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Relationship Between Recruitment Practice, Employer Knowledge, and Applicant Attraction

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Walden University

College of Management and Technology

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Annette W. Barrineau

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Walden University
2022

Abstract

Relationship Between Recruitment Practice, Employer Knowledge,
and Applicant Attraction

by

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MBA, Texas Tech University, 1989

BBA, University of Texas, 1979

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Business Administration

Walden University

August 2022

Abstract

Attracting quality job applicants is a chief recruiting concern. Resources managers recognize that attracting and retaining the most talented workforce contributes to a company's success and financial survival. Grounded in media richness theory, the purposes of this quantitative quasi-experimental study were to (1) examine the effects of recruitment practice (print, web, or print and web) on employer knowledge (employer familiarity, employer reputation, and job information) and applicant attraction, and (2) to assess the relationships between employer knowledge (employer familiarity, employer reputation, job information), media richness, and applicant attraction. The participants were 186 students attending a Florida higher education institution who completed a media richness survey. The analysis of variance indicated no statistically significant differences. The results of the multiple linear regression were significant, $F(4, 180) = 42.231, p < .001, R^2 = .473$. Job information was the only significant contributor to the model ($\beta = .570, p < .001$). A key recommendation is for human resources managers to design more effective recruitment tools containing specific job information about the type and nature of work performed in the job role. The implications for positive social change include the potential to attract and retain qualified employees, thereby supporting the local community workforce and economy.

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Dedication

This study is dedicated to my husband, Al, and my son, Charlie, for their support and encouragement during my long journey in becoming a doctor. Without their confidence in me, I would not have completed this journey. I would also like to thank my father and mother for instilling in me the value of education and lifelong learning while modeling the importance of hard work and achievement. To my sister, Melissa, thank you for showing me that becoming a doctor is achievable, and to my niece, Laura Lee, who always challenges me, holds me accountable, and makes me laugh. I have an amazing, supportive family, and I love you all. Thank you for believing in me!

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Section 1: Foundation of the Study

Research on applicant attraction could indicate how to improve recruitment strategies and talent acquisition by attracting qualified applicants. Business leaders who optimize their strategies to source superior talent will improve their competitive advantage and bottom line (Wilska, 2014). The objective of the current study was to examine the relationship between recruitment strategies, employer knowledge, and applicant attraction to provide hiring managers with tools for sourcing superior talent.

Section 1 presents the background of the problem, the business problem, and the purpose of the study. In addition, the section includes the central research question and hypotheses. Finally, there is a discussion of the significance of this study and the benefits for various stakeholders.

Background of the Problem

The war on talent is an escalating worldwide concern for several reasons, including the aging workforce in the industrialized West, the ascendancy of the emerging markets (Brazil, Russia, India, and China), the increased level of education and technical skills needed in those emergent markets, and a general reduction in immigration (Tung, 2016). Since 2015, talent acquisition has been a changing process fraught with risks and mistakes in hiring can have a negative effect on an organization's bottom line (Shahay, 2015). Previous research (Held & Bader, 2018; Landay & DeArmond, 2019; Windscheid et al., 2018) indicated that several factors can influence applicant attraction. The current study addressed applicant attraction to provide information that recruitment professionals can use to develop effective recruitment strategies for attracting and hiring well-qualified

job seekers. Research on applicant attraction in the Southeast United States could indicate strategies for recruiting well-qualified, skilled job seekers, and findings may be applicable to other regions in the United States.

Problem Statement

Attracting quality job applicants is a chief recruiting concern (Landay & DeArmond, 2019) because developing and retaining the most talented workforce contributes to the success and survival of a company (Gomes et al., 2016; Lawong et al., 2019). However, 52% of U.S. employers surveyed reported attracting few or no qualified applicants for available positions (Dunkelberg & Wade, 2017). The general business problem was that human resources (HR) recruitment professionals might not optimize early recruitment tools in an organization's recruitment strategy to attract applicants. The specific business problem was that some HR managers are unaware of the relationship among recruitment practice, media richness, employer knowledge, and applicant attraction.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this quantitative quasi-experimental study was to examine the effects of recruitment practice (print, web, or print and web) on employer knowledge (employer familiarity, employer reputation, and job information) and applicant attraction, and to assess the relationship between employer knowledge (employer familiarity, employer reputation, job information), and media richness and applicant attraction. In the first analysis, the independent variable (IV) was recruitment practice, with three categories: print alone, web alone, and print and web together. The dependent variables

(DV) were employer knowledge (familiarity, employer reputation, and job information) and applicant attraction. In the second analysis, the IVs were employer knowledge (employer familiarity, employer reputation, and job information) and media richness (print, web, or print and web), and the DV was applicant attraction. The target population was students at a Florida higher education institution. More effective hiring decisions could contribute to filling positions with employees who best fit the qualifications, resulting in more satisfied employees, improved social conditions in the workplace, and reduced unemployment in the community.

Nature of the Study

I chose quantitative methodology for this study. The objective of quantitative research is to predict and control social phenomena (Park & Park, 2016). Quantitative researchers examine data from a sample of randomly selected respondents in the population of interest and generalize findings to other similar groups and situations. Qualitative researchers use structured data collection techniques and statistical data analysis to identify, isolate, and measure certain variables within the context of the study (Park & Park, 2016). In the current study, the quantitative method was appropriate for examining the relationships among variables and extending the results to a larger population.

Qualitative researchers examine outcomes rather than phenomena and do not test hypotheses (Yin, 2017). Therefore, qualitative methodology was not appropriate for the current study. Mixed-methods researchers combine elements of quantitative and qualitative research to expand the breadth and depth of the findings (Park & Park, 2016).

The intent of the current study was not to explain an outcome through qualitative viewpoints and data collection; therefore, mixed-methods analysis was also inappropriate.

After considering three types of quantitative designs (correlational, experimental, and quasi-experimental; see Venkatesh et al., 2013), I selected a quasi-experimental approach. Researchers conduct correlational studies to evaluate the degree and nature of the relationships or associations between variables rather than direct cause-effect relationships (Hargreaves-Heap et al., 2012). Scholars using an experimental design seek to prove cause and effect (Park & Park, 2016) through manipulation, control, and random assignment (Starr, 2014). A quasi-experimental design is an experimental approach without random assignment (May et al., 2012). A researcher attempts to uncover a causal relationship and treat a given situation as an experiment, even though it may not contain all of the elements of a classic experiment (Starr, 2014). In the current study, the IV of recruitment practice contained three preexisting conditions (print, web, or print and web), and participants were assigned to one of the three conditions. Therefore, a quasi-experimental design was appropriate for this study.

Research Question

RQ1: Is there a significant difference in applicant attraction, and employer knowledge based on recruitment practices (print, web, or print and web)?

RQ2: Is there a significant relationship between employer knowledge, media richness, and applicant attraction?

Hypotheses

H1₀: There is no significant difference in applicant attraction, employer knowledge based on recruitment practices (print, web, or print and web).

H1_A: There is a significant difference in applicant attraction, employer knowledge based on recruitment practices (print, web, or print and web).

H2₀: There is no significant relationship between employer knowledge and media richness and applicant attraction.

H2_A: There is a significant relationship between employer knowledge and media richness and applicant attraction.

Theoretical Framework

The media richness theory (MRT; see Daft & Lengel, 1984) was the theoretical framework selected to examine early recruitment tools with varying media richness as an HR management strategy helpful in enhancing a firm's competitiveness (see Holtbrügge et al., 2010). According to Daft and Lengel (1984), MRT suggests that communication effectiveness involves finding an alignment between communication requirements and media capability. At many companies, marketing techniques are the strategies used to inform applicants about career opportunities and company characteristics (Baum & Kabst, 2014; Perkins et al., 2000). Therefore, recruitment strategies could contribute to attracting applicants from a marketing perspective (Baum & Kabst, 2014; Collins & Stevens, 2002).

According to MRT as applied in the current study, I expected the IV of recruitment practice (print, web, or print and web) to have an effect on the DVs of

employer knowledge (employer familiarity, employer reputation, and job information) and applicant attraction. In a second analysis, I expected the IVs of employer knowledge (employer familiarity, employer reputation, and job information) and media richness (print, web, or print and web) to effect on the DV of higher applicant attraction. Such an effect could result in a more skilled job applicant pool due to an enhanced recruitment strategy. Moreover, a better qualified applicant pool could result in hiring a superior employee. Applying the principles of MRT could enable HR managers to understand the efficacy of the recruitment tools and strategies they use to attract skilled employees for optimal business performance and sustained competitive advantage.

Operational Definitions

This section includes the key technical terms used in this study.

Employer brand: Employer brand is the reputation an organization has as an employer and the value proposition it provides to its employees (Biswas & Suar, 2016).

Human capital: Human capital is the measure of skills, knowledge, judgment, and experience of the employees of an organization in terms of value or costs (Wang & Zatzick, 2019).

Lean media: Lean media is a communication medium that does not enable two-way communication; therefore, it is neither an interactive nor vivid medium (Badger et al., 2014).

Personalized marketing communication: Personalized marketing communication, also known as individualized marketing communication, is a means of leveraging data

analysis and digital technology to deliver individualized messages or product offerings to customers (Strycharz et al., 2019).

Rich media: Rich media is a communication medium used to transmit video and audio to enable two-way communication (Badger et al., 2014).

Talent: Talent includes all potential, current, and future employees regardless of skill level (van Esch & Mente, 2018).

Talent management: Talent management is a demand for talented employees greater than the available supply (Kaliannan & Adjovu, 2014).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Assumptions

Assumptions are reasonable expectations presumed as correct by the researcher (Leedy & Omrod, 2015). In academic research, assumptions are issues or propositions accepted as true or probable that could influence a study's findings (Bernard, 2013). A fundamental assumption of the current study was that the participants volunteered to participate. A second assumption was that participants understood the importance of completing the survey in its entirety and allotted sufficient time for its completion. Another assumption was the appropriateness of the sample to address the research problem. Finally, I assumed the sample size was sufficient to address the research question. The participants were aware of their volunteer status and ability to withdraw at any time without consequences or repercussions.

Limitations

Limitations are possible weaknesses of a study that are out of the researcher's control and could have an effect on the study's outcomes (Kirkwood & Price, 2013). In the current study, the setting was the college or university environment; therefore, the results might not be applicable to job seekers without formal higher-level education. Second, the participants were college students, most of whom did not have extensive full-time work experience and therefore might have had less familiarity with the application process than experienced job seekers. Finally, the participants needed the ability to read and understand English; therefore, the study might not have had results applicable to individuals not fluent in the English language.

Delimitations

Delimitations are the boundaries and characteristics used to limit the study scope (Bernard, 2013). One of the delimitations in the current study was that the participants were college students working toward certificates, associate's, or bachelor's degrees. In addition, the participants were students currently enrolled in programs of study. Finally, the participating students attended a college or university in Florida and lived in the United States at the time of the study.

Significance of the Study**Contribution to Business Practice**

This study's results could be valuable for businesses because organizational leaders who optimize their strategies to source superior talent drive competitive advantage (see Wilska, 2014). Knowing how to optimize the talent pool is the foundation

for developing a plan to meet the organization's resource needs and effectively manage and optimize the talent pool (Schiemann, 2014). The knowledge gained in the current study could contribute to business practices because an increased understanding of recruitment tool utilization, such as early recruitment tools with differing media richness, could be instrumental in attracting quality applicants. Increased knowledge of early e-recruitment strategies could enable hiring managers and organizational leaders to source and hire higher quality applicants more efficiently and effectively (Holm, 2014).

Implications for Social Change

The implications for positive social change include the potential to provide knowledge that HR managers and recruitment professionals could find useful for developing more effective and efficient recruitment strategies and a more satisfied and engaged workforce. Employers who increase the efficiency of their recruitment strategies and processes might become more skilled in matching applicants to jobs and developing employees' knowledge, skills, and abilities while showing concern for their personal growth and job satisfaction. Employees engaged and enthusiastic about their work may be more likely to feel a sense of purpose and find their work meaningful, resulting in higher productivity and lower turnover. These outcomes may provide benefits to both the individual and the employer. A competitive and profitable organization may also provide employment stability, thereby addressing unemployment's adverse economic and social impacts on individuals and communities. Employed people may put financial resources back into their local economies by spending money on products and services. As purchasing increases, business prosperity and the number of people employed grows. The

continuously evolving economic cycle could positively affect the local economy and community.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

This literature review contains a critical analysis and synthesis of the literature related to the theoretical framework of the study (MRT; see Daft & Lengel, 1984) and the study's variables (recruitment practice [print, web, or print and web], media richness, employer knowledge [employer familiarity, employer reputation, and job information], and application attraction). This review provides the background and historical context and an inquiry of the most recent research related to the study topic, including a survey of books, scholarly articles, and other sources relevant to the study subject. There is also an overview and analysis of the ideas, theories, and significant research. The literature search included the following topics: media richness theory, rival theories (cognitive load theory, person-environment theory, person-organizational fit theory, social influence theory), employer knowledge (employer familiarity, employer reputation or brand, job information), rich versus lean media, recruitment practices, and applicant attraction.

A search occurred for professional and academic literature from peer-reviewed journals and articles, books, dissertations, websites, and other relevant research documents from Walden University Library databases including ABI/INFORM Collection, Business Source Complete, Dissertations & Theses @ Walden University, EBSCOhost, Emerald Insight, ProQuest, SAGE Journals, and Ulrich's Periodical Directory. Google Scholar was the primary search engine used for this review. The literature review included 157 peer-reviewed sources, 49% of them published within 5

years of the anticipated graduation date. The keywords and phrases used in the search were *applicant attraction, attracting talent, talent acquisition, job information, recruitment methods, recruitment strategies, recruitment and selection, competitive advantage, talent management, media richness, media richness theory, lean media, rich media, communication channel richness, communication cues, personalized communication, employer knowledge, employer familiarity, employer brand, employer branding, employer reputation, employer value proposition, organizational reputation, corporate reputation, and web-based recruitment*. This literature review presents an exploration of the theoretical framework as the lens through which this study was viewed.

Media Richness Theory

The theoretical framework selected for this study was MRT (see Daft & Lengel, 1984). MRT has been a popular research topic due to the acceptance and widespread use of electronic communication media (email) in the 1990s. Daft and Lengel (1984) suggested using a communication medium (channel) by coordinating the richness of the medium and the equivocality of the task. Communication effectiveness is a factor dependent on the alignment between communication requirements and media capability (Daft & Lengel, 1984, 1986). Although MRT originated in the organizational setting and has continued to provide inspiration for new research in this setting, empirical studies have had inconsistent results. This section presents empirical studies that show the theory's application, support, and challenges.

Productive communication between individuals occurs when the fitness of the media matches the characteristics of the communication task. If the communication

channel is not a fit for the task, the communication will be less effective (Daft & Lengel, 1986). MRT presents different forms of communication media based on the extent of their richness. Richness varies based on the quality of the feedback provided, the level of personal detachment from the communication message, and the diversity of the language communication (Daft & Lengel, 1986). The basis of this theory is that although individuals continuously exchange information, the exchanges vary in the level of certainty and equivocality (Susskind, 2014).

According to MRT, richer information is a more compelling and effective way of communicating important material than less rich information (Cable & Yu, 2006). The most effective method for communicating ambiguous or vague information is employing channels with high media richness (Gurkov & Saidov, 2017). Trust is a construct of MRT (Saat & Selamat, 2014), and richer media is better for developing customer trust and commitment (Mishra, 2016). Organizational leaders who establish a foundation of trust can build sustainable relationships with customers. Building a sustainable, trusting relationship is a marketing objective because trust can affect brand selection and purchasing decisions (Rambe & Jafeta, 2017).

Organizational recruitment professionals use recruitment strategies to convey information to job seekers (Badger et al., 2014). An aspect of the recruitment process is the effective exchange of information regarding employer familiarity, reputation, and job knowledge. Communication mediums have varying effectiveness in transferring information (Badger et al., 2014; Daft & Lengel, 1986). The richest medium, face-to-face communication (Daft & Lengel, 1986; Mishra, 2016), is most suitable for highly

equivocal tasks because it provides the opportunity for immediate feedback (Smit et al., 2017). Face-to-face communication also allows communicators to check the interpretation of the message. Electronic media (email) is a medium leaner in richness often used to communicate nonequivocal tasks. The leanest communication media are bulletins, documents, and memos (Daft & Lengel, 1986; Makaoui & Aloui, 2015). Face-to-face communication is preferable when there is high ambiguity; however, written forms of communication are effective when there is low ambiguity. Richer media enables the better performance of ambiguous tasks (Daft et al., 1987; Lambert & Yanson, 2017). Media richness has four criteria: feedback, multiple cues, a personal focus, and language variety.

Feedback is the speed of answers to questions and the implemented improvements. A rich medium has the capacity for immediate feedback, which contributes to common interpretation and understanding (Lavhengwa et al., 2014). Kingsley Westerman et al. (2018) investigated the synchronicity of feedback and the channel selected to deliver the message to determine their effects on perceptions of supervisor communication competence and source credibility. Kingsley Westerman et al. found that the participants preferred feedback via telephone rather than text. The participants also rated supervisors higher if they provided positive feedback.

