CHANGING THE CONVERSATION ON PASSIVE AND ACTIVE JOB SEEKERS: A CONTINUUM-BASED APPROACH

by

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ABSTRACT

CLAIRE ALYSE MANSFIELD. Changing the Conversation on Passive and Active Job Seekers: A Continuum-Based Approach. (Under the direction of DR. GEORGE BANKS).

As employers leverage recruitment activities to compete for active job seekers, they may also seize opportunities to recruit those who are not actively searching for jobs (i.e., passive job seekers). The literature currently focuses on active job seekers and has created a false dichotomy between active and passive job seekers. This study aims to change the conversation on passive job seekers and emphasize that all individuals fall on a continuum of job seeking behavior frequency. There is currently a lack of theoretical insight into the cognitive processes involved in the recruitment of active and passive job seekers, and misalignment between theoretically and practically relevant constructs and the measures currently being used. This study aims to identify the factors and mechanisms that attract talent across the job seeking behavior frequency continuum and establish a more thorough understanding of the factors that influence candidates' actual job choices. The first contribution of this study to the field of recruitment is the reconceptualization of active and passive job seeking as different levels of job seeking behavior frequency on a continuum. The second is the extension of expectancy theory to the recruitment of job seekers across the continuum. The third contribution of this research is that it moves the needle to more closely approximate a measure of actual job choice decisions and provides a better understanding of how candidates make job choice decisions. This research may also inform the tailoring of organizational policies and practices to best attract job seekers on the passive end of the continuum, which could lead to advantageous recruitment outcomes.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AIC	Akaike Information Criterion
CFI	comparative fit index
ET	expectancy theory
HIT	human intelligence task
LDA	Latent Dirichlet Allocation
MTurk	Amazon's Mechanical Turk
OLS	ordinary least squares
RMSEA	root-mean-square-errors-of-approximation
RQ	research question
RWA	relative weights analysis
TLI	Tucker-Lewis index

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Employee recruitment involves activities aimed at influencing the numbers and types of applicants who apply for job roles as well as those activities that lead to the acceptance of job offers (Breaugh, 1992). Firm performance is linked to the effectiveness of recruitment processes (Huselid, 1995; Schmidt et al., 1979). Thus, employers strive to maximize the effectiveness of recruitment processes by leveraging recruitment activities to generate human capital, an important strategic resource (Huselid, 1995). The unemployment rate in the United States is currently at 6.2 percent (*Bureau of Labor Statistics Data*, 2021), as the economy recovers from a recession due to COVID-19. As employers leverage recruitment activities to compete for active job seekers, they may also seize opportunities to recruit those who are not actively searching for jobs (i.e., passive job seekers). In order to compete for this covetable source of human capital, employers must find ways to lure passive job seekers from their current jobs. However, most recruitment research has been conducted with active job seekers and is limited in understanding employment decisions of passive job seekers (Breaugh, 2008; Chapman et al., 2005; Phillips & Gully, 2015). It is critically important to identify the factors and mechanisms that attract both active and passive talent and establish a more thorough understanding of the factors that influence actual employment decisions. Consequently, several gaps exist in the literature on passive job seekers which must be addressed.

The first major limitation in this literature is the false dichotomy regarding the nature of job seekers. Active job seekers are traditionally defined as individuals who are actively searching for jobs by engaging in job seeking behaviors, and are described in the

literature as employed with low job security, underemployed, or unemployed with no income (Nikolaou, 2014; Picard, 2013). Passive job seekers are traditionally defined as individuals who are not actively searching for jobs and are described in the literature as individuals who are currently employed and would consider taking new jobs but are not actively searching for them (Breaugh, 2013; Van Hoye & Saks, 2008). However, job seeking activities are varied and job seekers may engage to any extent in any number or type of job seeking behaviors. Existing definitions of active and passive job seekers incorrectly silo job seekers into these two categories and thereby fail to account for the fact that job seeking behavior exists on a continuum (e.g., DeKay, 2009; Hosain & Liu, 2020; Nikolaou, 2014; Picard, 2013; SHRM, 2019).

