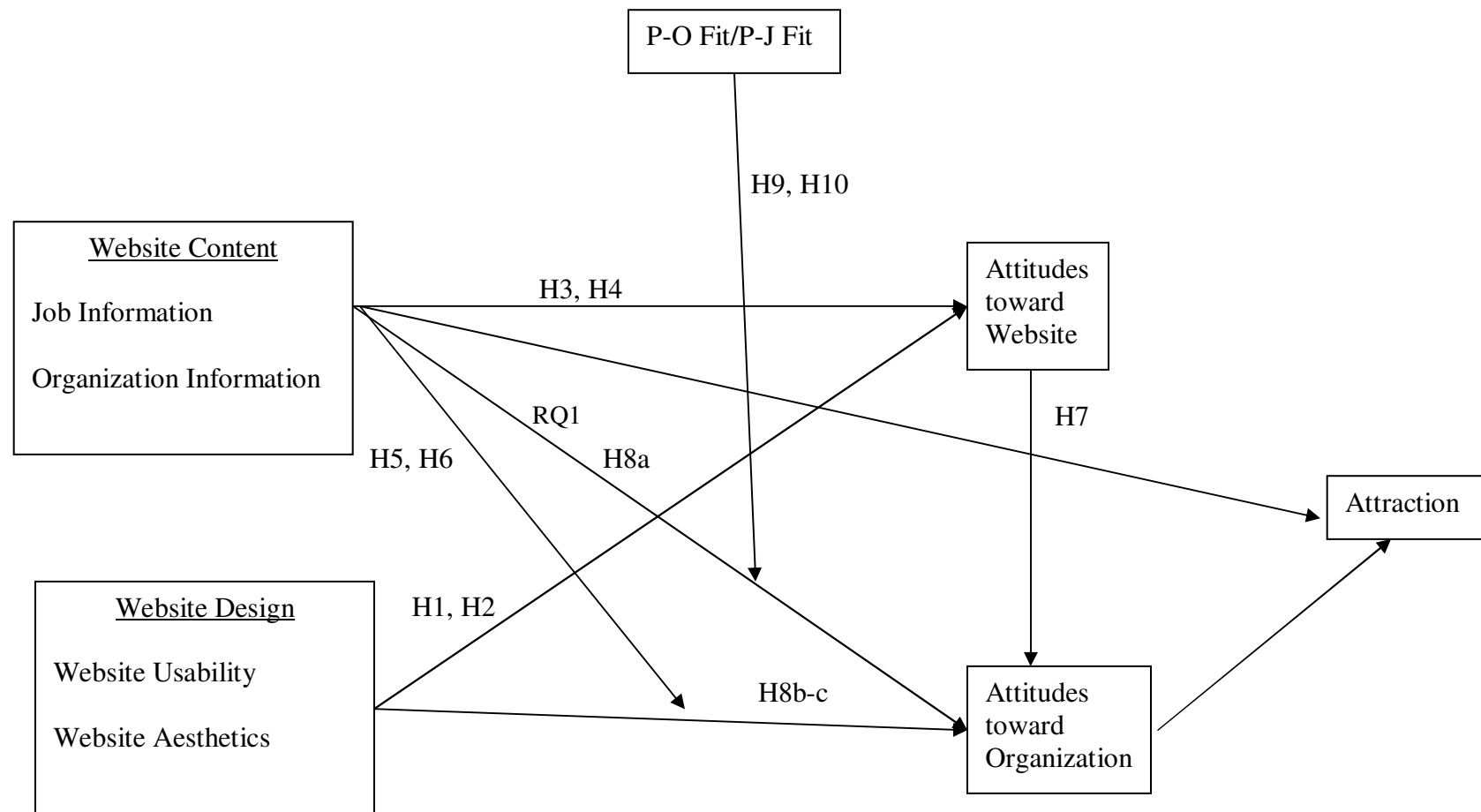


Figure 1. *Proposed Effects of Internet Recruitment Website Antecedents on Attraction*

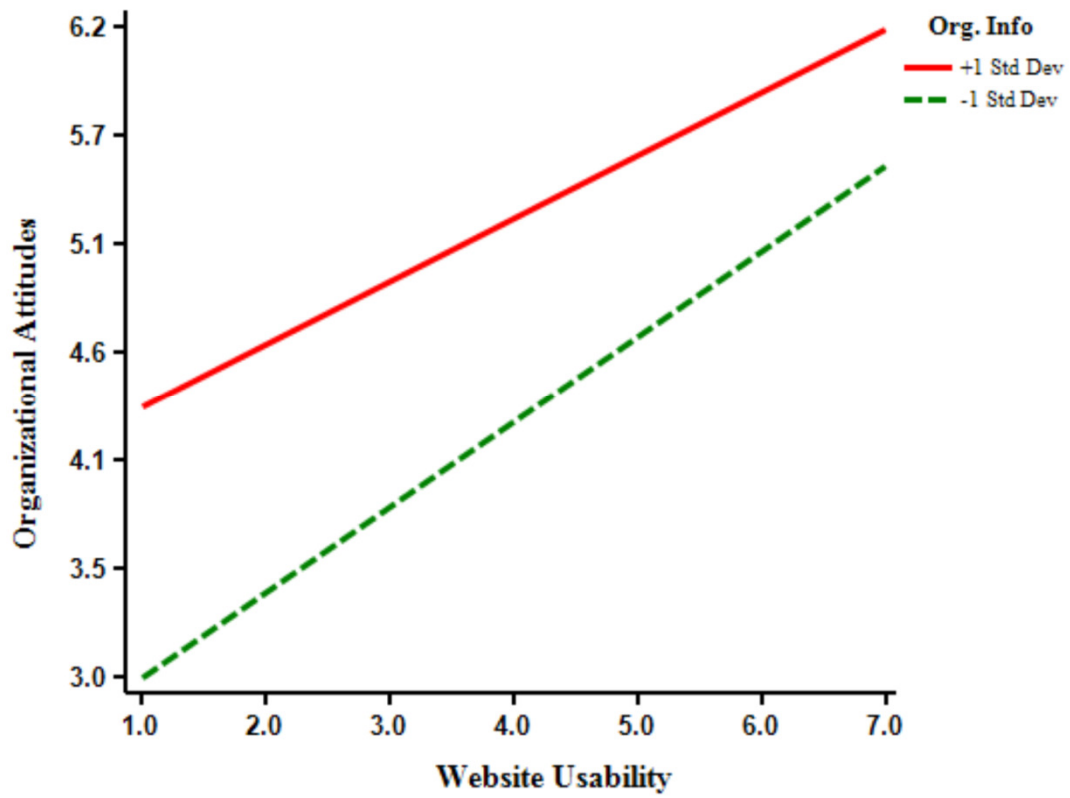


Figure 2. Interaction between amount of organization information and website usability on organizational attitudes in Study 1