Communication competence is the ability to be an effective and appropriate speaker (Canary & Spitzberg, 1987). Effectiveness is how well the sender (in this case, the supervisor) communicates the message, whereas appropriateness is the ability to deliver a message without breaking the accepted rules for a given situation. Channel

selection and synchronicity of the message could affect perceptions of effectiveness and appropriateness. Emerging technology has provided new and different communication channels helpful in obtaining feedback (Kingsley Westerman et al., 2018). Increasing the number of channels available for feedback has led to a changing communication landscape and how organizational members use these channels. Kingsley Westerman et al. (2018) had different results from the original tenets of MRT (Daft & Lengel, 1986) as they found immediate feedback from supervisors to be unimportant. However, the channel selection made by the supervisors was significant to employees' perceptions of their supervisors (Kingsley Westerman et al., 2018).

The second criterion of media richness is communication cues, including voice tone, voice inflection, body language, words, numbers, and symbols. Communication cues provide understanding and meaning, suggest more than the transfer of information (Lavhengwa et al., 2014), and enable the sender to interpret the receiver's understanding (Smit et al., 2017). According to MRT, the capacity of a medium to transmit multiple cues contributes to the comprehension and understanding of the communicated message (Daft et al., 1987).

Interactive media are often the preferred forms of communication. Social media has been a means of enhancing audiovisual responses within organizations, especially for crisis communications (Combs, 2015). In a study of audiovisual crisis communication, De Waele and Claeys (2017) found that audiovisual messages show not only verbal cues but also visual (eye contact, hand gestures) and vocal (voice pitch, speech hesitations) nonverbal cues. In measuring the nonverbal cues that affected the public's perception of

deception, De Waele and Claeys found that nonverbal cues could indicate deception depending on the crisis type, source, and communication format. Koppensteiner et al. (2015) also studied communication cues and their ability to present an overall impression. The study showed that nonverbal cues could have either a positive or negative influence on the perception of the message and the speaker. The findings of both studies appear to align with the tenets of MRT.

Personal focus, the third criterion of media richness, is the ability to change the communication medium to meet the receiver's needs. A medium with a personal focus enables the transmission of emotions and feelings. With personal focus, communicators can tailor a medium to the needs and perspectives of the information receiver (Lavhengwa et al., 2014). Personalized marketing communication, also known as individualized marketing communication, is a means of leveraging data analysis and digital technology to deliver individualized messages or product offerings to customers (Strycharz et al., 2019). There has been increased use of personalized marketing communication due to the benefits organizations or businesses receive from a personal focus in marketing (Strycharz et al., 2019). Personalization provides organizations the benefits of higher prices, better response rates, increased customer satisfaction and loyalty, and differentiation from competitors. Consumers also benefit from personalization through better communication, product matches, and experiences. However, personalization also has perceived costs, such as privacy risks, spam risks, and extra fees. Strycharz et al. (2019) interviewed practitioners and consumers about their personalization knowledge to predict the practice's future in marketing communication.

Findings indicated that personalization in communication was the new standard. The findings also aligned with the personal focus criteria by Daft et al. (1987) in that media richness contributes to communication.

The final criterion of MRT is the degree of language variety, or the amount of meaning possible to express (Daft et al., 1987; Lambert & Yanson, 2017). Natural language is a means of communicating concepts broader than numbers and formulas, which present more precise information. Face-to-face communication is the preferable medium for high ambiguity, with written messages often used for low ambiguity. Based on the four criteria of MRT (Daft et al., 1987), face-to-face is the richest medium, followed by the telephone, the written addressed document such as a memo or letter, and the unaddressed document.

Using MRT as a theoretical framework, Baum and Kabst (2014) compared the effects of two early recruitment tools with varying richness (high and low) on applicant attraction. The researchers also demonstrated how these recruitment activities related to one another. The results showed that the high richness/information recruitment practices had a more significant influence on employer knowledge than the lower richness/information practices. Additional findings were that both high- and low-richness recruitment practices mediated by employer knowledge had an indirect influence on applicant attraction. The evidence suggests that, when used simultaneously, multiple recruitment activities with varying richness directly affect applicant attraction.

Frasca and Edwards (2017) investigated the effects of media richness and source credibility on organizational attraction by comparing three media with clear differences

in setup and communication modes: Facebook, YouTube, and websites. Frasca and Edwards were among the first to examine how job seekers perceived organizations' social recruitment media. The researchers found the three forms of recruitment media studied varied in media richness and source credibility. Although the recruitment message remained constant, the three web-based media in the study resulted in differences in the participants' judgment of media richness features (e.g., feedback, multiple cues, language variety, and personal focus), the amount of information, and source credibility. Frasca and Edwards found significantly higher ratings for video in multiple cues than Facebook or websites, a finding aligned with MRT and prior comparisons of traditional communication channels (Daft & Lengel, 1986; Daft et al., 1987).

Widespread access to the internet and the growing preference for electronic media (Hirudayaraj & Baker, 2018) has resulted in the transformation of information dissemination and communication (Makaoui & Aloui, 2015). Technological advancements have increased the variety of the media used for information exchange and the number of communication channels. Information varies across devices, platforms, and modes of access (Maity et al., 2018). Communication technology has caused organizational members to change how they connect and transmit information to their business partners, including potential employees. This change has also occurred with job seekers, who access company information using the same methods consumers use to access product information (Baum & Kabst, 2014).

Maity et al. (2018) examined the impact of media richness on consumer information search and choice. The researchers sought to determine whether media richness influenced the relative impact of memory- and stimulus-based information search and choice. Richer media tend to have a greater sense of presence than less-rich media. The richness of the medium results in less ambiguity in a message, and repeated use of the medium enables users to communicate better and understand messages. Maity et al. conducted three smaller studies in which they manipulated media richness and product type to assess the effects on search and choice decisions. The three studies showed that participants relied more on stimulus-based processing in the high media richness condition and memory-based processing in the low richness condition. Maity et al. concluded that even within the same media channel, as media richness increases, so does brand information search. In addition, the scholars found that the participants relied more on stimuli-based information searches when there was high media richness; in contrast, participants conducted more memory-based searches when the medium had low richness.

Despite several limitations, Maity et al.'s (2018) study contributed to the literature that marketing managers could consider when choosing the most appropriate communication channel for the increased use of computers and mobile devices. Communications channels will likely continue to increase in number and complexity as consumers more widely accept virtual reality, augmented reality, and other new and developing media. The increase in communication channels and computer and mobile devices could contribute to the findings by Maity et al. (2018). The authors produced

research significant to marketing managers because they supported a strategy for considering the influence of media richness on information processing and the number of communication channels that consumers consider. Brand marketers must determine not only the most suitable medium/channel and the appropriate mix but also the suitable content within each channel that consumers will find the most appealing.

Marketing researchers face a growing need to design new information technology mechanisms for establishing trust when individuals use electronic interfaces to conduct business transactions (Chesney et al., 2017). Trust has a key role in commercial interactions. Consumers place a premium on information quality and reliable online product information (Chen & Chang, 2018). Purchasers are more likely to trust websites when they perceive information to be an independent product with service reviews from actual customers. Reliable, accurate, timely, and trustworthy information produces a sense of trust in potential customers.

Richer information produces greater trust among potential customers (Chen & Chang, 2018); therefore, marketing professionals should seek to convey information through rich media formats. The effective integration of social media presence and advertising produces a sense of media richness that can contribute to the purchase intentions of potential customers (Chen & Chang, 2018). Similarly, recruiting managers should integrate social media presence and job advertisements to create a sense of media richness and encourage application intention among job seekers.

Positive online product reviews have a significant impact on purchase intention (Chen & Chang, 2018). Information gathering by potential customers is the key factor of

purchase intention. Websites can provide complete, clear, and transparent product information through enhanced media richness and an interactive virtual experience that contributes to increased buyer satisfaction and confidence.

Chen and Chang (2018) investigated whether consumer ratings, information quality, and media richness had an impact on consumer behavior intention. Using Airbnb as a case study, the researchers examined the impact of media richness on satisfaction. Chen and Chang (2018) found that one-on-one communication between buyer and seller had a positive and significant impact on satisfaction by providing both parties with access to online communication. Online purchasing is increasing; however, some consumers still feel anxious about making purchase decisions online. The practical managerial implication from Chen and Chang's (2018) study is that enhancing trust between buyer and seller is the key to increasing purchase intention. A limitation of their study was the small population of Chinese speakers in Taiwan. In addition, cultural factors could have resulted in skewed results not applicable to other markets and countries.

MRT focuses on two influential communication forces: uncertainty and equivocality. Uncertainty is the lack of information, and equivocality is the conflicting interpretation of information (Palvia et al., 2011). When individuals deal with uncertainty, communicating more information could be a way to increase the level of understanding. The media should provide clarification and be a tool for reducing ambiguity. Daft and Lengel (1986) posited that richer media has more effectiveness than leaner media when conveying ambiguous, vague, or personal information. Richer media is often a strategic choice during recruitment because it enables employers to convey

complex information, such as organizational values or culture, to prospective job applicants, a claim later supported by Baum and Kabst (2014) and Maity et al. (2018). However, Baum and Kabst also proposed that the communication mix and information content also have an influence on employer knowledge and applicant attraction.

Research as of Spring 2021 has indicated mixed or partial support for MRT. Comparing face-to-face, video, audio, and textual communication channels, Daft et al. (1987) found the face-to-face medium the most effective for two-way communication. Other recruitment communication channel research has indicated that career fairs, due to their face-to-face nature, have significantly more richness than text-based media channels, such as company websites and electronic bulletin boards (Cable & Yu, 2006). Cable and Yu (2006) found that participants rated websites richer than bulletin boards, perhaps due to the ability to infuse richness into the website medium. Increasing the richness of a website can occur through enhancements such as color, pictures, and a tailored appeal to a targeted group of job seekers (Cable & Yu, 2006). Organizational leaders who communicate through different forms of media benefit from understanding the varying richness of the media, means of enhancing richness, and the associations between a medium's richness features and job seekers' attitudes.

Rival and Opponent Theories of the Theoretical Framework

MRT was the only theory relevant to recruitment practices and tools and how they present employer knowledge to potential job seekers. Therefore, I chose not to use other media choice or organizational communication research theories as the theoretical lens for the business problem. Past researchers have posited that media richness could be a

way to enhance information acquisition by job seekers/applicants. However, other scholars have offered various research perspectives to explain how best to communicate and the effect of channel richness. The current studies on media choice for organizational communication have indicated three rival theories to MRT: cognitive load theory, person-environment/person-organization fit theory, and the social influence theory.

Cognitive Load Theory

In consideration of how people think and learn, cognitive load is the effort used in working memory or mental workload (Sweller, 1994). Mental workload is an applicable concept to understanding the relationship between media richness and information acquisition. According to the cognitive load theory (Shiffrin & Schneider, 1977), individuals have limitless long-term memory capacity; in contrast, working memory has a restrictive capacity. According to cognitive load theory, people learn less when they have a higher cognitive load (Badger et al., 2014), regardless of its source (Sweller, 1994).

Unnecessary mental workloads can obstruct schema formation and overall learning (Badger et al., 2014). The design of the material itself should not be a burden for working memory and cause cognitive load for the user, making learning to be more of a challenge (Ong & Tasir, 2015). According to the cognitive load theory, richer websites may have distracting elements that could affect an applicant's ability to interpret and retain information; this principle is a counterargument to MRT (Badger et al., 2014).

Both MRT and cognitive load theory have been successful predictors of learning and communicating in the recruitment setting, where organizations must present different types of information to job seekers. Badger et al. (2014) used both theoretical

frameworks to understand how job applicants/seekers acquire information and the effect of the characteristics of the media on information acquisition. Subtle information is an integral component when a job seeker makes judgments about how they will fit within an organization. Badger et al. indicated the need for employers to examine and evaluate the fit of the technology with the information communicated during recruitment activities for the most effective communication. Therefore, MRT was a logical theoretical lens for this study.

Person-Environment or Person-Organization Fit Theory

Person-environment (P-E) fit is the degree to which individuals and their work environments match or fit (Bednarska, 2016). P-E fit theory includes a framework for evaluating how the attributes of the individual and the work environment jointly affect worker satisfaction (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984). Several researchers have developed models to determine P-E fit, one of the most popular being the formulation by Dawis and Lofquist (1984). P-E fit is a multidimensional and broad concept often defined in terms of supplementary and complementary fit (Bednarska, 2016). Supplementary fit occurs when the individual has similar characteristics to others in the environment. According to Bednarska (2016), a complementary fit is one in which an individual's unique traits or skills fill a gap or a need in the environment. Bednarska examined the role of employer attractiveness in the association between the job seeker's perceptions of complementary PE fit and job pursuit intention in the service industry. Bednarska found positive, indirect links between the complementary P-E fit and job pursuit intentions of millennials in the

hospitality industry. The results suggest that a P-E fit increases employer attractiveness to produce a stronger job application intention.

Two additional concepts often used to describe person-organization (P-O) fit are objective fit and subjective fit (Überschaer et al., 2016). Objective P-O fit occurs when an objective comparison of a person's characteristics indicates that an individual fits with an organization's characteristics. Subjective fit stems from the concept that fit happens when individuals believe their personal characteristics match an organization's. The subjective fit is based on individual judgment. Applicants believe they fit when they see their personal needs and values reflected in an organization's attributes. Previous research has indicated that subjective fit is a more immediate predictor of peoples' attitudes and behavior than objective fit (Cable & Judge, 1997; Überschaer et al., 2016). In addition, subjective fit is a mediator between objective P-O fit and attraction.

Scholars have used P-E and P-O fit theories in numerous studies on applicant attraction and recruitment; however, neither theory was an appropriate lens for viewing this study's research question. P-E and P-O theories do not focus on communication with potential job applicants and the richness of the communication medium selected for job applicant recruitment. After researching the cognitive load and fit theories, I found it logical to use MRT as the theoretical framework for the study.

Social Influence Theory

There are two opposing theories in media choice research: MRT and social influence theory (Fulk & Boyd, 1991). Fulk (1993) proposed a rival theory, the social influence theory, based on the concept that social forces have an influence on an

individual's media perception and, therefore, media choice behavior. Social influence theory suggests that surrounding social forces influence individuals' media choices. The theory also indicates that individuals have subjective media perceptions. Conversely, MRT focuses on the objective characteristics of media and suggests that the content of the communication indicates media choices (Daft & Lengel, 1986). Social influence theory provides a social explanation for media choice but requires replacing the objective perspective of media choice with a subjective one.

Employer Knowledge

Organizational recruitment professionals have employed strategies to use employer knowledge to influence or persuade potential job seekers to apply for positions at their organizations (Cable & Yu, 2006). Employer knowledge comprises a job seeker's memories and associations of an organization as a possible future employer (Cable & Turban, 2001). Employer knowledge provides applicants with a model for classifying, saving, and recalling employer-related information (Kashive & Khanna, 2017). Researchers have defined the dimensions of employer knowledge as employer familiarity, employer reputation, and job information/employer image (Kanar et al., 2015). Employer familiarity, employer reputation, and employer image are related but different concepts that, together, comprise employer knowledge (Lievens & Slaughter, 2016).

Researchers have distinguished between the concepts of employer knowledge (Kanar et al., 2015; Lievens & Slaughter, 2016). Employer or organizational familiarity is the applicant's or job seeker's awareness of the employer (Yu & Davis, 2019). Employer

reputation is the job seeker's perceptions of the public's attitudes/feelings or evaluation of the organization as an employer. Finally, employer images are job seekers' beliefs about the characteristics of employers that contain information about values and cultures, type of work (jobs), and the organization's current employees. Researchers have often referred to this information as job information when defining employer knowledge (Kanar et al., 2015).

Most research on employer knowledge has focused on how employers use different recruitment tools/activities and media to influence the dimensions of employer knowledge (familiarity, reputation, and image/job information). Baum and Kabst (2014) compared the effect of printed recruitment advertisements and recruitment websites on applicant attraction in Germany. The researchers also examined the interaction of the recruitment activities with one another. This study provided three contributions to recruitment research. First, the researchers compared and analyzed two different early recruitment tools important for attracting applicants. Specifically, Baum and Kabst compared printed recruitment advertisements to recruitment websites and their ability to contribute to a stronger employer brand. Second, they expanded on prior studies by analyzing the concurrent use of more than one recruitment activity. Third, Baum and Kabst assessed whether individual cognitive processes were partial or full mediators of the relationship between recruitment tools and applicant attraction. The results of the study indicated that websites (high-information recruitment practices) have a significant positive effect on employer knowledge of the potential job seekers applying for positions. In addition, the results showed that low-information recruitment tools (in this case,

printed ads) did not have a significant influence on employers' knowledge of applicant attraction. However, the low-information recruitment tools did have an effect when used in conjunction with other recruitment activities. Further, the results showed that employer knowledge has an impact on the effect of recruitment activities on applicant attraction. These findings indicate that different recruitment practices have disparate effects on potential job applicants.

Kashive and Khanna (2017) examined the dimensions of early recruitment activities, such as publicity, sponsorship, advertisement, and word of mouth, and their effect on employer knowledge. Often referred to as employer brand knowledge, employer knowledge consists of three dimensions: employer familiarity, employer image/job association, and employer reputation. Kashive and Khanna also examined the impact of early recruitment activities and employer brand knowledge on organizational attractiveness and firm performance. The results showed that the early recruitment activities impacting all aspects of employer brand knowledge were advertisement, publicity, and word of mouth (WOM). Also, employer reputation and job association had significance and an effect on organizational attractiveness. Brand awareness and job association had an influence on firm performance. The internet and networking were the most common sources of employment information for job seekers. The findings aligned with those of Baum and Kabst (2014), who found that early recruitment practices had an effect on employer knowledge and the application intention of job seekers.