There is also a lack of focus on job seekers on the passive end of the job seeking behavior continuum. This is a pressing issue because these relatively passive job seekers make up 73 percent of the workforce in the United States (HR Cloud, 2019) and they may have different objectives than active job seekers. Job seekers on the passive end of the continuum may include individuals such as those who are merely interested in seeing job postings and remaining apprised of the availability of jobs available on the market, those who have not applied for jobs in years but might consider and accept a very attractive job offer, and individuals who are being actively recruited by other organizations (Nikolaou, 2014; Picard, 2013). The current recruitment literature is limited in understanding how job seekers on the passive end of the continuum make employment decisions, as most research on recruitment has been conducted with active job seekers (Breaugh, 2008; Phillips & Gully, 2015). If organizations do not find ways to engage

qualified job candidates that are not actively searching for jobs, they may miss out on the majority of the talent pool.

The second major limitation in this literature is the lack of theoretical insight into the cognitive processes involved in the recruitment of job seekers on the passive end of the job seeking behavior continuum. The expectancy theory of motivation (ET; Atkinson, 1964; Lawler & Suttle, 1973; Vroom, 1964) may help to extend the recruitment literature by providing insight into cognitive processes involved in the evaluation of recruitment signals. These cognitive processes are important to understand because they help explain motivation and job choice behavior, which is the ultimate outcome of interest for recruitment researchers (Chapman et al., 2005). ET posits that the motivation to pursue a job alternative is calculated by multiplying the perceived instrumentalities and valences of characteristics of offer alternatives by the expectancy of receiving an offer (Vroom, 1964).

While ET has been applied to active job seekers (e.g., Lin et al., 2012; Rynes & Lawler, 1983; Wanous et al., 1983), it may apply differently and have new empirical implications when applied to job seekers on the passive end of the continuum. Relatively passive job seekers may place different weights on criteria used to evaluate potential roles than do relatively active job seekers, perceive a larger range of alternatives, and feel freedom to be more particular about differences in organizational practices and policies. While several theories such as signaling theory (Connelly et al., 2011; Spence, 1973) and goal-setting theory (Lee et al., 1989; Locke & Latham, 2002) have been advanced that attempt to explain the cognitive processes involved in the recruitment of active job seekers, further investigation into the cognitive processes of job seekers on the passive

end of the continuum is warranted. While signaling theory can help explain how recruitment initiatives affect applicant perceptions, ET may hold promise for the comparison of job seekers on different ends of the job seeking behavior continuum because it allows for the delineation of how they may differ in their expectancy, instrumentality, and valence evaluations, and how these evaluations may translate into recruitment outcomes.

As a third major limitation in our knowledge of recruitment, researchers claim to measure job choice as an outcome when they are not measuring actual job choice. That is, questionnaire measures of job choice often measure attitudes or perceptions of behaviors rather than behavioral acts, which limits understanding of organizational dynamics (Alvesson, 2020). This is concerning because many theories of recruitment focus on the applicant's final employment decision as an outcome. Job choice is defined here as a job seeker's actual employment decision (i.e., to accept or decline an employment offer).

Meta-analytic evidence points to a small percentage of studies measuring job choice; out of 71 total recruitment studies, only 14 focused on job choice measures (Chapman et al., 2005). However, these studies used proxies such as "job pursuit intentions" or "likelihood of offer acceptance" as operationalizations of job choice. The use of such proxies creates the risk of spurious inflation of job choice relationships because employment-related attitudes or intentions may be related to each other (Wanous et al., 1983). Predictor variables operationalized as perceptions or attitudes are often conceptually close to outcome variables, which may preclude the refutation of findings (Alvesson, 2020; Antonakis, 2017). This use of proxies may result in the misspecification

of models and presents a problem for theory building and testing because the usefulness of a theory is derived from its ability to correctly identify and provide a rationale for relationships between constructs (Greenberg et al., 1988; Shaffer et al., 2016). Weak definitions of constructs and inaccurate estimates of relationships between constructs can lead to weak theory development and low validity in theory testing (Banks, Gooty, et al., 2018; MacKenzie, 2003).