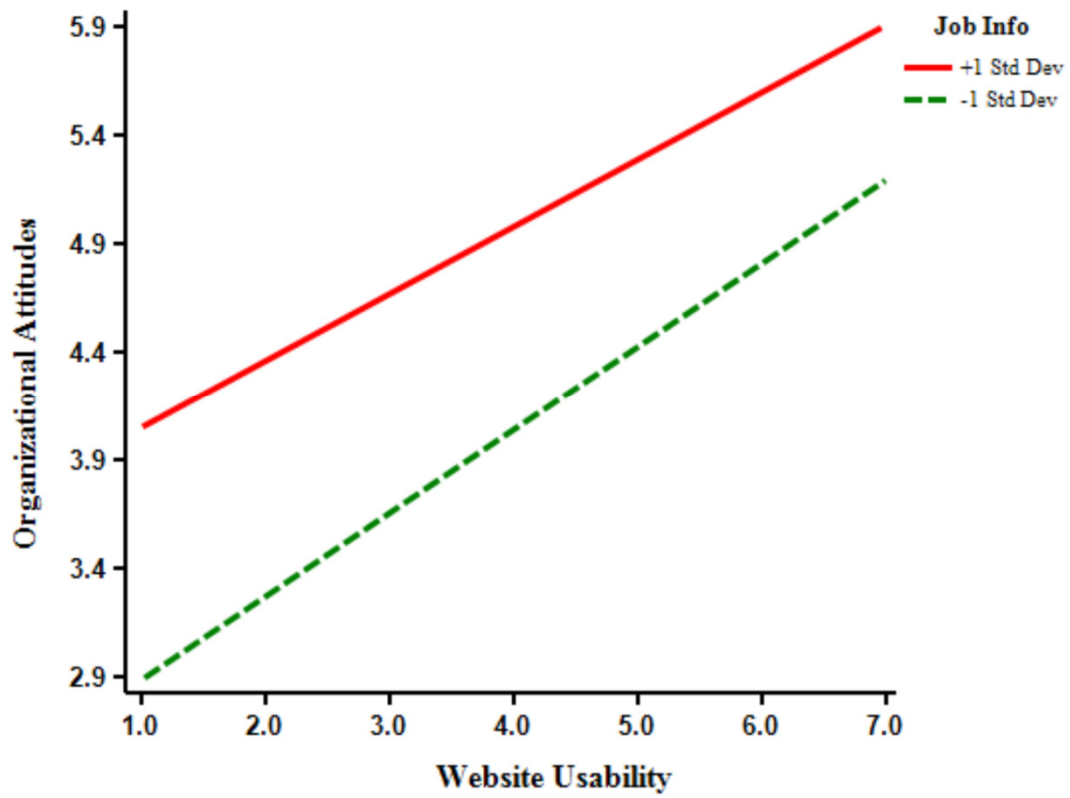


Figure 3. *Interaction between amount of job information and website usability on organizational attitudes in Study 2*

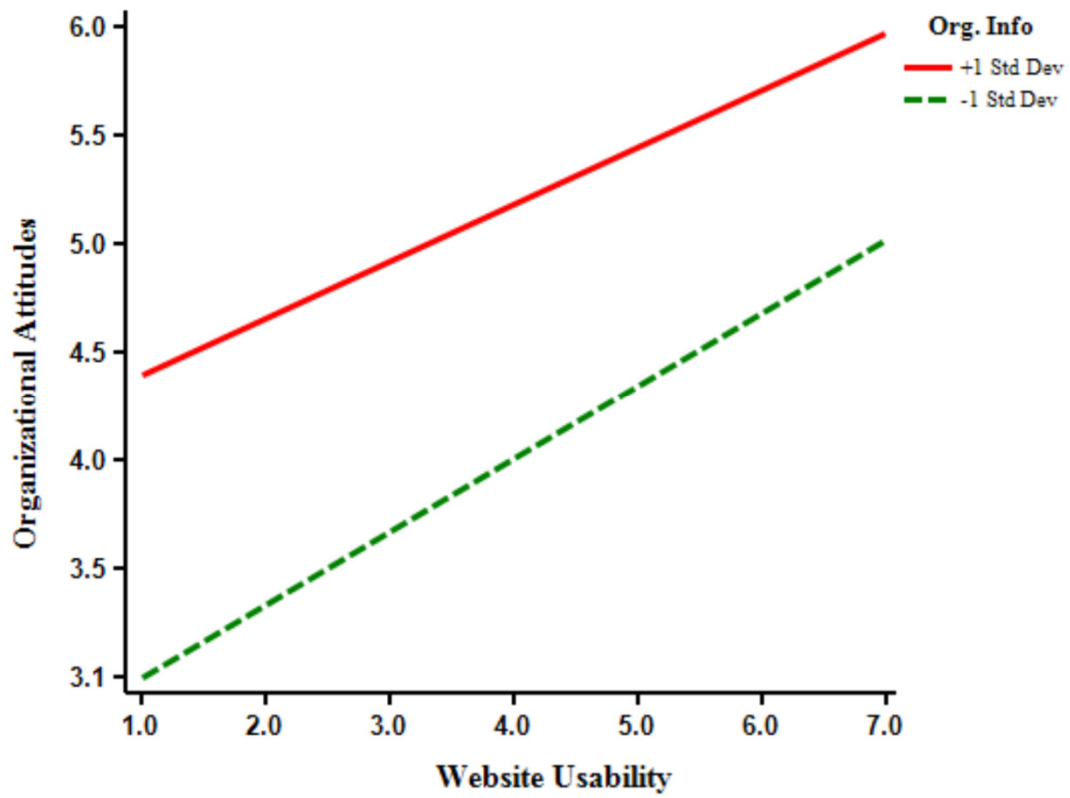


Figure 4. *Interaction between amount of organization information and website usability on organizational attitudes in Study 2*

Appendices

Appendix A

Items Assessing Amount of Job Information

Instruction: Please rate the following items assessing the amount of job information found on the Internet recruitment website you just viewed.