Researchers have examined the different types of recruitment activities and media used by employers to influence the various aspects of employer knowledge. In a time-

lagged study of job seekers enrolled in a Singaporean business school, Yu and Davis (2019) focused on the impact of job search behaviors and employer knowledge on organizational attraction during the recruitment process. The researchers focused on the influence of job search on the depth of familiarity that job seekers have with employers and the influence of employer image and reputation on organizational attraction. The findings were complementary to prior research on the effectiveness of recruitment practices used to communicate aspects of employer knowledge. Moreover, the findings showed the significance of employer knowledge for organizational attraction for job seekers. Yu and Davis also found that images, especially creative images, and images with a people focus, had a positive influence on organizational attraction. The following sections present the dimensions of employer knowledge: employer familiarity, reputation, and job information/image.

Employer Familiarity

Job seekers often have preexisting beliefs about an organization as an employer, known as employer familiarity (Kanar et al., 2015). Employer familiarity is the knowledge that job seekers have about an organization and how well they can recall information about it. Job seekers feel more attracted to employers when they can recall information about that organization. Despite perceptions of familiarity, researchers have found that familiarity could have a dampening effect on employers' ability to change their reputations. An employer who must alter organizational reputation might encounter difficulties in overcoming the preexisting, negative, ingrained, and difficult-to-change information in the minds of potential consumers or job applicants.

Kanar et al. (2015) used a 4-week longitudinal experimental design to examine whether recruitment messages could have a positive impact on an unfavorable employer reputation. The authors randomly assigned college-level job seekers to receive either high- or low-informational recruitment messages. The results aligned with prior findings that high-information recruitment messages were a more effective means of changing job seekers' perceptions than low-information messages. Kanar et al. found that recruitment messages could be a means of adapting beliefs about employer reputation. The researchers concluded that familiarity with the employer had a negative relationship to reputation change, regardless of the type of recruitment message. Although the researchers investigated an important and understudied issue, the study has several notable limitations. The sample comprised college job seekers and thus might have had results with limited generalizability for experienced job seekers. Scholars could replicate the study with timeframes longer or shorter than 4 weeks. In addition, Kanar et al. measured job seekers' opinions of only one organization in a single industry. Additional organizations in different industries should undergo exploration to produce results generalizable to a variety of industries.

One of the primary ways to attract job seekers is fostering and maintaining a favorable reputation as an employer. Kanar et al. (2015) were the first to examine the success of changing a company's unfavorable employer reputation. The authors indicated that employers could change reputation beliefs through recruitment efforts. However, the effectiveness of recruitment messages for changing unfavorable perceptions was based on job seekers' initial familiarity with the organization. Therefore, recruitment strategists

should focus on fostering the positive reputations of their organizations because initial employer familiarity is a significant factor in applicant attraction.

Employers that provide clear information about job characteristics enhance their organizational image and familiarity with job seekers, which could have an effect on job searches and application intention (Lu & Liou, 2015). Lu and Liou (2015) examined the impact of high information and low-information recruitment strategies on prospective applicants' perceptions of organizational reputation and job characteristics on job pursuit intentions. This study focused on four types of early recruitment channels: job advertisement, WOM, publicity, and sponsorship. High-information activities included WOM and detailed job advertisements; low-information strategies included publicity, sponsorships, and general job advertisements. The results showed that high-information activities (WOM and detailed job advertisements) were means of increasing job seekers' perceived job characteristics and their likelihood of pursuing jobs (Lu & Liou, 2015). Low-information recruitment activities (sponsorships and general advertisements) had a positive relationship with job seekers' increased acknowledgment of the company reputation; however, these activities had little influence on job pursuit intention. The outcomes of this study aligned with Kanar et al. (2015), who found high-information messages to be more effective in changing job seekers' perceptions and job pursuit intentions than low-information messages.

Employer familiarity, one of the dimensions of employer knowledge, has been the focus of studies on the impact of increased familiarity on prospective applicants and their intentions to pursue employment (Kanar et al., 2015; Lu & Liou, 2015). However, there

is little research on newer forms of online recruitment (websites and social networking sites) and the effects of these recruitment tools on employer familiarity and job pursuit intention. Intindola et al. (2019) addressed this gap in the research by investigating the effects of job seekers' exposure to company information via different electronic HR management (e-HRM) platforms. These researchers studied how the effects of potential applicants' perceptions of employer familiarity and image changed over time in response to multiple exposures to corporate recruitment websites and a combination of corporate recruitment websites and the organization's Facebook page. The findings of this study showed that an increase in information (measured by the number of web views) correlated with an increase in organizational familiarity, although not in a linear fashion. Increased exposure to e-HRM platforms could have a curvilinear effect on employer familiarity. Because saturation points or overexposure can occur, Intindola et al. suggested that *more is better* is not an ideal mentality for using e-recruitment platforms.

Employer familiarity, one of the elements of employer knowledge, has an effect on applicant attraction. Employer familiarity or awareness is an antecedent of employer reputation (Lievens & Slaughter, 2016). The following section includes a definition and analysis of employer reputation to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the elements of employer knowledge.

Employer Reputation/Employer Branding

Many job seekers find a favorable employer reputation compelling; therefore, employer reputation could have a favorable impact on job seekers' application intention (Kanar et al., 2015). A company's reputation can have an influence on job seekers'

intention to apply (Lu & Liou, 2015). Upon initial contact with a position or job advertisement, the job seeker decides to apply based on three components: prior image or preexisting beliefs of the organization, attractiveness of the advertisement, and content of the message (Überschaer et al., 2016). Employee branding is an organization's reputation as an employer and thus has value for prospective and current employees (Dabirian et al., 2017).

A positive employer brand or portrayal of an organization as a great place to work (Aboul-Ela, 2016) is a strategic means of identifying as a desirable employer to job seekers (Sengupta et al., 2015). Employer brand consists of all the benefits provided by a company that produce a unique employer offering and reputation that contributes to the enthusiasm of job applicants and employees to join or stay with the company (Ambler & Barrow, 1996). Employer brand presents a personality and corporate image to those in the job market. Employer branding has been a topic of increasing interest to employers. Because organizational leaders consider their firms' brands one of their most valuable resources (Khalid & Tariq, 2015), brand management is a significant concern (Eger et al., 2018). Organizational leaders have realized that human capital is a distinguishing factor and a valuable asset. Thus, employer branding is a strategic priority for senior management (Kissel & Buttgen, 2015). A positive employer brand enables employers to retain top performers and attract new skilled talent to establish a competitive advantage (Sengupta et al., 2015). The relatively new topic of employer brand has been a popular topic of research (Tanwar & Prasad, 2017).

Employer branding factors include work climate, employee orientation, location, salary, experience, trust, career development, performance-based remuneration, and job security (Jain & Bhatt, 2015). Other HR processes and practices can also contribute to an employer's image or brand, such as leave structure, transfer options, and sabbaticals. These factors contribute to overall employee satisfaction and the strength of the employer brand that extends beyond the organization and increases the employer's appeal to applicants.

Employers must distinguish their organizations from their competitors to attract the top industry talent and gain and maintain a competitive advantage (Tanwar & Prasad, 2017). Employer branding is an ongoing concern, as establishing and maintaining a reputation as an attractive employer and a desirable place to work requires effort (Reis & Braga, 2016) and employees want to know they are an integral part of an organization's sustainability strategy (Puncheva-Michelotti et al., 2018). Another definition of employer branding is the image of the organization's employment or the employer (Lievens & Slaughter, 2016). Employer image is part of the broader concept of organizational image. Lievens and Slaughter (2016) defined employer image as a mixture of mental images that an individual has of certain aspects of a company as an employer. Essential components of this definition are that an image (a) occurs in the mind of an individual, not the general public, (b) may change from time to time and is not necessarily stable, (c) consists of specific features, and (d) involves conscious mental activity.

Researchers have examined the benefits and advantages of employer branding or employer image and the achievement of employer of choice status at organizations.

Chhabra and Sharma (2014) examined the organizational attributes most attractive to university management students making application and employment decisions. This study differed from Kanar et al. (2015), who focused on whether employers could change unfavorable organizational reputations through positive employer branding messaging. Chhabra and Sharma sought to gain insight into the most effective branding strategies and the preferred channel for employers to use when promoting their attractiveness as employers.

After interviewing and surveying university students, Chhabra and Sharma (2014) found that organizational culture, brand name, and compensation were the most preferred organizational attributes. The study showed that prospective employees preferred to learn about employers through job portals. However, 33% of respondents said they acquired the needed or desired information from company recruitment visits or presentations. The study was a valuable contribution to the literature because Chhabra and Sharma formulated a model on the process for employer branding. The researchers also identified the differences in the preferred organizational attributes between the current generation and baby boomers, as indicated in previous literature on employer branding. In addition, Chhabra and Sharma added to the knowledge of preferred communication channels for branding strategy effectiveness.

Researchers have developed different approaches for studying organizational attractiveness attributes. Reis and Braga (2016) adopted the Employer Attractiveness Scale by Berthon et al. (2005) to identify the appealing and prioritized attributes of an organization from a generational perspective. The scale consists of five attractiveness

attributes and is a measure of the extent an organization provides (a) interest value, including challenges, interesting work, and the opportunity for creativity and innovativeness; (b) social value as a positive and pleasant place to work; (c) economic value via above-average wages, job security, and advancement opportunities; (d) development value, including recognition and skills development opportunities; and (e) application value, or the opportunity to share knowledge with others.

Reis and Braga (2016) administered a survey to 937 professionals from three generations: baby boomer, Generation X, and Generation Y. The participants worked across industries in Southeastern Brazil, and the majority were managers with a high education level. The results indicated that, when choosing a potential employer, the members of different generations prioritize and find different features attractive. Generation Y job seekers expressed the most interest in economic value, which Generation X participants also valued more than baby boomers. Development and economic value were the most-appreciated attributes by all respondents, regardless of their generation. Baby boomers valued working in innovative jobs where they could be creative and develop their creative skills. The baby boomers also appreciated working in positive environments that enabled them to establish good relationships and thrive. The baby boomer respondents described economic value as less important. Although the Generation X managers had some similarities to the baby boomers, they expressed the most interest in development opportunities, competitive compensation packages, and stimulating and creative environments. Finally, Generation Y participants provided the most definitive ranking of their preferred attributes, presenting compensation and rewards

as the most important. Despite ranking development opportunities as important, the Generation Y participants did not consider these opportunities as critical as the rewards package.

Reis and Braga (2016) found that organizational attractiveness and the prioritization of attractiveness attributes differed between culture and demographics. However, with a focus limited to Southeastern Brazil, the study did not have results representative of the entire nation. In addition, Reis and Braga conducted a cross-sectional study and did not measure attractiveness over time. Despite these limitations, the researchers identified the attractiveness attributes most desired by the members of three generations. However, it is challenging to target potential employees through branding when considering only generational demographics.

Aboul-Ela (2016) examined the factors in an organization's identification as an employer of choice. Through an extensive literature review, Aboul-Ela grouped the highest-rated factors to develop the bloom-live-connect-grow framework. The bloom dimension consists of the factors outside the organization attractive to potential applicants to the organization. Examples include corporate social responsibility practices, a positive image with the general public, and the ability to maintain a good reputation. The live dimension, defined as the actual working environment where employees operate, includes salary systems, bonus systems, retirement packages, and health and safety programs. The third dimension, connect, focuses on the interactional relationship between the employee and the organization and addresses factors such as care for employees' well-being, teamwork and team spirit, and fulfillment of obligations toward

employees. Grow, the final dimension of the framework, focuses on professional growth, development, and advancement in the workplace. Examples include training and development opportunities, career ladders and advancement opportunities, objective and constructive feedback, and job security. Although Aboul-Ela proposed a framework for identifying the factors of an employer of choice, the research has lacked a scale for measuring the employer branding construct. The study had a scope limited to the Egyptian environment, specifically the Cairo and Giza governorates; therefore, the results might not be generalizable to other domains or countries.

Sparrow and Otaye (2015) also identified the determining factors of an organization's employer brand, including the attractiveness of the business sector, company reputation, pay, work environment, location, quality of product or service, economic conditions, culture, employee benefits, work-life balance, and corporate social responsibility. These factors showed similarities to those developed by Aboul-Ela (2016) and thus require consideration when determining whether an organization is an employer of choice. In a related study, Mehta and Sharma (2016) examined the importance of social media in promoting the employer brand to assess the usage and effectiveness of social networking sites for sourcing employees. Mehta and Sharma focused on sourcing and identifying talent instead of building the employer brand. The study's results showed that most recruiters understood the importance of using social media to source employees; however, they did not use social media to its full capacity and utilized limited tools. Employers could benefit by improving their brands through social media and developing policies to prevent social media misuse from causing harm to their brands.

Creating a positive brand enables employers to retain top performers and attract new skilled talent by creating tight bonds between the brand and the workforce (Fernandez-Lores et al., 2016). Attracting and retaining top talent are crucial means of establishing a competitive advantage (Sengupta et al., 2015). Employer branding factors include work climate, employee orientation, location, salary, experience, trust, career development, performance-based remuneration, and job security (Jain & Bhatt, 2015). Other HR processes and practices also contribute to an employer's image or brand, including leave structure, transfer options, and sabbaticals., leading to overall employee satisfaction and a stronger employer brand that radiates outside the organization and shows the employer's appeal to applicants.

The employer branding process, also known as employer reputation or employer image, requires communicating the desired organizational image to prospective employees (Chhabra & Sharma, 2014; Kanar et al., 2015). Some researchers have focused on employer branding; however, the evolution of knowledge and exploration of this topic continues. Employer branding is a blend of marketing and HR strategies (Chhabra & Sharma, 2014). In the rapidly changing business environment, one organizational challenge is to meet the need for executive talent. Identifying and attracting talent is critical for gaining a competitive advantage (Chhabra & Sharma, 2014; Holtbrügge & Kreppel, 2015), and investing in internal marketing and employer branding results in a consistent, quality customer exchange. Employer branding is a means of differentiating and marketing the firm's offerings and work environment (Aboul-Ela,

2016; Ahmad & Daud, 2016; Chhabra & Sharma, 2014). Employer promotion should occur within and outside the firm for both current and potential employees.

Chhabra and Sharma (2014) described a three-step process for establishing the employer brand. First, organizational leaders should determine their value propositions and embed them into their brands. The value proposition should be the central message conveyed through employer branding. Second, the organizational leaders should market the value proposition to stakeholders. The employer brand should remain consistent with the overall company branding efforts. Third, organizational leaders must market the internal brand to existing employees to inspire loyalty and reduce turnover.

There are numerous advantages to a strong employer brand, including reduced employee recruitment cost, improved employee morale and relations, lower turnover rates for improved cost savings in employee acquisition and training, enhanced recruitment, increased employee engagement, and the ability to provide lower salaries for comparable positions than competing firms with weaker employer brands (Aboul-Ela, 2016; Chhabra & Sharma, 2014; Khalid & Tariq, 2015). Additional advantages include stronger financial performance, higher returns on investment and profitability, assimilation of organizational values, and improved employee relations (Aboul-Ela, 2016).

Employer image has a significant effect on organizational attractiveness (Aboul-Ela, 2016; Ahmad & Daud, 2016; Chhabra & Sharma, 2014). An applicant with a positive first impression of an organization is more likely to stay in the applicant pool after the initial interview and accept an offer (Chhabra & Sharma, 2014). Employer

image, also referred to as employer brand, reflects the employer's identity (Ahmad & Daud, 2016) and presents the organization's value as an employer.

Both organizational and nonorganizational sources are means of disseminating employer brand or image. Organizational sources include job advertisements, web pages, and recruiters; nonorganizational sources include WOM and media (Lievens & Slaughter, 2016). WOM is the sharing of information from person to person via communication. Thus, WOM is not a result of an organization's direct marketing activities about its products and the experience of working at the organization. Historically, WOM was an exchange via traditional social interactions from person to person. Recently, however, WOM also occurs via social media. WOM is a company-independent occurrence enacted by people with no self-interest in promoting an organization. Therefore, individuals consider such communication more credible than company-dependent sources, such as publicity, sponsorship, and advertising (Lievens & Slaughter, 2016).

The digital era has provided additional venues for broader and quicker communication to potential employees (Chhabra & Sharma, 2014). With continuous access to information, such as Google, job boards, and social networks, employers must manage their employer brands and the channels used to distribute information about their value propositions. There is no downtime when managing employer branding (Chhabra & Sharma, 2014; Eger et al., 2018). Organizational decision-makers should be interested in their portrayal on social media to understand how customers, job seekers, and members of the general public perceive their organizations. Glassdoor, Vault, and LinkedIn are social media sites partially dedicated to discussions about companies and

their employer brands (Lievens & Slaughter, 2016). Decision-makers, especially in HR and marketing, should remain aware of brand image as portrayed through social media because such portrayal could have an influence on applicant attraction.

Having a reputation as a good workplace is a way to attract a high-quality workforce. Social media has resulted in the increased exposure and transparency of organizations to the public (Melian-Gonzalez & Bulchand-Gidumal, 2016). Employer-review websites provide an avenue for workers to express their opinions, creating something known as worker electronic WOM. In addition, several publications have focused on good employers who treat employees well. Examples include *Fortune*, which provides an annual publication of “The 100 Best Companies to Work For,” and *Forbes*, which lists “The 25 Best Places to Work.” These publications provide job seekers with information about how well employers treat employees and contribute to the favorable reputations of employers (Fombrun et al., 2015).