It is useful to differentiate behaviors (i.e., actions) from psychological states such as perceptions and attitudes (Fischer et al., 2020). The measurement of job choice should be considered a measurement of behavior rather than a measure of employment-related attitudes or intentions. Job choice as an outcome is important for studies of job seekers on the passive end of the continuum specifically. Job seekers often weigh the desirability of offer alternatives, which can indeed be captured through the above proxies. However, the effects of job and organizational attributes and recruitment practices on the decision making of relatively passive job seekers can best be captured and examined through measuring their actual final employment decisions. Hence, in the recruitment literature there is a misalignment between theoretically and practically relevant constructs and the measures currently being used. Attitudinal variables also vary in their ability to approximate real job choices, and some attitudinal variables may be closer proxies for job choice behavior than others. While offer acceptance intentions are currently the most proximal measures to job choice decisions that are measured in the literature, they stop short of capturing actual job choices (Chapman et al., 2005). Given this limitation, the measurement of job choice behavior in studies of recruitment may reveal differences between predictors of applicant attraction and predictors of job offer acceptance. This

study goes a step further than Chapman et al. (2005) and retrospectively asks employees who have accepted a job in the past six months how they made their job choice decisions, with the goal of better understanding the key factors in their decision processes. While this study stops just short of capturing job choice decisions as they are made, it moves the needle in terms of asking individuals about their actual job choice decisions.

The purpose of the following field study is to discover how job seekers on different ends of the job seeking behavior frequency continuum may process the different motivational elements involved in the recruitment process. The first contribution of the following study is the reconceptualization of active and passive job seeking as different levels of job seeking behavior frequency on a continuum. This research aims to move the literature forward by introducing a new conceptualization of job seeking behavior frequency that captures the full range of job seekers, from the most active to the most passive. The second contribution of this research is that it aims to address the lack of theoretical insight into the cognitive processes involved in the recruitment of relatively passive job seekers by applying ET to identify the mechanisms that attract talent on different ends of the continuum. The third contribution of this study is that it determines which types of recruitment signaling (i.e., job and organizational attributes) are the most important predictors of organizational attraction and contributes to a better understanding of the factors that influence candidates' job choice decisions.

This research aims to help explain how job seekers across the job seeking behavior frequency continuum process the different motivational elements involved in the recruitment process and provides a foundation for future studies that aim to inform the tailoring of organizational policies and practices to best attract passive job seekers,

which could lead to advantageous recruitment outcomes. Through the examination of the job and organizational attributes that influence the decisions of job seekers, this study aims to challenge past assumptions regarding passive and active job seekers by more explicitly researching applicants across the full continuum of job seeking behavior frequency. This study aims to identify the factors and mechanisms that attract talent on different ends of the continuum and establish a more thorough understanding of the factors that influence candidates' job choice decisions.

In the current work, I first review the broad literature on recruitment, job seeking behavior, signaling theory, and ET. Next, I present and discuss a model that applies ET as a theoretical framework to the recruitment of job seekers on each end of job seeking behavior frequency continuum (see Figure 1). I then propose research questions and hypotheses regarding the research gaps discussed above and describe the procedures and results of the aforementioned field study. I conclude the paper with a description of the theoretical and practical implications of this research and a description of future opportunities for research on job seekers across the job seeking behavior frequency continuum.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW & HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Recruitment

Recruitment is an important human resource function for organizations because it generates human capital through influencing the attraction, motivation, and performance of prospective employees (Phillips & Gully, 2015; Ployhart & Kim, 2014; Rynes, 1989; Rynes et al., 1991). Human capital, a strategic resource, refers to the skills, knowledge, and other characteristics of human resources (Cable & Turban, 2001). Human capital enables organizations to obtain competitive advantages over their rivals by leveraging employees' characteristics to increase organizational effectiveness (Becker & Huselid, 2006; Ployhart et al., 2014). These competitive advantages are generated when recruiting practices and functions are valuable, rare, inimitable, and nonsubstitutable (Barney & Wright, 1998; Ployhart et al., 2014). The successful recruitment of job applicants is linked to important organizational outcomes at both the individual and the firm level (Huselid, 1995).

At the individual level, several factors can affect recruitment outcomes. These include not only job attributes (Boswell et al., 2003; Phillips et al., 2014) and organizational attributes (Gully et al., 2013), but also the characteristics of recruiters (Breaugh, 2013; Harris & Fink, 1987) and the content (Dineen et al., 2007), sources, and characteristics of recruitment information (Allen et al., 2007; Roberson et al., 2005). Other factors that influence recruitment outcomes include realistic job previews (Earnest et al., 2011) and selection procedures (Hausknecht et al., 2004; Smither et al., 1993, 1996) such as employment interviews (Chapman et al., 2003; Powell, 1991).