Please respond on a 1-7 scale, with 1 = *not much at all* to 7 = *a very great amount*

1. Overall, how much employment or job opportunity related information did the website provide compared with what you expected to find?
2. How much employment or job opportunity related information about compensation and benefits did the website provide?
3. How much employment or job opportunity related information about the knowledge and skills required for a job did the website provide?

Appendix B

Items Assessing Amount of Organization Information

Instructions: Please rate the following items assessing the amount of organization information found on the Internet recruitment website you just viewed.

Please respond on a 1-7 scale, with 1 = *not much at all* to 7 = *a very great amount*

1. Overall, how much information about the organization did the website provide compared with what you expected to find?
2. How much information about the culture of the organization did the website provide?
3. How much information about organizational career development did the website provide?
4. How much information about the organization's mission/values did the website provide?

Appendix C

Items Assessing Attitudes toward the Website

Instructions: Please rate the following items assessing your attitudes toward the Internet recruitment website you just viewed.

Overall, my attitude toward the Internet recruitment website I just viewed is. . .

1. -3 = *Bad* to 3 = *Good*
2. -3 = *Unfavorable* to 3 = *Favorable*
3. -3 = *Negative* to 3 = *Positive*

Appendix D

Items Assessing Attitude toward the Organization

Instructions: Please rate the following items assessing your attitude toward the organization whose Internet recruitment website you just viewed.

Please respond on a 1-7 scale with 1 = *not at all favorable* to 7 = *extremely favorable*

1. How favorable is your impression of this company, in general?
2. Overall, how would you evaluate this company's image as an employer?

Overall, my attitude toward the organization whose website I just viewed is. . .

3. -3 = *Bad* to 3 = *Good*
4. -3 = *Unfavorable* to 3 = *Favorable*
5. -3 = *Negative* to 3 = *Positive*

Appendix E

Items Assessing P-O Fit

Instructions: Please rate the following items based on how much your own values match with the organization's values of the website you just viewed.

Please respond on a 1-7 scale, with 1 = *not at all* to 7 = *completely*

1. To what degree do your values “match” or fit this organization and the current employees in this organization?
2. To what degree to your values prevent you from ‘fitting in’ this organization because they are different from most of the other employees’ values in this organization?
3. To what degree do you think the values of this organization reflect your own values?

Appendix F

Items Assessing P-J Fit

Instructions: Please rate the following items based on how much your personal characteristics match with the characteristics of the jobs being offered by the organization whose website you just viewed.

Please respond on a 1-7 scale, with 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*

1. My abilities fit the demands of this job.
2. I have the right skills and abilities for doing this job.
3. There is a good match between the requirements of this job and my skills.
4. My personality is a good match for this job.
5. I am the right person for this type of work.

Appendix G

Items Assessing Website Usability

Instructions: Please respond to the following questions assessing the ease of use of the website you just viewed.

Please respond on a 1-7 scale, with 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*

1. This website was clear and understandable.
2. This website did not require a lot of mental effort to navigate.
3. This website was easy to use.
4. This website was well-organized.

Appendix H

Items Assessing Website Aesthetics

Instructions: Please respond to the following questions assessing the aesthetic qualities of the website you just viewed.

Please respond on a 1-7 scale, with 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*

1. This website used aesthetically-pleasing colors.
2. This website contained aesthetically-pleasing pictures.
3. This website is visually pleasing.
4. This website consistently spaced out information included on a page (e.g., there was an equal amount of white space between headers and subtext).
5. The items on this website were proportionally aligned (e.g., centered).
6. Items that were related to each other were grouped near each other on the website.
7. There was a strong contrast between colors on this website (e.g., light versus dark colors).
8. This website displayed different font sizes to distinguish headers from subtext.

Appendix I

Items Assessing Organization Attraction

Instructions: Please rate the following items based on how attracted you are to the organization whose website you just viewed.

Please respond on a 1-7 scale, with 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*

1. For me, this company would be a good place to work.
2. I would not be interested in this company except as a last resort.
3. This company is attractive to me as a place for employment.
4. I am interested in learning more about this company.
5. A job at this company is very appealing to me.

Appendix J

Control Variables

1. **(Organizational Familiarity)** In general, how familiar are you with this organization?
 - a. Scale: 1 = *not at all familiar* to 7 = *very familiar*
2. **(Attractiveness of Industry)** In general, how would you rate the attractiveness of the industry of this organization?
 - a. Scale: 1 = *very unattractive*, 3 = *neutral*, 7 = *very attractive*
3. **(Attractiveness of Benefits)** In general, how would you rate the attractiveness of the benefits offered by this organization?
 - a. Scale: 1 = *very unattractive* to 7 = *very attractive*
4. **(Prior Organizational Attitudes)** Before participating in this study, what were your prior attitudes toward this organization?
 - a. Scale: 1 = *very unfavorable*, 3 = *neutral*, 7 = *very favorable*
5. **(Organizational Image)** How does this organization compare to other organizations you know on the following:
 - a. Concern for the environment
 - b. High ethical standards
 - c. Overall public image
 - d. Community involvement
 - e. Product quality