In their study of final-year postgraduate management students, Chhabra and Sharma (2014) sought to identify the organizational attributes attractive to students, develop employer branding strategies, and determine the preferred channel through which employers should market employer attractiveness or promote brand image. An organization’s employment brand should include the unique, distinguishing characteristics of its employment offerings or environments. Employer branding consists of promoting these unique offerings and the desirable traits of the organization as an employer. Employer branding is a necessity for acquiring and retaining talent. Promotion of the brand within the organization produces loyalty; in turn, marketing the brand

outside the organization could result in applicant attraction or employer attractiveness, producing tight bonds both inside and outside the organization. Rybaczewska et al. (2020) argued that employer image is not only an HR concern but also a component of marketing activities. Their study bridged a research gap by providing an understanding and evidence that a company's image as an employer affects current and future employees and contributes to consumers' decision-making and post-purchase behaviors. Rybaczewska et al. looked at an underresearched and underexplored aspect of employer image previously neglected in research on consumer decision-making.

Favorable employer branding could be a means of reducing the costs of recruiting and improving recruitment performance. In addition to differentiating, employers must use their brands to establish and satisfy emotional connections with potential applicants (Eger et al., 2018). HR managers should pay attention to the image and value of the brand, as they are key in recruiting and attracting potential candidates for the desired positions (Eger et al., 2018; Khalid & Tariq, 2015).

Employer attractiveness is a trait largely based on the employer value proposition to prospective employees or potential applicants. The employer value proposition should be a true description of what the organization provides to its employees. Developing the employer value proposition is a way to promote the proposition among potential applicants or employees to attract the target population. An employer should have a consistent brand that aligns with the product and corporate brand. Employer branding is the merger of marketing and HR strategies (Chhabra & Sharma, 2014), where employers

use marketing principles to communicate their position as an employer of choice (Khalid & Tariq, 2015).

Leaders must communicate a well-designed value proposition to potential employees. Communication of the proposition should occur via strategic channel selection to reach the target audience. In the digital environment of the 22nd century, employers must proactively manage communication channels and visibility to establish and maintain their employer brands. Employers should have highly visible and attractive brands to pull potential candidates toward the organization (Deloitte University Press, 2017).

The increasing popularity of social media has resulted in changed communication and communication channels. Users can participate in content generation and retrieve information from social media. Social media often has a key role in the recruitment process and the branding of organizations to potential employees (Eger et al., 2018). Social networking sites are highly frequented channels for gathering information during employment searches (Kissel & Buttgen, 2015), particularly for millennials, who want to research and evaluate companies before applying for positions and expect companies to provide such information (Eger et al., 2018). Ninety-four percent of the world's fastest-growing employers use LinkedIn, the largest online professional network worldwide, for recruitment and talent acquisition (Kissel & Buttgen, 2015).

Job Information

Creating a differentiated and valued offering in the marketplace is an important strategy for attracting potential employees (Bednarska, 2016), as recruitment is one of the

most crucial HR processes (Verwaeren et al., 2017). Although an important HR function, recruitment is costly (Yen, 2017). Similar to the marketing messages used for promotion, the information in recruitment messages ranges from high to low information and from specific to general (Kanar et al., 2015). Low-information recruitment messages often contain general information, such as the company name and logo, for increased organizational exposure and the distribution of a positive employer image or reputation. The primary purpose of job advertisements is to attract qualified talent to the organization; however, they are also branding tools for marketing the organization as a desirable place to work (Hirudayaraj & Baker, 2018).

Employers can attract the right human capital and gain a competitive advantage by including important job information in their position advertisements (Verwaeren et al., 2017). The job information needed in the recruitment process includes the type of work and information about the nature of the job (Lu & Liou, 2015), as well as compensation, benefits, and reward packages (Banks et al., 2016; Verwaeren et al., 2017). Compensation, benefits, and reward packages, also known as the employer value proposition, can be the differentiator for employers in the war for talent (Jepsen et al., 2015). Job postings are advertising tools for providing a product (a paid position) in exchange for capital value (knowledge, skills, and abilities). By including specific information about qualifications and competencies in job postings, HR professionals and hiring managers allow job-seekers to self-select in or out of the application process (Hirudayaraj & Baker, 2018).

Job seekers often have limited knowledge about potential employers in the areas of job-specific and company information and seek to gather knowledge through differing sources (Lin, 2015). The sources used to gain information vary, and there can be company-dependent and company-independent information sources. The most common sources of company-dependent information are job boards, job sites, and recruitment websites. Websites can be official company recruitment or third-party sites. The goal of a company-dependent website is to provide information, such as employee testimonials or career and professional development opportunities, to attract job seekers. Employers should build digital brands and align messaging across sites and experiences (Deloitte University Press, 2017).

Numerous sources not directly controlled by the organization can provide company-independent information. Job seekers often contact individuals in their social networks (e.g., family members, friends, and acquaintances) to determine whether an organization is a good place to work. Social networks are used to learn about a specific job (Lin, 2015).

Organizational leaders should consider the methods job seekers use to obtain recruitment-related information because the method could affect application intention. Job seekers obtain information through company-dependent and company-independent sources; therefore, employers must remain attuned to both information sources, including recruitment website quality and social influence factors, as both can affect organizational attractiveness and application decisions (Lin, 2015).

Dimensions in Job Advertisements

Job ads contain information about the job and work characteristics, including tasks, duties, responsibilities, and the work environment (Ganesan et al., 2018).

Applicants view job ads to expand their knowledge about the jobs and the organizations. Providing details about job and work characteristics enables potential applicants to view an organization as an attractive place of employment, which produces a positive attitude assessment in prospective applicants. Job seekers can use the details provided to match their job profiles with job ads and apply for positions.

An essential element of job recruitment advertisements is a description of the compensation and benefits. Although some employers use superior compensation and benefits to attract highly skilled applicants, many publish general and vague job advertisements. Most continental European countries have a cultural reluctance to presenting specific reward information in job advertisements. Verwaeren et al. (2017) found that providing information about compensation and benefits was a way to increase the organizational attractiveness of an employer. Theoretically, applicants find this information useful because they must consider basic human needs, such as food and shelter, and advanced needs, such as self-esteem and achievement. In a study based on PE fit, Verwaeren et al. examined the relationship between specific information on compensation and benefits and potential applicants' job pursuit intentions. An organization with a P-E fit enables compatibility between individuals and work environments with well-matched characteristics. Job seekers who perceive a fit with the

work environment are strongly attracted during the recruitment process, even in the early stages (Uggerslev et al., 2012).

To overcome the limitations of previous studies, Verwaeren et al. (2017) tested actual job seekers with extensive prior work experience instead of graduating students just entering the workforce. The study results showed the positive effect of specific information about reward packages (compensation and benefits) in job advertisements on applicant attraction and job pursuit intention. The compensation information in the job advertisements produced perceptions of the appropriateness of the salaries and benefits offered and provided information useful for drawing inferences about broader organizational attributes. The results showed there was little value in remaining vague about reward packages in job advertisements intended to attract highly sought-after job seekers.

Uggerslev et al. (2012) reviewed 232 studies on the predictors of applicant attraction at different recruitment stages. The results suggested that perceived fit is the strongest predictor of applicant attraction across the stages of recruitment. At all stages of recruitment, employers should communicate organizational characteristics to potential applicants. Uggerslev et al. found that applicants continuously evaluated their fit through the recruitment process; however, job seekers can change their perceptions as they move through the recruitment stages.

Yen (2017) examined the tradeoff between person-job (P-J) fit and P-O fit across the recruitment stages and their effect on job choice decisions. Similar to Uggerslev et al. (2012), Yen found P-J fit was a stronger influence when job seekers made decisions

about submitting applications, remaining in the applicant pools, and accepting job offers. Yen and Uggerslev et al. found that P-J fit had a more significant role in the decision-making process than P-O fit; however, these findings do not indicate the unimportance of P-O. Given the results of these studies, managers should review their recruitment practices to ensure they provide clear and realistic job previews so job seekers can accurately assess their fit with the position posted. HR professionals should also describe the company culture, beliefs, and values so job seekers can make informed decisions about P-O fit. A realistic and transparent job preview is a way to encourage job seekers with P-J and P-O fit to remain in the applicant pool, deter unfit job seekers from moving forward in the process, and save valuable time and resources.

Überschaer et al. (2016) found the strength between objective and subjective fit based on advertisement attractiveness and organizational image. The researchers examined whether advertisement attractiveness and organizational image contributed to the strength of the objective-subjective P-O fit relation. The intent was to address the research gap on the formation and accuracy of fit perception. Individuals can establish multiple types of fit within their environments, two of the most prominent being objective and subjective fit. An objective comparison between a person's and an organization's characteristics is an objective P-O fit. Subjective P-O fit is based on how well individuals believe they fit with an organization. Individuals tend to prefer organizations with a strong subjective fit because they perceive the organizations will match their personal needs and values. Individuals base job decisions more on subjective than objective fit. In addition, the subjective fit could be a mediator between objective P-O fit and attraction.

Job seekers depend on recruitment advertisements to locate and identify attractive employers (Baum et al., 2016). Recruitment advertisements tend to be the early recruitment channels with which potential job seekers or applicants have contact. Upon initial contact with a recruitment advertisement, job seekers base application decisions on three critical points: their prior image of the employer, the attractiveness of the advertisement, and the content of the message (Überschaer et al., 2016). Image is another important consideration in the recruitment process (Baum & Kabst, 2014). A positive image could cause job seekers to adjust fit perceptions to associate with a company.

After surveying undergraduate and graduate students at a midsized German university, Überschaer et al. (2016) found that advertisement attractiveness and organizational image contributed to the objective-subjective P-O fit relation. Participants included both prospective and actual job seekers. The results indicate that advertisement attractiveness moderates the relationship between objective and subjective fit for prospective job seekers. However, Überschaer et al. found no significant relationship for actual job seekers. Actual job seekers did not have a positive evaluation of organizational image related to P-O fit, regardless of the stage of recruitment. The researchers concluded that a positive organizational image is a means of enhancing applicant attraction and applicant pool quality but not the self-selection process for applicants.

Employer Value Proposition

Value propositions are the primary messages of the employer brand used to attract potential talent (Chhabra & Sharma, 2014; Sengupta et al., 2015). Employee value propositions are the advantages employees earn in return for their efforts in the

workplace (Lesenyeho et al., 2018). The concept of value proposition originated in the field of marketing, in which a seller makes promises to customers in terms of value and meets their needs. In the organizational or employer context, the value proposition is a tool for marketing an employer's unique attributes and offerings to potential and internal employees (Sengupta et al., 2015). The employer value proposition includes both financial and nonfinancial offerings for targeted job seekers (Biswas & Suar, 2016). In addition to promoting unique traits in a value proposition, employers should determine what sets them apart and makes them attractive to potential job seekers (Deloitte University Press, 2017). Previous research has shown that employers perceived as attractive are better positioned to hire qualified employees (Holtbrügge & Kreppel, 2015).

Rich Media Versus Lean Media

Communication channel richness is the capacity a form of media has to clarify vague or ambiguous information and promote understanding between parties.

Communication media vary in ability to facilitate a mutual or shared understanding and fall into one of two mediums: rich and lean (Daft & Lengel, 1986). Richer media or channels have the most ability to produce understanding. In this context, there is synonymous use of media and channels (Johnson & Lederer, 2005).

The difference between the two media, rich versus lean, is the number of cues associated with each (Daft & Lengel, 1986). Rich media consists of communication channels that enable immediate feedback, transmission of more than one language cue, the customization of messages to the needs of the recipients, and the incorporation of one

of four types of language (written, verbal, chart form, and graph; Cable & Yu, 2006).

Face-to-face communication is the richest and most credible source of information (Cable & Yu, 2006; Johnson & Lederer, 2005).

Lu and Liou (2015) examined the effects of high- and low-information early recruitment strategies on job seekers' perceptions of company reputation, job characteristics, and job pursuit intentions. The high-information recruitment strategies were WOM and detailed advertisements; the low-information recruitment strategies were publicity, sponsorship, and general advertisements. Lu and Liou found that high-information recruitment activities provided more comprehensive job descriptions, an increased understanding of job details, and more information about the work performed and the company. Low-information activities, such as company marketing to disseminate general but positive information, were means of bolstering company reputation. A common type of low-information exposure used by employers is repeated promotion of their names and logos.

An unfavorable employer reputation can affect an organization's recruitment success (Kanar et al., 2015). Over a 4-week longitudinal experimental design study, Kanar et al. (2015) examined whether recruitment messages were effective means of positively changing a negative or unfavorable employer reputation. In addition, the researchers tested the effects of familiarity on shifting perceptions of employer reputation.

Despite the increased popularity of advanced online platforms for recruitment, numerous employers have struggled to attract and hire the right fit for many positions

(Liu et al., 2016; Reis & Braga, 2016). Employers continue to invest in newspaper advertisements because of the potential to reach a large geographical pool and the ongoing consideration of newspapers as a stable and reliable medium (Ganesan et al., 2018). Print advertisements remain relevant, even with the increasing use of online platforms. Globally, print versions of newspapers continue to produce the majority of income for newspaper publishers (Kilman, 2015). Baum and Kabst (2014) emphasized the value of using print recruitment advertisements and recruitment websites simultaneously to increase applicant attraction. The authors found that using print recruitment advertisements with recruitment website postings enabled potential applicants to identify with an employer brand more positively and intently.

Formal and Informal Recruitment Channels

Employers can utilize various recruitment channels to attract potential employees. Recruitment channels vary depending on the type of job and other factors, such as occupation, employment sector, and organization size (Gerxhani & Koster, 2015). Recruitment channels fall into two groups: formal and informal. Formal channels include employment agencies, advertisements, and college and university recruitment centers. Informal channels consist of WOM information from relatives, friends, acquaintances, colleagues, current employees, and other employers. Prior researchers have posited that employers select recruitment channels based on cost-benefit analyses that address the following aspects: (a) the money and time costs associated with the specific recruitment strategy, (b) the size of the candidate pool, (c) the quality of the candidate pool, and (d) the likelihood of finding a qualified candidate.

Applicant Attraction

Employers attempting to achieve a sustained competitive advantage should view attracting highly qualified applicants as an essential and critical HR function (Lin, 2015). Employers should have the ability to differentiate themselves to become more effective in attracting talent (Eger et al., 2018). Therefore, employers with effective recruitment strategies that enable them to attract large numbers of applicants can hire the best employees (Baum & Kabst, 2014). Understanding applicant attraction is a necessity for organizations when developing effective recruitment strategies to attract qualified applicants (Banks et al., 2016).

Although recruitment has a direct effect on an organization's bottom line, acquiring the right talent can be a challenge. Employers must identify the type of individual they want to attract, the value proposition they want to convey, and which recruitment channels to use to reach the intended audience (SHRM Foundation, 2016). Poorly planned and implemented recruitment efforts could result in unqualified job applicants who lack diversity and are not good fits for the organization.

Applicants tend to use characteristics as screening mechanisms to identify the organizations providing more attractive positions (Banks et al., 2016). The literature has indicated that the most commonly examined predictors of applicant attraction are compensation/level of pay, type of work, and organizational image/reputation. Job and organizational characteristics are two common predictors of applicant attraction, with job characteristics including compensation, type of work, and organizational characteristics including organizational or corporate image. In marketing, organizational or corporate

image is a factor similar to corporate reputation and is the immediate picture of an organization based on aggregated multiple images held by stakeholders over time (Selamat et al., 2016). These characteristics are the strong indicators of applicant attraction; however, there are others.

Organizational attractiveness is a multidimensional construct. Berthon et al. (2005) identified the five distinct dimensions of employer attractiveness (interest, social, economic, development, and application value) potential candidates consider when choosing employers. Attraction to organizations occurs based on how applicants prioritize these factors and expect to meet their needs and expectations.

Lievens and Highhouse (2003) recognized two attributes of organizational attractiveness: instrumental and symbolic. Instrumental attributes consist of what an organization provides that job seekers find useful (e.g., salary package, leave time). Most researchers have focused mainly on instrumental attributes (Eger et al., 2018). Symbolic attributes are the subjective and intangible aspects of organizational identity or employer image (e.g., culture, prestige, degree of business innovation; Reis & Braga, 2016). Studies have shown that symbolic attributes could be more relevant to applicant attraction and act as better differentiators of employers from their competitors than instrumental attributes (Lievens & Highhouse, 2003; Reis & Braga, 2016). The instrumental-symbolic framework has key applications for applicant attraction (Lievens & Highhouse, 2003). Lievens and Highhouse (2003) posited that job seekers consider symbolic attributes more important when there are few instrumental differences between employers. The more subjective and intangible nature of symbolic attributes could be essential for attracting

applicants through websites and social media. The internet is one of the most popular sources of information used by job seekers to gain knowledge about employers (Eger et al., 2018).

Eger et al. (2018) sought to determine how young people assessed the personality traits of their preferred employers and how they used company and recruitment websites and social media to obtain information about potential employers. Eger et al. found that the essential symbolic personality traits young people desired in their ideal employers were reliability, professionalism, flexibility, and organization, regardless of gender and current employment status. Eger et al. further contributed to the research on employer branding or attractiveness by providing information on how young people use recruitment websites and social media to gain information about the potential employers they find attractive and consider for future employment.

Eger et al. (2018) contributed to the research and understanding of the organizational traits that job seekers or prospective employees find attractive. However, the study had limitations. Given the character of the sample used, the study did not have generalizable results. Therefore, there is a need for additional studies on the intercultural differences in application attraction among young people (Generation Y) worldwide.