It is important for organizations to understand the perceptions of potential job applicants because it allows them to use effective recruitment strategies that may lead to desirable recruitment outcomes (Banks et al., 2016; Breaugh, 2013). Outcomes examined in the recruitment literature include perceptions of organizational image (Cable & Yu, 2006; Dutton et al., 1994), organizational attraction (Cable & Turban, 2001; Lievens & Highhouse, 2003; Rynes & Barber, 1990), perceptions of organizational reputation (Cable & Turban, 2003; Turban & Cable, 2003), and intentions to accept a job offer (Carless, 2005; Chapman et al., 2005; Yu & Cable, 2012). When examining applicant perceptions and their relationships with recruitment outcomes, it is also important to consider applicants' job seeking behavior.

2.2 Job Seeking Behavior

There is currently a false dichotomy in the recruitment literature regarding the nature of job seekers. That is, job seekers are artificially categorized as either active job seekers or passive job seekers (e.g., DeKay, 2009; Hosain & Liu, 2020; Nikolaou, 2014; Van Hoye & Saks, 2008). Passive job seekers are traditionally defined as individuals who are not actively searching for jobs. These job seekers want to stay informed about potential job opportunities (SHRM, 2019; Van Hoye & Saks, 2008). This may include individuals such as those who are merely interested in remaining apprised of the availability of jobs available on the market, those who have not applied for jobs in years but might accept a very attractive job offer, and individuals who are being actively recruited by other organizations. The current recruitment literature is limited in understanding how passive job applicants make employment decisions, as most research on recruitment has been conducted with active job seekers (Breaugh, 2008; Phillips &

Gully, 2015). Active job seekers are characterized as individuals who are actively searching for jobs by engaging in job seeking behaviors (Breaugh, 2008; Nikolaou, 2014; Picard, 2013). Examples of active job seekers include individuals who are employed with low job security, underemployed, or unemployed with no income, and are actively applying for new jobs (Nikolaou, 2014; Picard, 2013). Active job seekers may also include individuals who are satisfied with their current jobs but are actively searching for new jobs because they feel they have the potential to secure even better jobs.

However, there is a degree of misrepresentation in the literature regarding active and passive job seekers. That is, active and passive job seekers are generally presented as belonging to two distinct categories. This representation of active and passive job seekers is misleading. While these two categories may seem sound at a surface level, they are not an accurate representation of the nature of job seekers and job seeking behavior because job seeking behavior exists on a continuum. Job seeking activities are varied and may include tasks such as researching potential employers (e.g., visiting the websites of organizations with available jobs and looking at job postings on job boards or job search websites) and preparing and submitting documents (e.g., updating resumes, submitting job applications, writing cover letters, and requesting letters of recommendation). Other job seeking activities include interacting with potential employers (e.g., contacting employers for information about jobs, interviewing for jobs, visiting potential job sites, and making calls to follow up about the status of job applications) or third parties during the job search (e.g., contacting employment agencies and speaking on the phone or exchanging emails with recruiters). Additionally, job seeking activities may include introspective exercises (e.g., analyzing one's interests and abilities to determine the best

future occupation) and networking activities (e.g., asking personal contacts about possible job leads, networking to develop relationships with professional contacts, and attending networking and recruitment events). Notably, job seekers may engage to any extent in any number or type of job seeking behaviors. As a result, many job seekers may not fit neatly into the traditional active-passive category structure, which may obstruct the study of job seekers in the middle of the continuum and result in incorrect estimates of relationships between job seeking behavior frequency and other variables.

The artificial dichotomization of variables is problematic because arbitrary cut points can result in the loss of psychometric information (Dawson & Weiss, 2012; Foster et al., 2017). Dichotomization can also reduce power to detect relationships (Irwin & McClelland, 2003). It is important to consider the context when making the decision to artificially dichotomize measures and the default method chosen by researchers should be to avoid dichotomization unless it is necessary (Foster et al., 2017). In the recruitment context, the division of job seekers into these two categories may result not only in flawed understandings of what job seekers on each end of the continuum value and how they make job choice decisions, but also may result in the missed opportunity to understand job seekers who fall in the middle of the continuum.