Scale: 1 = *much poorer* to 7 = *much better*

Appendix K

Proposal Document

Internet Recruitment: Examining the Roles of Information, Attitudes, and Perceived Fit on Applicant Attraction

Traditionally, recruitment media has consisted of such things as organizational brochures, newspaper and magazine advertisements, word-of-mouth accounts of job openings, and career fairs (Cober, Brown, Blumental, Doverspike, & Levy, 2000; Herriot & Rothwell, 1981). However, with the exponential growth in technology in recent years, the Internet has been used as a beneficial tool to convey information regarding organizational recruitment initiatives in a new light. A recent survey found that Internet recruitment is being used by over 90% of large U.S. companies (Cober et al., 2000); and the use of the Internet is one of the most cost and time efficient ways of attracting and hiring employees (Cappelli, 2001; Cober et al., 2000; Kay, 2000, Marcus, 2001; Millman, 1998). In fact, recent statistics indicate that U.S. companies average \$1,000 to \$8,000 per applicant in recruiting costs; however, the average cost of attracting applicants with Internet recruiting has been shown to be as low as \$900 per applicant (Greenburg, 1998).

According to signaling theory (Spence, 1973; 1974), potential applicants may view the design and content of recruitment websites as signals for what it would be like to work for a particular organization. Design features, such as website aesthetics and website usability, provide indirect cues about an organization that can impact job seekers' perceptions regarding the attractiveness of an organization (Williamson, Lepak, & King, 2003; Zusman & Landis, 2002). Allen, Mahto, and Otondo (2007) found job seekers were

more attracted to organizations that provided adequate amounts of job information and organization information on their recruitment websites. Just as website aesthetics and usability may function as signals, the amount of job and organization information on a recruitment website can also provide signals to job seekers in the early phases of job search.

Allen et al.'s (2007) study was the first study to empirically test the effect of the amount of job and organization information on a recruitment website on attraction to the hiring organization; however, their study was conducted linearly. That is, the authors only examined the amount of information on a website and its effects on attraction, without examining the dynamics personal attributes might add. Therefore, one of the main purposes of this study is the inclusion of interactions to the model by examining the effects of subjective perceptions of person-organization (P-O) and person-job (P-J) fit on the information-attraction link. Additionally, this study will be the first to examine the interaction between the amount of information on a recruitment website and website usability and aesthetics. As Figure 1 illustrates, I will examine whether attitudes toward the organization, which are influenced by attitudes toward the recruitment website, mediate the relationship between attraction and recruitment website content and design characteristics (i.e., amount of job and organization information, usability, and aesthetics). As previously mentioned, the moderating effects of P-O and P-J fit will also be empirically examined.

Different Types of Internet Recruitment

Two methods of portraying recruitment media on the Internet have emerged. One method is the use of job boards (e.g., Monster.com), which essentially function like newspaper advertisements on the web. That is, general information about job openings at

various organizations are posted in much the same way that organizations post job advertisements in the employment sections of newspapers. However, the use of job boards provides an interactive element that traditional newspaper advertisements cannot provide. Job seekers can virtually search for open positions in hiring organizations throughout the country, and even throughout the world. These job seekers can also type in search cues, such as specific industries, part-time/full-time positions, and job titles to customize their search for new jobs. While the abovementioned benefits result from the use of job boards over more traditional recruitment media, the job boards typically do not provide much additional information over and above what is found in traditional recruitment media. Therefore, many organizations also utilize specific portions of their own organizational websites dedicated solely to recruiting to provide job seekers with information about both open positions and the organization.

These 'careers' sections embedded within organizations' main websites provide much additional information compared to traditional recruitment media, as well as Internet job boards. That is, the 'careers' sections of organizations' official websites typically not only provide information about current open job positions within the organization, but also information regarding the culture of the organization, organizational policies, mission and value statements, employee testimonials, and information regarding benefits, rewards, and organizational programs and initiatives (Cober et al., 2000). This additional detailed information about the organization may provide beneficial outcomes for both the organization and job seekers. Job seekers gain information over that provided by traditional recruitment media and job boards, which may increase their ability to identify the culture of

the organization. If job seekers can gather this type of information from the recruitment website, they can perceive whether they fit well with the organization's culture and how attracted they are to the organization, allowing for more informed decisions about applying. If job seekers do not perceive a good fit with the organization or they are not attracted to the organization, they will likely not apply for a job with the organization, resulting in beneficial outcomes for the organization in the long-run.

Recruitment Websites and Website Attitudes

Past research in the marketing and consumer psychology literature has shown that individuals' attitudes toward advertisements are one of the best predictors of their effectiveness (e.g., Brown & Stayman, 1992). Within the recruitment realm, Ashforth and Saks (2002) found that job advertisements affectively influence viewers. Thus, it seems plausible to suggest that recruitment websites can influence job seekers' attitudes toward the website itself and toward the organization; however, very little empirical research on this topic exists.

Following Brief's (1998) two-component model of attitudes, I define website attitudes to encompass both the emotional affective component elicited through viewing recruitment websites, as well as the more traditional cognitive evaluative component. Cober, Brown, Keeping, and Levy (2004) justify the inclusion of only positive affective website attitudes in their proposed model of recruitment website predictors and outcomes because negative affective reactions (e.g., fear, guilt) are not likely to result from viewing a recruitment website. In contrast, it is likely that job seekers will vary on the degree of

excitement/pleasure versus boredom/indifference they will experience from viewing recruitment websites.

Upon viewing a website, individuals form attitudes about the website they are searching, which provides viewers with an overall evaluation of their website search experience (Coulter & Punj, 1999; Coyle & Thorson, 2001). Drawing from marketing research, Olney, Holbrook, and Batra (1991) found that the attitudes individuals form toward advertisements are positively associated with viewing time of the advertisement. Likewise, Peters (2001) found that the more favorable perceptions individuals had of a website, the more likely they were to engage in further exploration of that website. Because the information that is available to viewers on a website can influence their attitudes toward the website they are viewing (e.g., Allen et al., 2007; Allen, Van Scotter, & Otondo, 2004), this study will examine how the content and design of recruitment websites influences potential applicants' attitudes toward recruitment websites.