Summary and Transition

The purpose of this quantitative quasi-experimental study was two-fold. First, I examined the effects of applicant attraction and employer knowledge (employer familiarity, employer information, and job information based on recruitment practices (print, web, or print and web) . Second, I examined the effects of employer knowledge

and media richness on applicant attraction. The intent was to understand the relationship between the early recruitment practices, media channel richness, and employer knowledge and applicant attraction. The results could provide HR managers with the knowledge to develop recruitment strategies and attract skilled employees.

Section 1 presented the study's problem, problem statement, purpose, nature of the study, research question, hypotheses, and theoretical framework. The section included the recent literature on the MRT, the rival or opponent theories of the MRT, employer familiarity, employer reputation or brand, job information, and applicant attraction.

Section 2 presents the role of the researcher, participants, research method and design, population and sample, ethical research, data collection instruments, data collection technique, data analysis, and study validity. Section 3 includes an analysis of the findings and the conclusion. The section also presents a detailed discussion of the findings related to HR managers and the social change implications. Section 3 concludes with recommendations for action and further study, a personal reflection about the doctoral study process, and a summative concluding statement.

Section 2: The Project

In this study, I focused on the relationships between applicant attraction, employer familiarity, employer reputation, and job information based on recruitment practices (print, web, or print and web). In addition, the study focused on the relationships between employer familiarity, employer reputation, job information, media richness, and applicant attraction. The data analysis could provide information that HR managers and hiring managers can use to design more effective early recruitment tools. Improved early recruitment tools could be a way to increase applicant attraction and applicant fit at organizations, resulting in increased organizational profitability and sustainability.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this quantitative quasi-experimental study was to examine the effects of recruitment practice (print, web, or print and web) on employer knowledge (employer familiarity, employer reputation, and job information) and applicant attraction, and assess the relationship between employer knowledge (employer familiarity, employer reputation, job information), and media richness and applicant attraction. In the first analysis, the independent variable (IV) was recruitment practice, with three categories: print alone, web alone, and print and web together. The dependent variables (DV) were employer knowledge (familiarity, employer reputation, and job information) and applicant attraction. In the second analysis, the IVs were employer knowledge (employer familiarity, employer reputation, and job information) and media richness (print, web, or print and web), and the DV was applicant attraction. The target population was students

at a Florida higher education institution. More effective hiring decisions could contribute to filling positions with employees who best fit the qualifications, resulting in more satisfied employees, improved social conditions in the workplace, and reduced unemployment in the community.

Role of the Researcher

The roles of a quantitative researcher include exploring design options and choosing the appropriate design; managing, collecting, analyzing, and evaluating the data; following ethical guidelines; and publishing the findings (Kang et al., 2017). In addition, a quantitative researcher should recognize and document research bias and any preconceived outcomes in data collection to ensure credible findings (Šimundić, 2013; Zyphur & Pierides, 2017). Researchers should act in the best interests of their participants (Famenka, 2016). In my role as the researcher, my primary function was to recruit participants and collect, analyze, and interpret the data. I did not have any direct or prior relationships with the participants. My relationship with the topic consisted of managing programs at the Florida higher education institution where the students attended. However, I did not teach courses or interact with students directly during the data collection portion of the study.

I conducted the research ethically by following the principles of respect for participants, beneficence, and justice in the Belmont Report (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1979). Researchers should disclose the nature of their research and the process followed and inform participants that they can withdraw from the process at any time (Judkins-Cohn et al., 2014). Researchers must minimize the potential risks to

participants by ensuring their confidentiality and privacy (Snowden, 2014). Before beginning this study, I completed human subject protection training from the National Institutes of Health (see Appendix A). Further adherence to ethical guidelines included informing the participants they could withdraw at any time and assuring them of their anonymity.

Participants, Recruitment, and Process

The participants in this study met the following criteria: (a) enrolled in a college or university in Florida, (b) attending college on a full- or part-time basis, and (c) minimum age of 18 years of age. The participants were randomly sampled men and women from the overarching population. The study occurred with measures to recruit only those students who met the eligibility requirements and represented the target population to preserve the validity of the research. I did not have a direct relationship with the participants and did not invite members of vulnerable populations, such as children, older individuals, crisis victims, or prisoners, to participate in the study.

I used public means to identify and contact participants for data collection and obtained approval of the institutional review board (IRB) of the college where the data collection occurred. Qualifying students received an email invitation to participate in the quasi-experimental study (see Appendix B) and a copy of the consent form. The consent form included the following information: (a) the purpose of the quasi-experimental study, (b) the nature of the study, (c) the rights of the participants, and (d) the process used to protect the privacy of the participants. Before gaining access to the survey, the respondents met eligibility requirements and indicated their consent by clicking “yes” for

the consent form statement. The current study included the requirement of maintaining data anonymity to protect the confidentiality, privacy, and intimacy of the participants during the research process (see Mondada, 2014). The participants did not provide their names, student identification numbers, or other identifying information.

The goal of the current study was to answer the central research question by examining the relationships between recruitment practice (with varying media richness), employer knowledge, and applicant attraction in the Southeast United States. The participants attended college either full- or part-time; therefore, they could have (a) been active or potential job seekers, (b) had limited employer knowledge, or (c) had a varied attraction to recruitment media. All of these traits aligned with the central research question.

Research Method and Design

Researchers use problems and questions to align the research method and design of a study (Zachariadis et al., 2013). After developing the research questions, researchers must select an appropriate research design to answer the research questions (Kohler et al., 2017). For the current study, I selected a quantitative method with a quasi-experimental design to answer the research question. Data collection occurred via a validated questionnaire to obtain data for analysis and to test the hypotheses.

Research Method

There are three methods available to scholars when conducting research: quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods (Halcomb & Hickman, 2015; Mahimbo et al., 2017). Qualitative research methods include natural inquiry, emergent design

principles, and a focus on how respondents understand their realities (Hitchcock et al., 2015). The qualitative method is an interpretive approach used to study phenomena in usual or normal settings without designing or manipulating the circumstances. Qualitative methodology is appropriate for researchers seeking to interact with participants rather than test hypotheses to examine and understand problems (Hesse-Biber, 2016). The qualitative approach was not appropriate for the current study because I did not seek to interpret the information acquired in this research project through interviews, inquiries, and explanations of human perceptions.

Mixed-methods research includes both quantitative and qualitative approaches (Hitchcock et al., 2015; Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). The purpose of combining the two methodologies is to draw from the strengths of each method and minimize the inherent weaknesses of a single approach (Hitchcock et al., 2015). Because the qualitative method was not appropriate for this study, a mixed-methods approach would not have been a suitable fit either.

Scholars conduct quantitative research to examine the statistical relationships of numerical data (Westfall et al., 2017) and examine the relationships between two or more variables to test hypotheses (Park & Park, 2016; Patton, 2015). I sought to understand the relationship between recruitment practices (with varying media richness), employer knowledge, and applicant attraction (a quantifiable dependent variable). Therefore, the quantitative method was the most suitable approach for this study. In addition, the numerical data collected underwent statistical analysis.

Research Design

The three quantitative designs are correlational, experimental, and quasi-experimental (Venkatesh et al., 2013). In the current study, the independent variable of recruitment practice had three preexisting conditions (print, website, or print and website). I assigned the participants into one of the three groups; however, there was not a control group. Therefore, a quasi-experimental design was the most appropriate approach.

Population and Sampling

The general population was all students attending colleges or universities in the United States. The target population consisted of students attending a college or university in the State of Florida in the Southeast United States. The participants in this study met the following criteria: (a) enrolled in a college or university in Florida, (b) attending college on a full- or part-time basis, and (c) at least 18 years of age.

The target population for the quantitative quasi-experimental study was an appropriate group for answering the central research question. Many students attending colleges or universities in Florida look for employment upon graduation or have no or limited employer knowledge. Therefore, the study's population aligned with the central research question.

The two sampling methods of quantitative research are probability and nonprobability (Acharya et al., 2013). Probability sampling is the preferred method in quantitative research for obtaining a randomized sample and generalizable results. Probability sampling enables scholars to generalize their findings from the sample to the

overarching population; however, this sampling method is typically complicated, time-consuming, and costly. Conversely, nonprobability sampling is an effective method when a researcher cannot feasibly obtain an actual random sample and there is an unknown probability for subject selection.

For the current study, nonprobability convenience sampling occurred by sending emails to students enrolled at a higher education institution in Florida. Convenience sampling is the most used technique for recruiting participants and efficiently obtaining data (Scholtz, 2021). After recruitment, I assigned the participants to one of the three groups at regular intervals. The order of the recruitment tools presented in the survey was as follows: (a) print advertisement, (b) website, and (c) both print advertisement and website. For example, the first student to click the link to take the survey received the survey with the print advertisement to view before answering the survey questions, the second student to click on the survey received the employer website with recruitment information, and the third student received both the print advertisement and the website. This pattern continued throughout the data collection process via logic programmed into the survey tool used to collect the data.

G*Power was the software used to calculate the appropriate sample size for this univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA). The G*Power 3.1.9.7 software analysis indicated the number of respondents required for this survey was 159 to 180 with statistical power of .80 or .85, alpha level of .05 (Type I error rate), and a medium effect size of .25 (*f*) (see Figure 1). For linear regression, the study had a sample size sufficient

to achieve a power of .80 and .85 regression ($N = 85$ or 95) with a medium effect size of .15 (f^2). Therefore, the recruitment of a minimum sample size of 180 occurred.

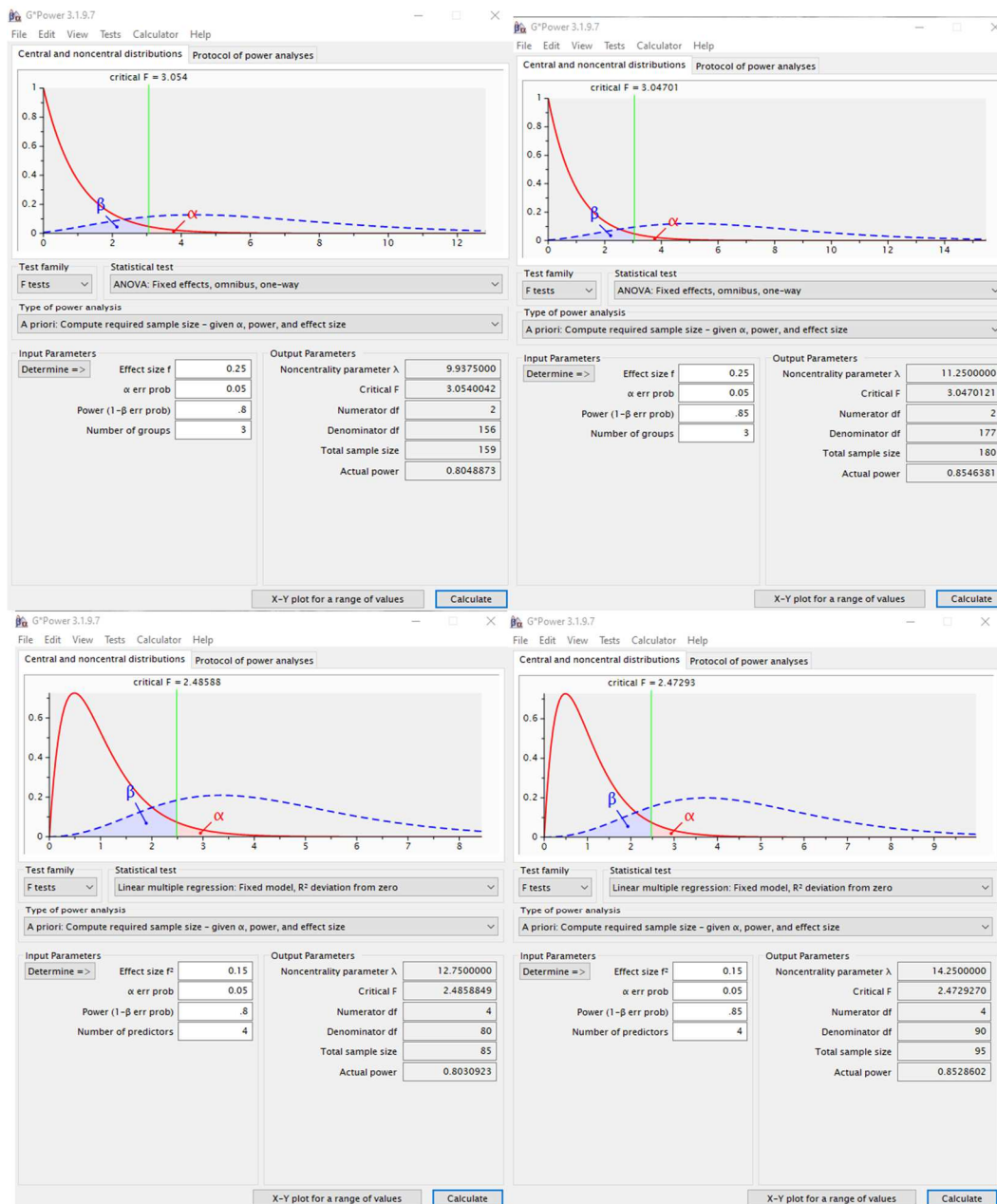
Ethical Research

Research activities often include enrolling human subjects as study volunteers (Liberale & Kovach, 2017). All the participants in this study received and completed an informed consent form before the data collection process. Informed consent is a voluntary agreement to participate in a study and is a means of protecting the participants from ethical issues during the data collection process (Jordan, 2014). The participants in the current study could withdraw without penalty at any time during the data collection period.

The participants received a \$10 gift card as an incentive for participation and appreciation for their participation. Two of the main reasons for paying research participants are to boost recruitment and thank the participants for their assistance (Leavens et al., 2019; Resnik, 2015). It is a common practice to offer participants a monetary incentive. However, the practice can present ethical concerns such as undue inducement if there is an excessive incentive, or exploitation if there is an insufficient incentive (Resnik, 2015). There are different methods for determining the appropriate payment for research participation, including reimbursement for expenses, such as wages or compensation, and as a gesture of appreciation. In the current study, the participants received a nominal amount of money as an expression of gratitude for their time and contribution to the research.

Figure 1

Graphical Models of G*Power Analysis to Determine Sample Size



Scholars must ensure ethical conduct when researching human subjects by obtaining approval from an IRB (Liberale & Kovach, 2017). The purpose of the IRB is to protect human beings' ethical rights and welfare from research risks and ensure data collection occurs with the informed consent of all of the participants (Judkins-Cohn et al., 2014). I submitted a request to Walden University's IRB for approval to collect the data and continue the research process. IRB approval indicated that this study aligned with the required ethical and compliance standards of research methods. The informed consent form included the approval number 01-15-21-0581482.

The data collection process occurred at a college or university in Florida. Therefore, I also submitted a request to the college's IRB for approval to collect data and the email addresses of all students over 18 years of age who attended the institution during Summer 2021. I received formal approval from the partner institution on April 21, 2021, which I submitted to Walden University's IRB on April 23, 2021. I received notification of Walden IRB application approval and authorization for data collection on April 27, 2021.

Researchers should take measures to encourage accurate and honest survey responses, such as informing participants of the anonymous and confidential nature of the data collection (Bova et al., 2016). For confidentiality purposes and to protect the students' identities, I did not require the participants to provide their names, student identifiers, or birth dates. I ensured data security by storing password-protected files on a password-protected device or computer. I will maintain all of the data securely for 5 years before destruction, per Walden University requirements.

Data Collection Instruments

This study included five variables. I measured each variable with the questions developed by the researchers who have measured the same variables in previous studies (Baum & Kabst, 2014). In the first analysis, the IV was recruitment practice (print, web, or print and web); the DVs were employer knowledge (as measured by employer familiarity, employer reputation, and job information) and applicant attraction. In the second analysis, the IVs were employer knowledge (employer familiarity, employer reputation, and job information) and media richness (print, web, or print and web); the DV was applicant attraction. A recruitment practice with a print tool had low media richness, whereas the recruitment practice with a website tool had high media richness (Baum & Kabst, 2014). Employer knowledge was a variable measured with the three subsets of employer familiarity, employer reputation, and job information. This section includes an explanation of the instrumentation used in the study.

I followed the method and questionnaire by Baum and Kabst (2014) to measure the independent and dependent variables. I sent an email with an attached letter to Baum to request permission to use the questionnaire he and Kabst employed in a 2014 research study and received permission to reproduce and use the questionnaire for noncommercial research (see Appendix C).

Recruitment Practice

The recruitment practice consisted of three advertisement categories: print only, web only, and both print and web. I assigned the participants to one of the three groups. The participants then answered survey questions regarding richness, employer knowledge

(employer familiarity, employer reputation, and job information, and attraction. The third group answered richness questions related to both print and website, as well as five additional richness questions not provided to the other participants. All the participants responded to the same number of questions regarding knowledge and attraction.

Media Richness

I measured media richness by asking questions related to information content, feedback possibility, personal focus, and the symbolism of the two recruitment activities (Baum & Kabst, 2014). The five questions (see Appendix D) were the means used to measure the richness of the print recruitment advertisement, with slight revisions of the same five questions used to measure the richness of the website. Each question had a 7-point Likert scale from 0 (*strongly disagree*) to 6 (*strongly agree*). The multiscale items used to measure richness print and richness website had Cohen's alphas of 0.87 and 0.89, respectively (Baum & Kabst, 2014). Computing the mean scores occurred to examine the richness of the advertisement information, with higher scores indicating better richness.