While the recruitment of active job seekers is costly, with the average cost of hiring at $4,129 per job (Society for Human Resource Management, 2016), firms may expend even more resources when recruiting the most passive job seekers, as the recruitment of passive job candidates often requires recruiters to play a more active role in the process (Phillips & Gully, 2012). Given these costs, it is especially important to

identify the factors and mechanisms that attract the talent of those job seekers at the passive end of the continuum (Breaugh, 2013; Phillips & Gully, 2015).

As recruitment initiatives have been linked to applicant perceptions, it is important to examine the cognitive processes involved in the formation of these perceptions and the ensuing employment decisions. One theory that has been used to help explain how recruitment activities can influence applicant perceptions is signaling theory (Celani & Singh, 2011; Connelly et al., 2011; Spence, 1973).

2.3 Signaling Theory

Part of the challenge that job seekers face during the recruitment process is evaluating recruitment signals to determine how much value they place on potential employment outcomes that they expect to be associated with each signal. Signaling theory (Spence, 1973) can help explain how recruitment initiatives can affect applicant perceptions and ultimately recruitment outcomes (Rynes et al., 1991; Rynes & Barber, 1990). Human resource systems have signaling functions that send information about what is expected, valued, and rewarded at a firm (Ostroff & Bowen, 2016). At the beginning of the job search process, job seekers have limited knowledge about organizations and available job roles (Rynes, 1989). According to signaling theory, firms signal to applicants to overcome these information asymmetries (Bergh et al., 2018). This theory explains how information is communicated and understood in the relationship between the job applicant and the organization (Connelly et al., 2011). Signals sent during the recruitment process, including those sent by realistic job previews, employment interviews, job and organizational attributes, and recruiter characteristics, can give applicants an idea of what it is like to be employed by an organization. For

example, applicants may acquire information about the physical characteristics and conditions of the work environment such as the level of noise during a realistic job preview, which may allow them to better understand what their work environment would be like if they were to accept a job offer at that organization. As another example, an outdated company website may signal to applicants that an organization is not adaptable or technologically advanced.

Signals can have important implications during the recruitment process, including an influence on applicant attraction outcomes (Celani & Singh, 2011; Chapman et al., 2005), so it is crucial that firms think strategically about what they signal to applicants. It is necessary to understand applicants' evaluations of recruitment signals because these evaluations are linked to behavioral outcomes such as offer acceptance. Understanding job seekers' perceptions of recruitment signals allows organizations to use effective recruitment strategies to increase applicant attraction outcomes (Banks et al., 2016; Breaugh, 2013). Applicants must determine how much they value the potential employment outcomes that they expect to be associated with each recruitment signal. The cognitive processes involved in the evaluation of these signals and the ensuing applicant attraction outcomes can be further explained by ET.

2.4 Expectancy Theory

The expectancy theory of motivation (ET; Atkinson, 1964; Lawler & Suttle, 1973; Vroom, 1964) originated in the work motivation literature and has been used in the recruitment literature to provide insight into cognitive processes involved in applicant attraction. The theory can help explain how employees develop attraction to organizations and choose which organizations to work for. ET can be applied to these

cognitive processes and their relationships to recruitment outcomes such as applicant attraction because job seekers are in control of these outcomes. ET has three main components: expectancy, instrumentality, and valence. The theory posits that the motivation to pursue a job alternative is calculated by multiplying the perceived instrumentalities and valences of characteristics of offer alternatives by the expectancy of receiving an offer (Wanous et al., 1983).

2.4.1 Expectancy

In the context of recruitment, expectancy is a job seeker's belief that they will be offered employment if they apply for a job (Feather & O'Brien, 1987; Vroom, 1964; Wanous et al., 1983). This belief is based upon a job seeker's past experiences, level of self-efficacy, and the perceived difficulty of the objective of receiving an employment offer (Chiang & Jang, 2008). When a job seeker believes that a job offer from an organization is not attainable, or that they are unable to influence or control the outcome of the employment process, expectancy is low and the job seeker will have low motivation to apply for a job (Coleman & Irving, 1997; Wanous et al., 1983).

2.4.2 Instrumentality

Instrumentality is the belief that certain outcomes or rewards will be associated with entry into a new organization or job role (i.e., a performance expectation is met) (Coleman & Irving, 1997; Vroom, 1964; Wanous et al., 1983). These outcomes may include job and organizational attributes or characteristics such as opportunities for promotion or pay increases. Instrumentality is low when the reward (i.e., job and organizational attributes or characteristics) is the same for every instance of applying for

a job. In order for instrumentality to be high, job seekers must believe that certain outcomes or rewards will be associated with entry into a new job.