Website Design and Website Attitudes

Internet recruitment websites may help determine the first impressions of job seekers during the early stages of recruitment; therefore, it is important for these websites to be well-designed to their fullest extent. Signaling theory (Spence, 1973; 1974) provides a possible explanation for how applicants decide to apply for a job with an organization after viewing recruitment materials. According to signaling theory, when individuals do not have complete data, or are uncertain of the position they should take on a matter, they will typically draw inferences based on cues from available information. Rynes and Miller (1983) noted that job seekers are often limited in their knowledge of organizations such that the perceived

characteristics of the recruitment material may be their primary source of information about the hiring company. In accordance with signaling theory, which suggests that any information that a job seeker views will guide his or her impressions of the hiring company, variables that do not seem to have a direct connection to a job or organization can become cues for what it would be like to work for that organization and affect the viewer's attraction to the organization (Rynes, Bretz, & Gerhart, 1991; Turban, 2001; Turban, Forret, & Hendrickson, 1998).

The majority of preliminary research on Internet recruitment has focused on the functionality (usability) and aesthetic aspects of recruitment websites related to organizational attraction (e.g., Braddy, Thompson, Wuensch, & Grossnickle, 2003; Cober et al., 2000; Cober, Brown, Levy, Cober, & Keeping, 2003; Coyle & Thorson, 2001; Scheu, Ryan, & Nona, 1999; Williamson et al., 2003; Zusman & Landis, 2002). Website usability can be defined as individuals' subjective perceptions of how effective and efficient a computer-based tool is in helping them reach their goals (Karat, 1997). Aspects of usability, such as the orientation of the website and the ease of use of navigating the website through various hyperlinks, toolbars, and menus also relate to organizational attractiveness (Cober et al., 2003; Davis, Bagozzi, & Warshaw, 1989; Venkatesh & Davis, 1996; Williamson et al., 2003; Zusman & Landis, 2002). To illustrate the importance of a highly usable website, Karr (2000) found that 26% of participants chose not to apply for positions in organizations due to the ineffective design of their recruitment websites alone.

In order to capture the attention of the job seeker, recruitment websites also need to have appealing aesthetic features to engage the individual's interest in further exploration

(Coyle & Thorson, 2001). Grabbing the attention of the job seeker enhances the likelihood of attraction and interest in the organization. Aesthetic characteristics generally include visual elements such as attractive colors, pleasing text images and fonts, and multimedia presentations (e.g., Braddy et al., 2003; Cober et al., 2000; Williamson et al., 2003).

Cober et al. (2004) posit that job seekers' affective reactions upon exposure to a recruitment website are important in determining the website's general effectiveness in forming positive attitudes toward the organization and attracting individuals to the organization. Because job seekers typically do not have much information about an organization before viewing recruitment media (Gatewood, Gowan, & Lautenschlager, 1993), it is imperative that an organization's recruitment website be designed in such a way that elicits positive attitudes upon initial exposure to the website. Evoking positive reactions to a recruitment website can prompt a job seeker to further explore the website to gather much additional information about the focal organization (e.g., the culture of the organization).

Websites that are easily navigable and aesthetically pleasing are more likely to capture the attention of the viewer, engage the viewer in further exploration, and provide signals that the organization is also well-organized and a pleasurable place to work. Cober et al. (2004) proposed recruitment website usability and façade (i.e., aesthetic qualities) will positively influence job seekers' attitudes toward the website. To provide additional empirical evidence of the relationship between website design and website attitudes, it is proposed:

Hypothesis 1: Website aesthetics will be positively correlated with favorable job seeker attitudes toward the website.

Hypothesis 2: Website usability will be positively correlated with favorable job seeker attitudes toward the website.

The Effect of Information on Attitudes

Previous research has shown the more organizational and job information job seekers are given during recruitment, the more attracted they are to the organization (Allen et al., 2004; Barber, 1998; Barber & Roehling, 1993; Cable & Judge, 1994; Cable, Aiman-Smith, Mulvey, & Edwards, 2000; Cober et al., 2003; Chapman, Uggerslev, Carroll, Piasentin, & Jones, 2005; Rynes et al., 1991). By providing job and organization information in recruitment materials, job seekers can determine if a good fit exists between the organization, job, and their personal characteristics. Realistic job previews (RJPs) and source of recruitment information (e.g., recruiters, brochures) are two areas within the recruitment realm that have received abundant attention over the years. Both of these topics deal with types of information available during the recruitment process. Zottoli and Wanous (2000) proposed the realistic information hypothesis which states that different *sources* of information provide different *types* of information to individuals. The effectiveness of these sources is determined, in part, by characteristics of the information they provide. For instance, past research has shown that different sources (e.g., informal vs. formal) of information can have differing effects on attraction to the organization (e.g., Rozelle & Landis, 2002). More informal sources of recruitment information, such as word-of-mouth referrals, may give more “realistic” accounts of attributes of the job or organization

compared to more formal sources of information. Rozelle and Landis (2002) suggest that Internet recruitment websites may be more “informal” as they provide abundant amounts of information that more traditional recruitment sources cannot provide (e.g., brochures, newspaper ads).

Williamson et al. (2003) found that when viewing Internet recruitment websites, job seekers were most concerned with gathering information about the organization and the job. In turn, job seekers used this information to determine if they would fit well within the organization. Similarly, previous research has found that job seekers use the information provided on organizational recruitment websites (e.g., pictures, employee testimonials) to determine their overall fit with the hiring organization (Braddy, Meade, Michael, & Fleenor, 2009; Dineen, Ash, & Noe, 2002; Kroustalis, 2006). Thus, the job and organization information provided on Internet recruitment websites may be used as signals by prospective applicants in determining their fit and attraction to the organization.