Employer Knowledge

The collection of data on employer knowledge occurred by asking questions on familiarity, reputation, and job information (Baum & Kabst, 2014). The assessment of each question occurred with a seven-point scale that ranged from 0 (*I do not agree*) to 6 (*I entirely agree*). Four items were the means used to measure the familiarity with the employer and determine whether the potential applicants could identify the company from other employers (see Appendix E). The reputation of the employer was a variable measured with four items to assess the company as an employer. Measuring job

information, the last dimension of employer knowledge, was with eight questions to find whether the potential applicants had a basic knowledge of the employer and the job.

Baum and Kabst (2014) used multi-item scales to measure latent constructs, designing the scales in their questionnaire based on prior literature for content validity. Baum and Kabst computed Cronbach's alpha for each multiple-scale item to measure scale reliability. All multiscale items had sufficient Cronbach's alpha scores above the accepted minimum value of 0.7, as follows: employer familiarity = 0.81, employer reputation = 0.9, and job information = 0.85.

Applicant Attraction

Finally, applicant attraction was the dependent variable measured with three items. Each item had a 7-point Likert scale, from 0 (*strongly disagree*) to 6 (*strongly agree*). Higher scores indicate more attraction to the company. Previous researchers have found that applicant attraction had strong reliability among the three items with Cronbach's alpha = 0.89 (Baum & Kabst, 2014).

Baum and Kabst (2014) assessed the convergent and discriminant validity of the measurement models by computing the descriptive statistics, correlations, average variance extracted, and variance inflation factor. The results showed convergent validity and discriminant validity. Baum and Kabst also checked for multicollinearity and found no significant risk. Finally, Baum and Kabst took precautions to prevent potential common method variance problems. Common method variance produces a false internal consistency or apparent correlation among variables with self-reported measurements from a single source (Chang et al., 2010). Baum and Kabst used self-reported

measurements collected from a single source. Therefore, the researchers applied multiple strategies to assess common method variance, including both ex-ante and ex-post survey strategies, as recommended by Chang et al. (2010).

Data Collection Technique

I tested my hypotheses by surveying students at a Florida college. I contacted the college's IRB to request the email addresses of the students enrolled at the institution and over 18 years of age. The college name remained anonymous as part of the agreement. The students enrolled in Summer 2021 and over 18 years of age had the opportunity to participate in the study. The survey contained an embedded consent form and participation acknowledgment at the beginning of the survey. The students had to view and actively accept the consent statement before beginning the survey. The consent form included the purpose of the study, how to complete the survey, the option of not participating, the confidentiality of participation, and the use of the results.

The students received the consent form and survey via their student email addresses. The survey remained open and available to the students for 4 weeks during May and June 2021 and did not include any identifying student markers. The students could no longer access the survey at the end of the 4-week period. The collection of the survey data occurred through the survey tool Qualtrics, with the data subsequently downloaded to a Microsoft Excel file. Microsoft Excel was the tool used to import the data into SPSS software for data manipulation and statistical testing. The deletion of the data in the survey tool (Qualtrics) occurred after the completion and approval of the data analysis section of the study. All the data associated with this study remained secure on a

password-protected computer or a locked file used for data analysis and data storage. The data will remain in a locked file until destruction 5 years after the completion of the study, as per Walden University IRB guidelines.

The survey distribution method provided a controlled and consistent delivery environment advantageous for this quasi-experimental study. I systematically placed the participants into three groups through the program logic set up in the survey tool. Group 1 had access to only the printed advertisement, Group 2 had access to only the website, and Group 3 had access to both the printed advertisement and the website.

Data Analysis

The study's foundational research questions were: Is there a significant difference in applicant attraction, employer familiarity, employer reputation, and job information based on recruitment practices (print, web, or print and web)? The second question was: Is there a significant relationship between employer familiarity, employer reputation, job information, and media richness and applicant attraction? The hypotheses of this study were:

H1₀: There is no significant difference in applicant attraction or employer knowledge based on recruitment practices (print, web, or print and web).

H1_A: There is a significant difference in applicant attraction or employer knowledge based on recruitment practices (print, web, or print and web).

H2₀: There is no significant relationship between employer knowledge and media richness and applicant attraction.

H2A: There is a significant relationship employer knowledge and media richness and applicant attraction.

Assessing data quality is vital in converting raw data into a useable form for statistical analysis (Birtwhistle & Williamson, 2015). Researchers can ensure usable data through the cleaning and screening process. Data cleaning entails identifying and correcting data imperfections (Greenwood & Shields, 2017). In turn, data screening involves evaluating the data to ensure their readiness for further statistical analysis (Sullivan et al., 2015; Won et al., 2017).

I first checked the impossible and invalid data to ensure data accuracy. In the data scanning process, the raw data underwent examination for percentages and patterns of missing values. Instances of missing data can occur when participants fail to respond to questions in the survey or make input errors during the data entry process (Bashir & Hassan, 2018). In this study, I used pairwise deletion if the missing data were less than 5% and if the missing pattern was completely at random; otherwise, I replaced the missing values with a multiple imputation approach. Although prior researchers had developed all the instruments applied in this study, I examined each instrument's reliability with Cronbach's alpha to ensure the reliability and validity of the analysis. These assumptions included data appropriateness, independence, approximately normal distribution, and the homogeneity of the variance of residuals (Boslaugh, 2013).

Assessment of the bivariate relationships between demographics (age, gender, and enrollment status) and the IVs and the DV occurred with correlations, crosstabulation, independent *t* tests, and ANOVA. None of the demographics had an association with any

IVs or the DV. Therefore, I only used demographic information for descriptions and did not control it in any primary analysis. A one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare recruitment practices on the outcomes of RQ1. Eta squared was the computation used to reflect the effect size of the one-way ANOVA. Applicant attraction, employer reputation, and job information were continuous variables. Then, a multiple linear regression was performed to examine the relationships between knowledge/richness and applicant attractions. The dependent variable was applicant attraction. The independent variables were employer, familiarity, employer reputation, job information, and media richness. The assumption tests for linear regression, such as linearity, residual normality, and multicollinearity of predictors, also underwent assessment. I reported the unstandardized coefficients and the 95% confidence interval (CI) to indicate the changes in applicant attraction due to a change of one unit of each independent variable. Standardized coefficients showed the magnitude of the predictors' impact (changes of applicant attraction due to a change of one standard deviation of each independent variable). I cleaned and analyzed the data in IBM SPSS Statistics for Windows, Version 25.0 (SPSS v25; IBM Corp., 2017).

Study Validity

Validity is a central tenet of quality research (Jordan, 2018). An integral aspect of quantitative research, validity consists of assessing whether the collected data are accurate representations of the phenomenon under study. Research includes two types of validity: internal and external. Internal validity is measured to understand the strength and control of a research design and the degree to which the data produce conclusions

about cause-and-effect relationships (Dalal & Carter, 2015; Hoareau et al., 2017; Johnson et al., 2019). External validity is the extent to which a study has results generalizable to other settings, different people, and over time (Chaplin et al., 2018; Hoareau et al., 2017; Stroebe et al., 2018). The four main threats to validity in quantitative research are conclusion, internal, construct, and external (Ampatzoglou et al., 2019). Threats to internal and external validity should be evaluated for experimental and quasi-experimental studies (Onwuegbuzie, 2000).

Internal validity addresses causal control and is one of the most important properties of scientific research (Broniatowski & Tucker, 2017; Peters & Pereira, 2017). In this study, the intent was to determine causation; therefore, internal validity was essential. As internal validity increases in research, external validity decreases (Onwuegbuzie, 2000). Campbell and Stanley (1963) identified eight threats to internal validity: history, maturation, testing, instrumentation, statistical regression, selection of participants, mortality, and interaction effects. For the survey in this study, I utilized questions developed by Baum and Kabst (2014) who had measured the same variables in previous studies. Baum and Kabst (2014) assessed the convergent and discriminant validity of the measurement models by computing the descriptive statistics, correlations, average variance extracted, and variance inflation factor. The results showed convergent validity and discriminant validity. Baum and Kabst also checked for multicollinearity and found no significant risk. Finally, Baum and Kabst took precautions to prevent potential common method variance problems. Common method variance produces a false internal consistency or apparent correlation among variables with self-reported measurements

from a single source (Chang et al., 2010). Baum and Kabst used self-reported measurements collected from a single source. Therefore, the researchers applied multiple strategies to assess common method variance, including both ex-ante and ex-post survey strategies.

Possible threats to internal validity in this study were evaluated and determined to be mortality and subject selection. Participants could withdraw from the study at any time (mortality) and not complete the data collection survey resulting in more motivated students completing the study, which could be a threat. In addition, the groups in the study could have been slightly different in demographic characteristics (subject selection), and this could have resulted in a possible threat. In addition to recruitment strategies I applied in this study, there may be some other potential confounding factors causing applicant attraction. For example, there may be different attractions and knowledge between genders or by age, etc. Therefore, I collected some basic demographic information from the participants, age, gender, and enrollment status. Bivariate relationships were examined between the demographics, and the applicant attractions and employer knowledge. No significant relationships were found. I also evaluated the bivariate relationships between demographics and the three recruitment strategies to ensure that there were no characteristics differences between three groups in this quasi-experimental study. The crosstabulation with chi-square tests and one-way ANOVA indicate that the subject characters were not different between the three recruitment strategy groups. In addition, when data was collected, no one dropped from

the study, so participants withdrawal that may have impacted the treatment effect is not an issue for this project.

ANOVA analyses contain assumptions that researchers must address to ensure the appropriateness of the statistical technique: data appropriateness, independence, distribution, and homogeneity of variance (Boslaugh, 2013). A data appropriateness assumption indicates the need for a continuous outcome variable and categorical group variables. Independence occurs when each value of the outcome variable is independent of all other values. I checked and met this assumption if I selected an appropriate method for collecting the data. The independence assumption would not have been met if the clustering of the participants into larger units had an effect on their value on the outcome variable (Green & Salkind, 2014). The continuous variable should have an approximately normal distribution within each group (Boslaugh, 2013). I checked the distribution by creating a histogram and visually inspecting as well as running a statistical test for normality.

The final assumption of an ANOVA test is the homogeneity of variance, in which each group should have almost equal variance (Boslaugh, 2013). Researchers measure external validity to determine if the results apply to larger populations (Haghani & Sarvi, 2019). When a sample is not adequately representative of the target population, selection bias is the primary threat to external validity. Researchers utilizing external validity should not generalize from a biased sample to a larger sample. Therefore, the more representative the sample, the higher the confidence in generalizing the results to the broader population (Mathes et al., 2018). In this study, I took a sample from the larger

population of students in the Southeastern United States; therefore, the study could have had results generalizable to other populations.

Transition and Summary

The purposes of this quantitative quasi-experimental study were to examine the effects of recruitment practice (print, web, or print and web) on employer knowledge (employer familiarity, employer reputation, and job information) and applicant attraction, and assess the relationship between employer knowledge (employer familiarity, employer reputation, job information), and media richness and applicant attraction. Understanding the factors of applicant attraction could enable managers to develop more effective recruitment strategies to improve hiring practices and decisions. An in-depth review of recent professional and academic literature on the relevant topics provided insight into the phenomenon. A list of keywords and their definitions offered clarity and an understanding of the literature review.

Section 2 included information about the structure and implementation of the study, including the role of the researcher, description of the participants, research method and design, population and sampling method, and the measures taken to ensure ethical research. This section also contained a discussion of the instrumentation and process used to collect and analyze the data, as well as an overview of validity and the means used to minimize both external and internal threats.

One-way ANOVA was used to compare more than two groups on the continuous DVs and multiple linear regression occurred to assess the predictable relationship between two or more IVs and one DV. SPSS v25 was the software used to facilitate the

analysis of the data collected from the participants. Section 3 presents the final stages of the research process. The section includes an explanation of the statistical findings and presents the results used to accept or reject the null hypotheses based on the statistical analysis. Section 3 presents recommendations for further research, reflection on the research process, and a conclusion to the study.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

The purposes of this quantitative quasi-experimental study were to examine the effects of recruitment practice (print, web, or print and web) on employer knowledge (employer familiarity, employer reputation, and job information) and applicant attraction, and assess the relationship between employer knowledge (employer familiarity, employer reputation, job information), and media richness and applicant attraction. I collected data from the participants who met the following criteria: (a) full- or part-time student, (b) attending a Florida higher education institution, and (c) minimum age of 18 years. The study occurred with measures to recruit only the students who met the eligibility requirements and represented the target population to ensure study validity.

The final analysis included 186 participants. One-way ANOVA was the statistic used to compare three recruitment practices on applicant attraction and answer the research question. The results showed no significant differences in attraction and knowledge among the recruitment practices. The multiple linear regression indicated that higher scores of job information was significantly related to greater applicant attraction. However, richness and other knowledge subscales (employer familiarity and reputation) did not significantly relate to applicant attraction.

Presentation of the Findings

Statistical Test

I conducted reliability analysis using Cronbach's alpha for the variables *richness*, *employer knowledge subscales*, and *applicant attraction*. I present the frequencies and percentages for categorical variables and means and standard deviations for the

continuous variables. I assessed the bivariate relationships between the demographic variables and every IV and the DV to determine the need to include any covariates in the primary analysis. None of the demographics (age, gender, and enrollment status) significantly related to recruitment practice, knowledge, or applicant attraction; therefore, they were not components controlled for in the subsequent analysis.

To test Hypothesis 1 that there is no significant difference in applicant attraction, employer familiarity, employer information, and job information based on recruitment practices (print, web, or print and web, I used a one-way ANOVA. To test Hypothesis 2 that there is a significant relationship between employer knowledge and media richness and applicant attraction, I conducted regression analysis. The predictors in this model were richness and employer knowledge.

Descriptive Statistics

The sample consisted of 186 student participants. Nearly half were between the ages of 21 and 29 years (43.5%), with 28% age 30 to 39, 12.9% age 40–49, and 11.3% age 18–20; only eight were 50 years of age and older. Most of the participants in the sample were women (78.4%), and over half were enrolled full-time students (54.3%). I randomly assigned the sample into three recruitment practice groups: 63 in the print group, 64 in the website group, and 59 in the print and website group. All the continuous variables, except for richness, ranged from 1 to 7; richness ranged from 1.2 to 7, with a mean of 5.07 ($SD = 1.22$). The mean scores for the three knowledge variables were 4.15 for employer familiarity ($SD = 1.49$), 4.43 for employer reputation ($SD = 1.21$), and 5.14 for job information ($SD = 1.06$). Applicant attraction had a mean value of 4.78, with a

standard deviation of 1.48. Tables 1 and 2 present more details about the sample's characteristics.

Tests of Assumptions

There were only .36% missing values. With such a small percentage of missing data, pairwise deletion occurred for the primary analysis. After computing the mean scores of richness, employer knowledge, and applicant attraction, I evaluated normality with a histogram and a Q-Q plot. I evaluated the outliers with a boxplot. The results indicated an approximately normal distribution of all continuous variables without any outliers. Variance equality between the three groups was not violated with the homogeneity of variances test (Levene's statistics = .124 - .742, $ps = .478 - .883$). Therefore, all the assumptions were met for the one-way ANOVA.

To test the assumptions for multiple linear regression, a normal P-P plot of standardized residual (see Figure 2) and residual scatterplots (see Figure 3) indicated the approximately normal distribution of the errors of variables and a consistent variance of residuals across all levels of IVs (homoscedasticity). With a relatively large sample size ($N = 185$), the data was robust to the slight deviation from the straight line in the P-P plot for normality assumption. Variance inflation factors and tolerance tests were conducted to examine the multicollinearity of the IVs. Variance inflation factors greater than 5 or a tolerance lower than .20 are multicollinearity issues (O'Brien, 2007). The results indicate no collinearity issues between the predictors (variance inflation factors = 1.14 – 2.48, tolerance = .40 - .88).

Table 1*Descriptive Statistics for Categorical Variables*

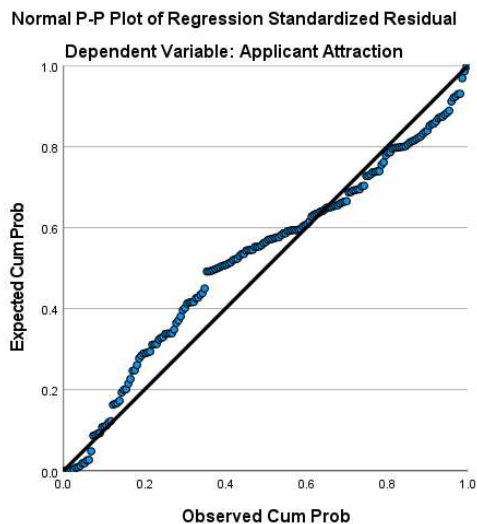
Categorical variable	Frequency	%
Age		
18–20	21	11.3
21–29	81	43.5
30–39	52	28.0
40–49	24	12.9
50–59	7	3.8
60+	1	.5
Gender		
Male	38	20.5
Female	145	78.4
Prefer not to say	2	1.1
Enrollment status		
Full-time	100	54.3
Part-time	84	45.7
Recruitment practice		
Print	63	33.9
Website	64	34.4
Both	59	31.7

Table 2*Descriptive Statistics for Continuous Variables*

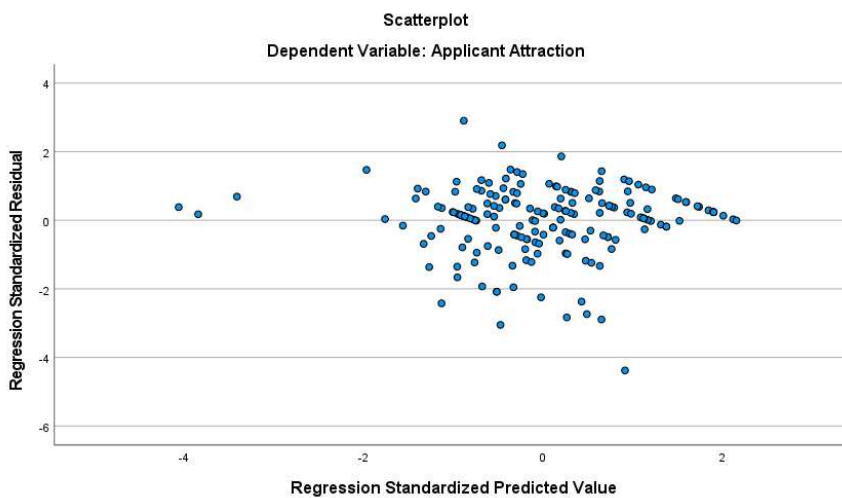
Continuous variable	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Min	Max
Richness	186	5.07	1.22	1.20	7.00
Employer familiarity	186	4.15	1.49	1.00	7.00
Employer reputation	185	4.43	1.21	1.00	7.00
Job information	186	5.14	1.06	1.00	7.00
Applicant attraction	186	4.78	1.48	1.00	7.00

Figure 2

Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual

**Figure 3**

Scatterplot of Regression Standardized Predicted Values



Inferential Statistical Analyses Results

This section includes the results of the inferential statistical analysis. First, the interitem reliability analysis results of the scale items are presented. Second, an analysis and comparison of different recruitment practices on applicant attraction and applicant attraction is provided. Finally, analysis that addressed the effect of media richness and employer knowledge on applicant attraction is interpreted.

Reliability

The five richness items underwent an interitem reliability analysis to determine the reliability of the scale items. As shown in Appendix I, the results indicated strong reliability for richness (Cronbach's $\alpha = .828$). The study included three scales for employment knowledge. Familiarity had four items, reputation had four items, and job information had eight items. The results indicated that every subscale had strong interitem consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha = .821-.933$). The applicant attractions consisted of three items with strong reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha = .929$).

Employer Knowledge and Applicant Attraction by Recruitment Practices

The null hypothesis for RQ1 was that there is no significant difference in applicant attraction, employer familiarity, employer information, and job information based on recruitment practices (print, web, or print and web). The one-way ANOVA (see output in Appendix J) indicated there were no significant differences among groups for any of the variables. However, job information was approaching significance ($p = .06$, see Tables 4 and 5). Evaluation of the boxplot (see Figure 4) revealed that even though there were two outliers lower than print only and web only, there was less spread in the

data when students viewed print and web information. The null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in applicant attraction, employer familiarity, and job information based on recruitment practices (print, web, or print and web) was accepted.

Table 3

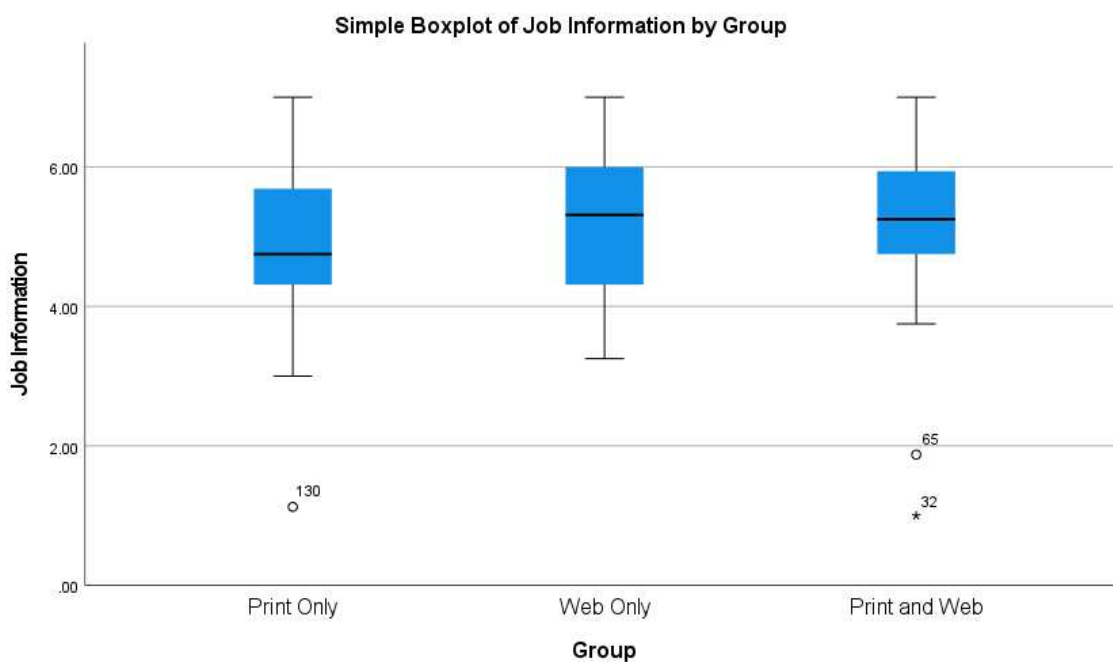
Means and Standard Deviations for Dependent Variables by Recruitment Practice

Dependent variables	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	95% CI for mean		
			<i>SD</i>	<i>LL</i>	<i>UL</i>
Applicant attraction					
Print only	63	4.63	1.47	4.26	5.00
Web only	64	4.97	1.35	4.63	5.31
Print and Web	59	4.72	1.63	4.30	5.15
Employer familiarity					
Print only	63	3.83	1.57	3.43	4.22
Web only	64	4.25	1.30	3.93	4.58
Print and Web	59	4.36	1.55	3.95	4.76
Employer reputation					
Print only	63	4.29	1.22	3.98	4.59
Web only	63	4.38	1.18	4.08	4.68
Print and Web	59	4.59	1.26	4.26	4.92
Job information					
Print only	63	4.87	.98	4.62	5.11
Web only	64	5.25	.99	5.00	5.50
Print and Web	59	5.24	1.14	4.94	5.53

Table 4*ANOVA Overall Model*

Dependent variables	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Applicant attraction				.885	.414
Between groups	3.89	2	1.95		
Within groups	402.44	183	2.20		
Total	406.33	185			
Employer familiarity				2.24	.109
Between groups	9.76	2	4.88		
Within groups	398.86	183	2.18		
Total	408.62	185			
Employer reputation				1.01	.366
Between groups	3.00	2	1.50		
Within groups	269.83	182	1.48		
Total	272.83	184			
Job information				2.79	.064
Between groups	5.98	2	2.99		
Within groups	196.09	183	1.07		
Total	202.08	185			

Note. *SS* = sum of squares; *df* = degrees of freedom; *MS* = mean of squares

Figure 4*Boxplot of Job Information by Group****Associations of Richness and Employer Knowledge with Applicant Attraction***

The null hypothesis for RQ2 stated that there is no significant relationship between employer familiarity, employer reputation, job information, and media richness. Multiple linear regression (see output in Appendix K) was conducted to examine the effects of media richness and employer knowledge on applicant attraction. The results indicated that the overall model was significant, $F(4, 180) = 42.231, p < .001$, and accounted for 47.3% of the variance (adjusted $R^2 = .473$).

Of all factors, only job information was statistically significant (unstandardized $\beta = .811$, standardized $\beta = .570, t(180) = 8.214, p < .001$). The positive slope for job information (.57) as a predictor of applicant attraction indicated there was about a .57

increase in applicant attraction for each increase of one standard deviation in job information. The squared semi-partial coefficient ($sr^2 = .1936$) indicates nearly 20% of the variance in applicant attraction is uniquely accounted for by job information when the other variables in the model were controlled. Therefore, the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between employer familiarity, employer reputation, job information, and media richness and applicant attraction was rejected.

Table 5

Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Predicting Applicant Attraction

Predictor	Unstandardized		Standardized	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	95% CI	
	β	<i>SE</i>	β			LL	UL
Web recruitment ^a	-.009	.19	-.003	-.05	.963	-.393	.375
Print+web recruitment ^a	-.307	.20	-.097	-1.57	.118	-.692	.078
Employer familiarity	.025	.08	.025	.31	.754	-.132	.182
Employer reputation	.192	.10	.157	1.84	.068	-.014	.399
Job information	.781	.11	.555	7.33	<.001	.571	.991
Richness	.070	.08	.057	.89	.372	-.084	.224

Note. $F(6, 178) = 30.28$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .505$, adjusted $R^2 = .488$. ^a compared to print recruitment.

Theoretical Discussion of Findings

The theoretical foundation of this study was MRT (see Daft & Lengel, 1984). Daft and Lengel (1984) proposed that a person could effectively use the communication medium (channel) by coordinating the richness of the medium and the equivocality of the task. Communication effectiveness occurs based on the alignment of communication requirements and media capability (Daft & Lengel, 1984, 1986). This theory suggests that a continual exchange of information occurs between individuals; however, the

exchanges vary in the level of certainty and equivocality (Susskind, 2014). Although MRT originated in the organizational setting and has continued to inspire new research in this setting, empirical studies have shown inconsistent results.

The results of the current study indicated that recruitment practice with varying media richness does not have a significant impact on applicant attraction. However, applicant attraction is mediated by employer knowledge. Job information as a component of employer knowledge does have a significant impact on applicant attraction. These findings only partially align with the literature. Regarding media richness and applicant attraction generally, several researchers have identified a link between the media richness of the message and positive outcomes among consumers, employees, and applicants (Baum & Kabst, 2014; De Waele & Claeys, 2017; Koppensteiner et al., 2015; Lambert & Yanson, 2017). Richer media is often a strategic choice during recruitment because it provides the opportunity to communicate more complex information to prospective job applicants (Baum & Kabst, 2014; Maity et al., 2018). However, Baum and Kabst also asserted that the communication mix and information content is also an influential means of increasing employer knowledge and influencing applicant attraction. Their research results indicated that recruitment activities need to increase employer knowledge to significantly impact applicant attraction which aligns with my study results.

Recruitment professionals and hiring managers not only have to determine the most suitable medium/channel and the appropriate mix for their recruitment tools but also the most appealing content within each channel to job seekers and applicants. My research revealed that specific job information is the key to attracting job seekers and

potential applicants. Recruitment activities that are high-information practices may have more influence on applicant attraction than low-information practices. High-information practices including specific job information such as compensation, benefits, nature of the job, career path opportunities, and employer culture are likely to influence applicant attraction.

Application to Professional Practice

The purpose of this quantitative quasi-experimental study was to examine the effects of recruitment practices, media richness, and employer knowledge on applicant attraction. Based on the research, I rejected the null hypothesis, as there was a statistically significant relationship between recruitment practice, media richness, employer knowledge, and applicant attraction. HR professionals and hiring managers should not rely solely on media richness to enhance early recruitment tools to attract qualified applicants. Corporate HR professionals can no longer assume that posting job openings or opportunities on an internet job board (low-richness tool) or their websites' careers links (higher-richness tool) are adequate means of attracting job seekers. The results indicate that applicant attraction varies; therefore, the strategies used to attract one applicant might not be useful to attract other job seekers. This study included examining the three aspects of employer knowledge and their individual effects on attraction. The results showed that only specific job information had a significant effect on applicant attraction. With this information, HR professionals and hiring managers could develop recruitment tools that contain specific job information, such as type of work, the nature of the job (Lu & Liou, 2015), compensation, and benefits and reward packages (Banks et

al., 2016; Verwaeren et al., 2017). Such recruitment tools could result in an improved recruitment process for identifying qualified candidates quickly and efficiently.

The results of this study have relevance to the business and industry because having an effective recruitment strategy and a process for attracting top-tier applicants are ways to increase the bottom line of an organization, lower hiring costs, minimize turnover, and increase employee productivity. Hiring managers and HR professionals could use the information in this study to design more effective early recruitment tools and strategies to include more comprehensive job information such as compensation, potential job locations, job descriptions, advancement opportunities, and work environment. According to the results of this study, including specific job information could increase applicant attraction. Increasing applicant attraction could result in more qualified applicant pools and improved quality of hires.

Implications for Social Change

The implications for social change include the potential to increase satisfying and fulfilling job opportunities and financial security in the community. By enhancing hiring managers' and HR recruitment professionals' knowledge of recruitment tools and strategies could aid organizations in developing recruitment strategies that attract stronger applicant pools resulting in quality hires. With this expanded information, hiring managers and HR recruiters could develop more effective and efficient recruitment tools. Improved recruitment tools could aid job seekers in identifying jobs which would match their skills, financial security, and career goals resulting in increased fulfillment and motivation in the workplace. Early recruitment tools that include specific job information

could be a way to heighten candidates' application experiences and increase the number and quality of applicants. More effective recruitment strategies and processes could enable employers to become more skilled with matching employees to jobs; develop employees' knowledge, skills, and abilities; and show concern for their personal growth and job satisfaction. Hiring applicants with the right mix of skills and experience could lead to shortened onboarding time and new employees making worthwhile contributions quicker. Employees with skill sets well-suited to their work are more likely to feel a sense of purpose and find their work meaningful, resulting in higher productivity and lower turnover. Smarter hiring decisions could also result in an increased bottom line for an organization, benefiting both the individual and the employer. Competitive and profitable organizations provide employment opportunities, resulting in employment stability and addressing the adverse economic and social impact of unemployment on individual workers and their communities. Employed people put financial resources back into their local economies by spending money on products and services. As purchasing increases, businesses have prosperity, and more people have jobs which lowers the unemployment rate in the community. The evolving economic cycle will continue to have a positive effect on the local economy, the community, families, and ultimately individuals.

Recommendation for Action

The results indicated a statistically significant relationship between recruitment practice, media richness, employer knowledge, and applicant attraction. Determining employer knowledge entailed addressing three factors: employer familiarity, employer reputation, and job information. Of the three factors, only job information had a

significant effect on the dependent variable of applicant attraction. Based on these findings, HR professionals and hiring managers should craft recruitment messages with specific job information. Communication mix and information content are influential factors in increasing employer knowledge and influencing applicant attraction (Baum & Kabst, 2014). One recommendation is for HR professionals to compare different early recruitment tools and their effect on applicant attraction. HR professionals should consider which tools are the best for communicating the job information important to job seekers. More descriptive value propositions for applicants in the recruitment advertisement material could have an influence on the application decision.

This study contributed to the body of knowledge on media richness in recruitment and the aspects of employer knowledge with the most effect on applicant attraction. I intend to produce and publish a peer-reviewed HR journal article with the findings. Additionally, I will make the study available to the participating business partner and the Florida higher education institution where data collection occurred. I anticipate presenting the study's findings at appropriate meetings, conferences, and events.

Recommendation for Further Research

A recommendation for further research is to study different populations, industries, U.S. regions, and countries. This research focused on full- and part-time college undergraduate students in Florida. Researchers could study other populations, especially job seekers who have already attained higher-level degrees and have full-time work experience. Future research could also focus on job seekers who do not have higher-level degrees to determine if media richness and employer knowledge have a

different effect on this population. Another recommendation is to expand the research to other areas of the United States and other countries. The inclusion of other regions and countries could result in different conclusions.

Another recommendation is further investigation into the various factors useful for increasing applicant attraction, such as participants' prior knowledge of the organizations presented in the recruitment tools and the effect of prior information on applicants' responses. Also recommended is to study the IVs in this research and their impact on applicant attraction with a qualitative study. Further research could focus on the effect of the media richness of recruitment tools, different presentations, and the specificity of employer knowledge on applicant attraction.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the data collection for this study occurred only via an online survey. I did not have face-to-face interaction with the participants to explain concepts or answer questions about media richness, employer knowledge, application attraction, the survey or the research. The lack of face-to-face interaction is a limitation of the study. Scholars could address this limitation by using a mixed methods approach to combine quantitative and qualitative research (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). A mixed methods study could provide the opportunity to obtain in-depth information from interviews with job seekers and potential applicants and understand what caused them to feel attracted to a particular organization's recruitment tools.

Reflections

At the start of my doctoral journey, I did not realize the challenges I would face, or the high load of work involved in completing a doctoral degree. The biggest challenge

for me was managing a demanding full-time job and family needs while meeting the program's requirements. The journey has been a long one, and I have often questioned my decision to obtain a doctorate late in my professional career. Financially, it did not make sense; however, achieving a terminal degree has been a personal goal for many years.

I have worked in the fields of HR and higher education; therefore, attracting superior candidates and quality hires are of interest to me. Due to my background, I believed I had a good understanding of how to attract quality applicants and improve job applicants' overall experiences. I thought my research would show that recruitment tools high in media richness and engaging to the job applicants would result in higher applicant attraction. After analyzing the data and reporting the findings, I have a better understanding of what job seekers find the most significant and compelling. Specific job information is more of a motivator to job seekers than other factors, including media richness, employer reputation/brand, or employer familiarity.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the shutdown of college campuses, I had to rethink my data collection method completely. My original plan was to collect data on campus in a lab setting with a paper survey. However, I had to adapt to using an online survey sent to the participants' student email accounts because the students were not on campus. Although I collected sufficient data, I believe the pandemic and the virtual nature of the survey had an effect on data collection and resulted in a lower response rate. I have a greater understanding of the data collection process and would like to conduct further research on recruitment tools and applicant attraction after the pandemic.