Job seekers work with limited amounts of information during the early recruitment phase (Schwab, Rynes, & Aldag, 1987); and the differences in the amount of information provided during this crucial phase of recruitment can influence the rest of the recruitment process. Herriot and Rothwell (1981) found that more information about a job increased job seekers’ willingness to apply for that job, while Feldman and Klaas (2002) found that business students who were surveyed about their job searches suggested the inclusion of more detailed information on recruitment media would have been more satisfying. Similarly, Mason and Belt (1986) concluded when more detailed information about job requirements was provided during the recruitment process, less qualified applicants were less likely to

apply (i.e., self-select out of the selection process). Allen et al. (2007) point out the lack of attention paid to amounts of job and organization information in the Internet recruitment context. This is interesting considering a large advantage of Internet recruitment 'careers' websites is the ability to provide much more information about organizational and job attributes compared with more traditional recruitment media.

As previously mentioned, in the early recruitment process, many job seekers have limited information about an organization other than the information provided to them through recruitment materials. Thus, these recruitment materials serve as signals for what the organization values and what the job will entail. Allen et al. (2007) found that the inclusion of more organizational and job information on a recruitment website makes this recruitment medium more useful to potential applicants. Specifically, the authors found that the inclusion of this type of information on Internet recruitment websites influences the attitudes individuals have toward the recruitment website and ultimately, their attraction to the hiring organization. Thus, it is proposed:

Hypothesis 3: The amount of job information on an organizational recruitment website will be positively correlated with favorable job seeker attitudes toward the website.

Hypothesis 4: The amount of organization information on an organizational recruitment website will be positively correlated with favorable job seeker attitudes toward the website.

Additionally, if signaling theory holds true, website usability and aesthetics should play a greater role when limited job and organization information are presented on the recruitment

website. Similarly, the greater presence of job and organization information on a recruitment website may compensate for a less navigable and aesthetically-pleasing website.

Hypothesis 5: The amount of job information presented on a recruitment website will moderate the effect of website usability and aesthetics on organizational attitudes, such that website usability and aesthetics will play a greater role in positively predicting organizational attitudes when less job information is presented.

Hypothesis 6: The amount of organization information presented on a recruitment website will moderate the effect of website usability and aesthetics on organizational attitudes, such that website usability and aesthetics will play a greater role in positively predicting organizational attitudes when less organization information is presented.

Organizational Attitudes and Attraction

Past research has shown individuals' feelings toward advertisements and recruitment material influences their attraction to advertised products and profiled organizations (e.g., Barber, 1998; Coulter & Punj, 1999; Muehling & McCann, 1993). As Allen et al. (2007) state, Internet recruitment websites are a form of advertising for jobs within an organization; thus the attitudes individuals form toward a recruitment website should influence their attitudes toward the organization itself (i.e., serving as a signal for what the organization is like) and, in turn, influence attraction toward the organization.

Several past studies that apply the theory of reasoned action (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980) to the information processing of consumers have found the design and content of advertisements produce general attitudes that then influence attitudes toward the

organization, and ultimately attraction, intentions to pursue the end-product, and the act of acquiring the end-product (see Kim & Hunter, 1993a; 1993b for a review). Similarly, Allen et al. (2004) found recruitment information communicated through different media influenced attitudes to the organization and subsequent intentions and behaviors in pursuing employment. Specifically, Allen et al. found that attitudes toward the organization mediate the relationship between recruitment media antecedents (e.g., organizational image, information, credibility) and ultimate attraction to the organization.

Additional meta-analytic evidence has shown attitudes-mediated models of job choice antecedents and organizational attraction fit better than models with direct effects of these antecedents on attraction (Chapman et al., 2005). However, Chapman et al. (2005) point out some antecedents may fit better in direct effect models. The authors compared attitudes-mediated models to intentions-mediated models, in which job choice antecedents were directly related to both attitudes and intentions, and found that some antecedents fit better in the intentions-mediated models. Allen et al. (2007) took this into account when studying recruitment message antecedents (including organizational familiarity and image and job and organizational information). The authors found that the attitudes-mediated model fit better with every antecedent except job information. Job characteristics and job information on recruitment media directly affected employment intentions over a poorer-fitting mediated model. To better understand the effects of recruitment media and organizational attitudes on attraction in the Internet recruitment realm, it is proposed:

Hypothesis 7: Website attitudes will be positively correlated with attitudes toward the organization.

Hypothesis 8a: Attitudes toward the organization will mediate the relationship between amount of job information on attraction to the organization.

Hypothesis 8b: Attitudes toward the organization will mediate the relationship between amount of organization information on attraction to the organization.

Hypothesis 8c: Attitudes toward the organization will mediate the relationship between website usability on attraction to the organization.

Hypothesis 8d: Attitudes toward the organization will mediate the relationship between website aesthetics on attraction to the organization.

To replicate Allen et al.'s (2007) findings, job information will also be examined with a direct effect on organizational attraction to determine if job information has a different influence over organization information on recruitment websites in its relationship with attraction.

Hypothesis 9: The amount of job information will be positively correlated with attraction to the organization.

Fit Perceptions and Attraction

One of the biggest contributions of this study over others in the Internet recruitment field is the inclusion of the dynamic interactions of person characteristics and environment characteristics on attraction to the organization. As previously mentioned, Allen et al.'s (2007) study was the first to empirically examine how the amount of information in recruitment materials affects attraction in a website context. However, the study did not take into account the interactions of personal characteristics with the information provided. The authors state in the conclusions of their research that a useful follow-up study would detail

how personal characteristics might interact with the information provided on a recruitment website to influence attraction to the organization. Thus, this study expands upon Allen et al.'s (2007) model by empirically examining the effects of subjective perceptions of person-organization (P-O) and person-job (P-J) fit on the information-attraction link.

Person-environment fit variables have been some of the primary mechanisms used to examine the antecedents that contribute to organizational attraction. Person-environment fit can generally be defined as the compatibility between individual and work environment characteristics (Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005). Person-environment fit encompasses a variety of manifestations (e.g., person-organization fit, person-job fit) and fit between an employee and the work environment has been shown to increase the likelihood of maximum work efficiency (e.g., Tziner, 1987). Organizations and their employees who can achieve a good fit are likely to enjoy many benefits, including decreased turnover (e.g., Bretz & Judge, 1993; O'Reilly, Chatman, & Caldwell, 1991; Schneider, 1987), increased performance (e.g., Schneider, 1987; Tziner, 1987), pro-social behaviors (e.g., O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986), and positive attitudes (e.g., Chatman, 1991; Dawis & Lofquist, 1984; Meglino, Ravlin, & Adkins, 1989). The person-environment fit literature highlights Schneider's (1987) attraction aspect of his attraction-selection-attrition model and Byrne's (1971) similarity-attraction paradigm, suggesting that people are attracted to organizations which have characteristics congruent with their own. If organizations utilize person-environment fit theories during recruitment, the aforementioned benefits are likely to result. As such, one way that person-environment fit can be realized is through recruiting practices.

Research has shown the more an applicant perceives a good fit with a focal organization, the more attracted the applicant is to the organization (e.g., Dineen et al., 2002; Judge & Cable, 1997; Tom, 1971). In order to enhance recruitment practices, it is important to examine how applicants perceive whether they fit well with an organization. If organizations thoroughly understand the antecedents of applicants' perceived fit and how that perception affects job choices, they would be better able to descriptively portray antecedents that influence fit perceptions during the recruitment process.

Person-organization fit. One of the most commonly examined aspects of person-environment fit is person-organization (P-O) fit. Perceived P-O fit can be defined as individuals' overall or holistic judgments of how compatible they are with an organization (Judge & Cable, 1997; Kristof, 1996; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). This congruence can be perceived through shared values (Chatman, 1989; Kristof, 1996; Verquer, Beehr, & Wagner, 2003), goals (Vancouver & Schmitt, 1991; Witt & Nye, 1992) and personality-climate compatibility (Christiansen, Villanova, & Mikulay, 1997; Ryan & Schmitt, 1996). P-O fit has been found to strongly influence organizational commitment, intentions to quit, and organizational satisfaction on the job (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). Prior to entry into the organization, P-O fit perceptions have a strong influence on organizational attraction, job acceptance rates, and acceptance intentions (Chapman et al., 2005; Kristof-Brown et al. 2005).

Cober et al. (2004) proposed that job seeker individual differences (such as perceived fit) will moderate organizational image perceptions and applicant attraction to the organization. Additionally, Allen et al. (2007) stated future research should examine the

dynamic interplay between personal characteristics and environment characteristics, noting different types of perceived fit with the organization may result on the basis of the type of information provided during the early recruitment process. Specifically, because perceived P-O fit is a measure of an individual's perceived congruence with the organization, the organizational information that is provided on an Internet recruitment website may allow potential applicants to determine whether their personal characteristics fit well with the organization's characteristics. This study will be the first to empirically examine the dynamic role P-O fit perceptions play on the amount of organizational information provided on a recruitment website and its effect on attraction. It is proposed:

Hypothesis 10: P-O fit will moderate the mediation effect of organizational attitudes in the organization information-attraction link, such that the amount of organization information leads to more favorable attitudes only when perceived P-O fit is high.

Person-job fit. Person-job (P-J) fit is another manifestation of the more general person- environment fit. Perceived P-J fit is defined as individuals' judgment of the congruence between their personal characteristics and job characteristics (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). This type of person-environment fit is typically characterized by either a congruency between demands-abilities or supplies-values (Edwards, 1991). Demands-abilities fit refers to a perceived compatibility between an individual's knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSA's) and those KSA's required by the job. Supplies-values fit refers to when the job meets an individual's needs, desires, or preferences. Previous research on P-J fit has found that when potential applicants perceive a P-J fit between their characteristics and the characteristics of the job, there is an increase in job and organization attraction, intent to hire,

job satisfaction, and organizational commitment, and a decrease in intentions to turnover (Chapman et al., 2005; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). Similar to what Allen et al. (2007) suggest with regard to P-O fit and organizational information, the authors also suggest that perceptions of P-J fit might result from the inclusion of adequate amounts of job information on an Internet recruitment website. However, no study has tested the interaction between perceptions of P-J fit and the amount of job information on attraction, especially in an Internet recruitment context. Therefore, it is proposed:

Hypothesis 11: P-J fit will moderate the mediation of organizational attitudes in the job information-attraction link, such that the amount of job information leads to more favorable attitudes only when perceived P-J fit is high.

Method

Participants

Participants will be approximately 300 undergraduate students at a large southeastern university. The sample will consist of x % female, with a mean age of x. X % of participants will be Caucasian, x % African-American, x % Asian, and x % Hispanic. The breakdown of class standing will be as follows: x % freshman, x % sophomores, x % juniors, and x % seniors.

Design and Procedure

Data collection will take place online. Each session will last approximately 30 minutes. As participants click on the homepage of the study, they will be given instructions for the experiment, and will be asked to complete an informed consent form. Participants will then be asked to assume that they are job seekers who have just graduated from college,

while reviewing the “careers” section of one randomly chosen Fortune 500 company organizational website. Participants will be asked to base all responses on what is seen on the organization’s website only.

Ten Fortune 500 company websites will be used for this study. A pilot testing procedure (described below) will determine which Fortune 500 company websites will be used. Each participant will view one Fortune 500 company website and will be told to search for a job within the organization. Participants will have unlimited time to search their assigned websites. A browsing timer will be inserted into this study to determine how long each participant viewed their respective Fortune 500 company website. After participants have viewed the organizational website, they will be directed to a series of questionnaires to assess their perceptions of the amounts of job and organizational information, attitudes toward the website and toward the organization, website aesthetics and usability, perceived P-O and P-J fit, and their attraction to the organization. In addition, participants will complete a questionnaire on demographics and general questions about their Internet use.