Conclusion

The first research question was: Is there a significant difference in applicant attraction, employer familiarity, employer information, and job information based on recruitment practices (print, web, or print and web)? The second research question was: Is there a significant relationship between employer familiarity, employer reputation, job information, and media richness and applicant attraction? The results of this research suggest that recruitment practices with varying media richness and employer knowledge do not have a significant relationship with applicant attraction. However, specific job information in the recruitment tool does have a significant relationship to applicant attraction. The findings did not show a relationship between the variables. Thus, HR professionals and hiring managers should consider factors, including specific job information and alternate recruitment avenues, other than internet job boards and website postings when developing recruitment strategies to attract highly qualified applicants.

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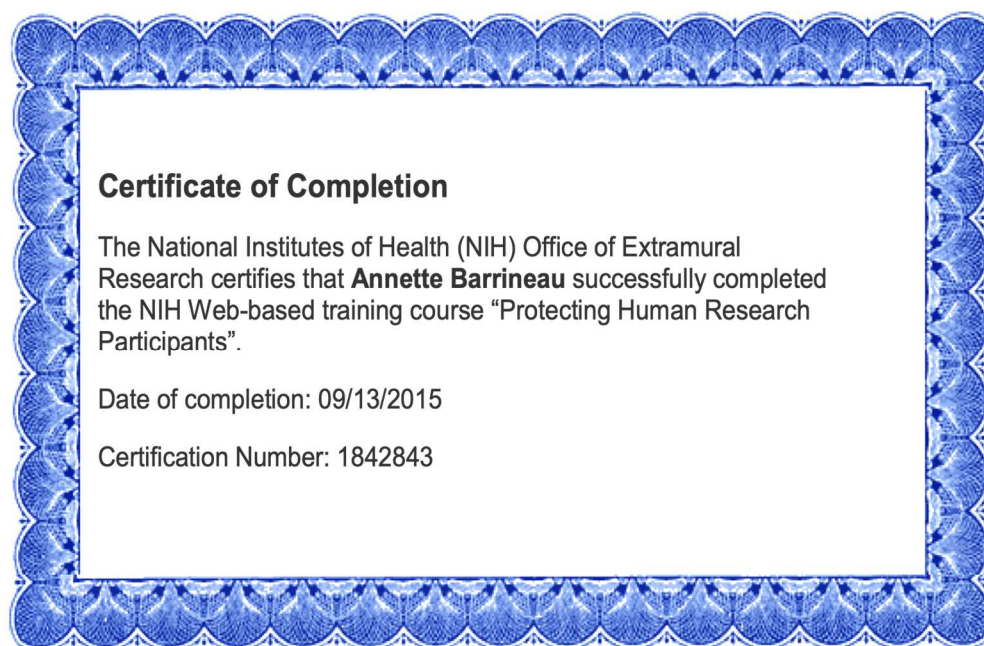
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Appendix A: Certificate of Completion for Protecting Human Research Participants



Appendix B: Invitation to Participate in Research Study

**INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY
on Early Recruitment Tools and Applicant Attraction**

Hi [REDACTED] Student,

My name is Annette Barrineau. As part of a doctoral study, I am exploring the effectiveness of employers' recruitment tools, specifically their job postings, advertisements, and websites. My particular interest is how these tools serve to inform and attract prospective employees.

I am using an online survey to collect the data that I need for this assessment. If you are interested in participating in this study, I will ask you to view an employer's posting/advertisement or website (or both) and then respond to a set of questions about these. Altogether this should take 15 to 20 minutes of your time; for this you will receive a **\$10 Amazon e-gift card**. Your name will not be associated with this survey; results will be reported as a group, not individually. All responses are confidential.

Your participation in the study is **completely voluntary**. You may decide to withdraw at any time during data collection. Completed questionnaires/surveys should be submitted by **Wednesday, June 16, 2021**.

The study has been reviewed and approved by the Research Ethics Review Board at Walden University. In addition, the study has been reviewed and approved by the Research Ethics Review Board at Florida State College at Jacksonville. By participating in the survey, you acknowledge that:

- You have been provided information about this research study.
- Your participation is voluntary.
- You are permitted to withdraw from the study at any time.
- There are no identifiers associated with your responses.
- All responses are confidential.

Follow this link to the Survey:

[Take the Survey](#)

Or copy and paste the URL below into your internet browser:

https://singuser2c2f4ba5.qualtrics.com/jfe/preview/SV_d1o2i30Ssv0wVkg?Q_CHL=preview

Follow the link to opt out of future emails:

[Click here to unsubscribe](#)

Appendix C: Request to Use Survey Instrument and Permission Granted

Prof. Dr. Matthias Baum <matthias.baum@wiwi.uni-kl.de>
>



Tue 4/11/2017 8:17 AM

Annette Barrineau <annette.barrineau@waldenu.edu> +1 other

Dear Annette,

please feel free to use the survey instruments from our study.

Best (and good luck with your research)
Matthias

Prof. Dr. Matthias Baum
University of Kaiserslautern
Chair of Entrepreneurship
P.O. Box 3049
67653 Kaiserslautern - Germany
Website: <https://enpres.wiwi.uni-kl.de/>
E-Mail: matthias.baum@wiwi.uni-kl.de

Von: Annette Barrineau [mailto:annette.barrineau@waldenu.edu]

Gesendet: Dienstag, 11. April 2017 13:19

An: Prof. Dr. Matthias Baum <matthias.baum@wiwi.uni-kl.de>

Cc: Christopher Beehner <Christopher.Beehner@waldenu.edu>

Betreff: undefined

Hello Dr. Baum,

Please see the attached letter which request the use of a survey instrument that you used in recent research that resulted in a published article titled, "The Effectiveness of Recruitment Advertisements and Recruitment Websites: Indirect and Interactive Effects on Applicant Attraction." I will also post this request through the U.S. Postal Service.

I appreciate your time and consideration of my request. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,
Annette W. Barrineau
Doctoral Candidate
Walden University

April 8, 2017

Dr. Matthias Baum
Chair of Entrepreneurship
University of Kaiserslautern
Postfach 3049
D-67653 Kaiserslautern
Germany

Dear Dr. Mathis,

I am a doctoral student/candidate from Walden University writing my doctoral study tentatively titled *Relationship Between Early Recruitment Tools and Applicant Attraction* under the direction of my doctoral study committee chaired by Dr. Christopher Beehner.

I would like your permission to reproduce and use a survey instrument used in your research for an article published in the *Human resources Management* journal. I would like to use your survey instrument under the following conditions:

- I will use this survey for my research study and will not sell or use in any compensated or curriculum development activities.
- I will include a copyright statement on all copies of the instrument.
- I will send my research study and a copy of any reports, articles, and the like that make use of these survey data promptly to your attention.

If these are acceptable terms and conditions, please indicate so by signing one copy of this letter and returning it to me along with the survey instrument to me either by postal mail or email:

Annette W. Barrineau
310 Round Lake
Palatka, FL 32177
USA

or email at Annette.barrineau@waldenu.edu or AnnetteBarrineau@bellsouth.net

If you are agreeable to my request, is it possible to get the survey in English rather than German? I noted that the journal article that referred to your survey was written in English, but the survey was conducted at a German University where I assume it was written in German. If you have questions and would like to speak with me, I can be reached at (386) 972-4449 in the United States.

Sincerely,

Annette W. Barrineau

Appendix D: Survey Questions – Original and Revised

Data Collection Survey**Richness Print:**

1. This advertisement offers a lot of information.
2. The advertisement facilitates contact with the company.
3. The advertisement provided the opportunity for two-way communication.
4. The advertisement was targeted to me personally.
5. The advertisement told me a lot about the company beyond what was said.

Richness Website:

1. This advertisement offers a lot of information.
2. The advertisement facilitates contact with the company.
3. The advertisement provided the opportunity for two-way communication.
4. The advertisement was targeted to me personally.
5. The advertisement told me a lot about the company beyond what was said.

Appendix E: Test for Employer Familiarity

Data Collection Survey

Employer Familiarity:

1. This company is one of the first to come to mind when I think of employers.
2. I can recognize this company among other employers.
3. I am aware that this company hires students from my school.
4. I am very familiar with this company as an employer.

Appendix F: Request to Survey Students

July 14, 2019

Dear Sir/Madam:

I request permission to conduct a survey among students at [College Name] that utilize the services of your Career Centers. My objective is to collect data for my doctoral research study entitled "Relationship Between Early Recruitment Tools and Applicant Attraction." The purpose of this study is to examine the influence of recruitment practices and employer knowledge on applicant attraction. I have attached the survey questionnaire for your review.

Survey participation would be voluntary, taking 10 to 15 minutes arranged at a time convenient for the students. There is no known or anticipated risk associated with taking part. Information provided will be held confidential and will be used only for academic research. Neither the name of your college nor those of the participants will appear in this study or any publications that result.

Once complete, you will receive an executive summary of this study's results and conclusions. If you are interested in greater detail, I am glad to make the entire research study available to you.

I sincerely appreciate your consideration of this proposal. If you approve, please sign below to acknowledge your consent and then return this letter in the enclosed envelope.

I look forward to the opportunity to work with you.

Sincerely,

Annette W. Barrineau, ABD
Doctoral Candidate
Doctor of Business Administration

By signing this document, I am approving the request made by Annette W. Barrineau to administer a survey at [Name of College] for academic research purposes.

X

Name

Date

Appendix G: Survey Adapted from Baum & Kabst Measuring Media Richness, Job
Knowledge, and Applicant Attraction

Data Collection Survey

Richness Print:

1. This advertisement offers a lot of information.
2. The advertisement facilitates contact with the company.
3. The advertisement provided the opportunity for two-way communication.
4. The advertisement was targeted to me personally.
5. The advertisement told me a lot about the company beyond what was said.

Richness Website:

1. This advertisement offers a lot of information.
2. The advertisement facilitates contact with the company.
3. The advertisement provided the opportunity for two-way communication.
4. The advertisement was targeted to me personally.
5. The advertisement told me a lot about the company beyond what was said.

Employer Familiarity

1. This company is one of the first to come to mind when I think of employers.
2. I can recognize this company among other employers.
3. I am aware that this company hires students from my school.
4. I am very familiar with this company as an employer.

Employer Reputation

1. I believe that other students in the school think highly of this company.
2. My friends have high regard for this company as an employer.
3. I believe that my friends hold a favorable impression of this company as an employer.
4. Other students in my school hold favorable impression of this company as an employer.

Job Information

1. A job at this organization would have above-average pay.
2. This organization would provide me with job opportunities in desirable locations.
3. This organization would provide me the type of job that I want.
4. This organization has good opportunities for career advancement.
5. A job at this organization would have a good working environment.
6. A job at this organization would have interesting assignments and responsibilities.
7. This organization would provide me with above-average benefits.
8. This organization would provide jobs with good prospects for work-life balance.

Applicant Attraction

1. For me this company would be a good place to work.
2. A job at this company is very appealing to me.
3. This company is attractive to me as a place for employment.

Appendix H: Request to Use Recruitment Tools

July 14, 2019

Dear Sir/Madam:

Pursuant to our recent conversation, I request permission to use [Company Name] recruitment tools, specifically a printed job advertisement (ad) and employment website, as part of a survey administered to college students. I am making this request so that I may collect data for my doctoral research study, entitled, "Relationship Between Early Recruitment Tools and Applicant Attraction." The purpose of the study is to examine the influence of early recruitment tools (printed ad and website) and employer knowledge on applicant attraction.

My goal is to determine the effect that recruitment tools that vary in richness, along with employer familiarity, employer reputation, and job information, have on applicant attraction. Printed ads are considered a low-information-recruitment practice; in turn, websites are considered a high-information-recruitment practice. For my correlation study, participants will be randomly assigned to three groups. Group 1 will view a printed ad prior to completing the questionnaire. Group 2 will view a website prior completing the questionnaire. Group 3 will view the printed ad and the website prior to completing the questionnaire.

I have attached the survey questionnaire for your review. Survey participation would be voluntary, taking approximately 10 to 15 minutes arranged at time convenient for students. There is no known or anticipated risk associated with taking part. Information provided will be held confidential and will be used only for academic research purposes. Neither the name of your company nor those of the participants will not appear in this study or any publications that result.

Once complete, you will receive an executive summary of this study's results and conclusions. If you are interested in greater detail, I am glad to make the entire research study available to you.

I sincerely appreciate your consideration of this proposal. If you approve, please sign below to acknowledge your consent and return this letter in the enclosed envelope.

I look forward to the opportunity to work with you.

Sincerely,

Annette W. Barrineau, ABD
 Doctoral Candidate
 Doctor of Business Administration

By signing this document, I am approving the request made by Annette W. Barrineau to utilize [Company Name] recruitment tools when administered a survey for academic research purposes.

X

 Name

 Date

Appendix I: Interitem Reliability using Cronbach's Alpha

Item	<i>n</i>	Cronbach's α
Richness		
1. This advertisement offers a lot of information	5	.828
2. The advertisement facilitates contact with the company		
3. The advertisement provided the opportunity for two-way communication		
4. The advertisement was targeted to me personally		
5. The advertisement told me a lot about the company beyond what was said		
Familiarity		
1. This company is one of the first to come to mind when I think of employers	4	.821
2. I can recognize this company among other employers		
3. I am aware that this company hires students from my school		
4. I am very familiar with this company as an employer		
Reputation		
1. I believe that other students in the school think highly of this company	4	.933
2. My friends have high regard for this company as an employer		
3. I believe that my friends hold a favorable impression of this company as an employer		
4. Other students in my school hold favorable impression of this company as an employer		

Item	<i>n</i>	Cronbach's α
Job information	8	.920
1. A job at this organization would have above-average pay		
2. This organization would provide me with job opportunities in desirable locations		
3. This organization would provide me the type of job that I want		
4. This organization has good opportunities for career advancement		
5. A job at this organization would have a good working environment		
6. A job at this organization would have interesting assignments and responsibilities		
7. This organization would provide me with above-average benefits		
8. This organization would provide jobs with good prospects for work-life balance		
Applicant attraction	3	.929
1. For me, this company would be a good place to work		
2. A job at this company is very appealing to me		
3. This company is attractive to me as a place for employment		

Appendix J: ANOVA Results

		N	M	SD	SE	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Applicant Attraction	Print Only	63	4.63	1.47	0.18	4.26	5.00
	Web Only	64	4.97	1.35	0.17	4.63	5.31
	Print and Web	59	4.72	1.63	0.21	4.30	5.15
	Total	186	4.78	1.48	0.11	4.56	4.99
Employer Familiarity	Print Only	63	3.83	1.57	0.20	3.43	4.22
	Web Only	64	4.25	1.30	0.16	3.93	4.58
	Print and Web	59	4.36	1.55	0.20	3.95	4.76
	Total	186	4.14	1.49	0.11	3.92	4.35
Employer Reputation	Print Only	63	4.29	1.22	0.15	3.98	4.59
	Web Only	63	4.38	1.18	0.15	4.08	4.68
	Print and Web	59	4.59	1.26	0.16	4.26	4.92
	Total	185	4.42	1.22	0.09	4.24	4.59
Job Information	Print Only	63	4.87	0.98	0.12	4.62	5.11
	Web Only	64	5.25	0.99	0.12	5.00	5.50
	Print and Web	59	5.24	1.14	0.15	4.94	5.53
	Total	186	5.12	1.05	0.08	4.96	5.27

Tests of Homogeneity of Variances

		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Applicant Attraction	Based on Mean	.742	2	183	.478
Employer Familiarity	Based on Mean	.738	2	183	.479
Employer Reputation	Based on Mean	.124	2	182	.883
Job Information	Based on Mean	.289	2	183	.749

		ANOVA				
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Applicant Attraction	Between Groups	3.892	2	1.946	.885	.414
	Within Groups	402.441	183	2.199		
	Total	406.333	185			
Employer Familiarity	Between Groups	9.761	2	4.880	2.239	.109
	Within Groups	398.855	183	2.180		
	Total	408.616	185			
Employer Reputation	Between Groups	3.000	2	1.500	1.012	.366
	Within Groups	269.827	182	1.483		
	Total	272.826	184			
Job Information	Between Groups	5.984	2	2.992	2.792	.064
	Within Groups	196.094	183	1.072		
	Total	202.077	185			

Appendix K: Regression Analysis

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.696 ^a	.484	.473	1.07833

a. Predictors: (Constant), Media Richness, Employer Reputation, Job Information, Employer Familiarity

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	196.423	4	49.106	42.231	<.001 ^b
	Residual	209.304	180	1.163		
	Total	405.727	184			

a. Dependent Variable: Applicant Attraction

b. Predictors: (Constant), Media Richness, Employer Reputation, Job Information, Employer Familiarity

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B		Correlations		
		B	Std. Error				Beta	Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Zero-order	Partial
1	(Constant)	-.291	.404		-.721	.472	-1.087	.505			
	Employer Familiarity	.071	.078	.071	.907	.365	-.083	.224	.450	.067	.049
	Employer Reputation	.182	.103	.149	1.767	.079	-.021	.385	.530	.131	.095
	Job Information	.811	.099	.570	8.214	.000	.616	1.006	.676	.522	.440
	Media Richness	-.005	.004	-.069	-1.209	.228	-.014	.003	.174	-.090	-.065

a. Dependent Variable: Applicant Attraction