A pilot testing procedure will be administered before actual data collection takes place to determine which Fortune 500 company websites will be used. Initially, 15-20 Fortune 500 company websites will be chosen by the author of this study. These initial Fortune 500 company websites will be chosen based on the author’s perception of amounts of job and organization information and an assessment of the websites’ usability and aesthetics. The pilot test will consist of approximately 30 undergraduate or graduate students viewing websites that contain differing amounts of job and organizational information and

website aesthetics and usability. A rating scale from 1 = *low* to 10 = *high* will be used to assess the website content and design features. The highest and lowest rated Fortune 500 company websites will be kept for use in the actual study to ensure variance in these variables across companies. Ultimately, ten Fortune 500 company websites will be used in the study.

Measures

Amount of Job Information. To assess participants' perceptions of amount of job information on the Fortune 500 company websites, an adapted measure from Allen et al.'s (2007) scale of job information will be used. Participants will respond to three Likert-type questions on a five-point scale ranging from 1 = *not much at all* to 5 = *a very great amount* (see Appendix A).

Amount of Organization Information. To assess participants' perceptions of amount of organization information on the Fortune 500 company websites, an adapted measure from Allen et al.'s (2007) scale of organization information will be used. Participants will respond to three Likert-type questions on a five-point scale ranging from 1 = *not much at all* to 5 = *a very great amount* (see Appendix B).

Attitudes toward the Website. In order to assess participants' attitudes toward the organizational websites they view, Chen and Wells' (1999) measure of website attitudes will be used. Participants will respond to six Likert-type questions on a five-point scale ranging from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree* (see Appendix C).

Attitudes toward the Organization. Participants' attitudes toward the organization will be assessed with Allen et al.'s (2004) four-item measure of attitudes toward the organization which the authors adapted from a survey of affective responses developed by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975; see Appendix D). Each participant will respond to the questions on a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = *very negative* to 5 = *very positive*.

Perceived P-O Fit. Perceived P-O fit will be examined as the participants' overall self-reported perception of fit with the organization. Participants' perceived P-O fit will be measured with a three item questionnaire taken from Cable and Judge (1996; see Appendix E). The response scale will range from 1 = *not at all* to 7 = *completely*.

Perceived P-J Fit. Perceived P-J fit will be assessed with a five-item measure developed by Lauver and Kristof-Brown (2001). The five items will assess different conceptualizations of P-J fit, including perceived congruence of skills, abilities, and personality with the job (see Appendix F). The response scale will range from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*.

Website Usability. Website usability will be assessed with Williamson et al.'s (2003) four-item measure of ease of use. Each item will be measured on a seven-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree* (see Appendix G).

Website Aesthetics. Three aesthetic items will be developed based on Cober et al.'s (2003) measure of website style. These items will include: "This website used color," "This website contained pictures," and "This website is visually pleasing." In addition, seven questions regarding the unity, contrast, and playfulness of the website will be developed based on Williams' (2004) description of how to build aesthetically-pleasing websites. The

unity of the website will be measured through three items: “This website consistently spaced out information included on a page (e.g., there was an equal amount of white space between headers and subtext);” “The items on this website were proportionally aligned (e.g., centered);” and “Items that were related to each other were grouped near each other on this website.” Contrast will be checked through the following two items: “There was a strong contrast between the colors on this website (e.g., light versus dark colors);” “This website displayed different font sizes to distinguish headers from subtext.” All items will be based on a seven-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree* (see Appendix H).

Organization Attraction. In order to assess participants’ attraction to the organization whose recruitment website they are viewing, a five-item measure will be used (taken from Highhouse, Lievens, & Sinar, 2003), with a five-point response scale (1 = *strongly disagree*; 5 = *strongly agree*). See Appendix I for the items assessing organization attraction.

Data Analysis

To analyze Hypotheses 1-7, linear regression will be used. For Hypotheses 1-4, the independent variables will be amount of job and organizational information, website usability, and website aesthetics, and the dependent measure will be the participants’ attitudes toward the website. Hypotheses 5-6 will be analyzed with the use of regression to test the interaction between website design (i.e., aesthetics and usability) and information on website attitudes. A simple linear regression will be used to test Hypothesis 7 to examine the effect of website attitudes on organizational attitudes.

Hypothesis 8 will be conducted with a mediated regression analysis to determine if attitudes toward the organization mediate the relationships between job information, organization information, website usability, and website aesthetics on attraction to the organization. To determine if full mediation exists, Baron and Kenny's (1986) procedure will be followed, where (1) job information, organization information, website usability, and website aesthetics must be significantly correlated with organizational attraction, (2) job information, organization information, website usability, and website aesthetics must be significantly correlated with attitudes toward the organization, (3), attitudes toward the organization affect attraction to the organization, and (4) when the influence of attitudes to the organization are held constant, a nonsignificant effect should be found between job information, organization information, website usability, and website aesthetics and attraction.

Hypotheses 9-10 will be conducted with a moderated mediation analysis. Following Muller, Judd, and Yzerbyt's (2005) steps for conducting a moderated mediation analysis, the treatment effect will be amount of information. The moderator will be perceived P-O fit and P-J fit. The mediator will be organizational attitudes, and the dependent variable will be attraction to the organization. Specifically, analysis of Hypotheses 8-9 will test whether the indirect effect of amount of information on attraction via organizational attitudes is higher when perceived fit is high. To test a moderated mediation, three equations must be calculated. First, an overall effect of the treatment variable (i.e., amount of information) on the dependent variable (i.e., attraction) will be conducted (with no moderation tested at this time). Second, the mediator (i.e., attitudes toward the organization) will serve as the criterion,

and the interaction term of information X perceived fit will be entered into the equation. A significant interaction will indicate moderated mediation such that the indirect effect of information via attitudes toward the organization varies as a function of perceived fit. A third equation will test the significance of the mediator (attitudes toward the organization) on attraction to the organization, with perceived fit acting as a moderator. The third equation is a test of whether attitudes toward the organization's (partial) effect on attraction and the residual effect of information on attraction, controlling for organizational attitudes, are moderated by perceived fit. The interaction term of organizational attitudes X perceived fit should be nonsignificant in this equation for the effect of information on attitudes toward the organization to be moderated by perceived fit (i.e., for moderated mediation to occur).