2.4.3 Valence

Valence describes the value that a potential employee places on the rewards associated with an employment outcome and is characterized by the degree to which a job seeker values an employment-related outcome (Coleman & Irving, 1997; Vroom, 1964; Wanous et al., 1983). These anticipated rewards can take the form of job and organizational attributes that are signaled to job seekers. Signals sent during the recruitment process can give applicants an idea of what it is like to be employed by an organization. Job seekers must evaluate these recruitment signals to determine how much value they place on potential employment outcomes that they expect to be associated with each signal. The value a job seeker places on a reward is based on the job seeker's goals, preferences, values, needs, and sources of motivation. Valence is not a job seeker's level of actual satisfaction with an employment-related outcome; rather, it is a job seeker's expected level of satisfaction with such an outcome. Valence is positive when a job seeker prefers attaining a given signaled employment-related outcome over not attaining such an outcome.

2.4.4 Job Choice

The application of ET to the recruitment of active job seekers with job choice as an outcome is not new to the recruitment literature (e.g., Chapman & Webster, 2006; Wanous et al., 1983; Wheeler & Mahoney, 1981). ET can help explain how heuristic processes can guide perceptions and actions during the recruitment process in a complex environment. The attractiveness of an organization to a job seeker is equal to the sum of

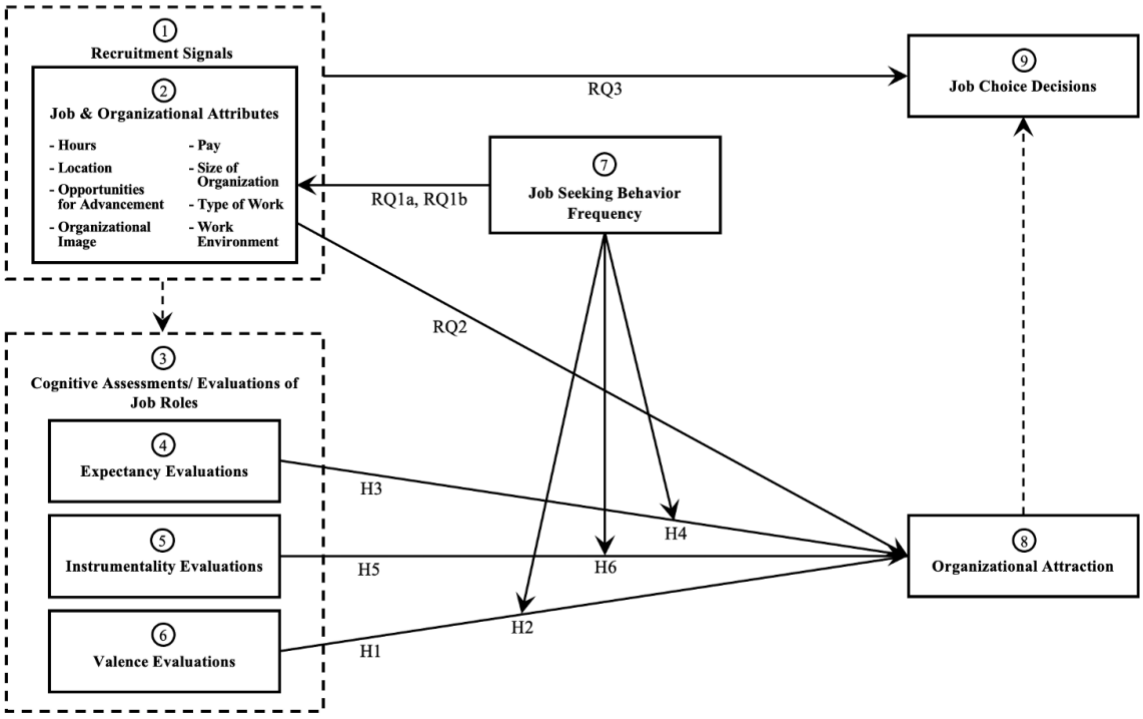
the desirability of each signaled employment-related outcome to the job seeker (i.e., valence), multiplied by the job seeker's belief about the employment-related outcomes that are associated with membership in the organization (i.e., instrumentality) (Sheridan et al., 1975; Wanous et al., 1983). The effort that a job seeker will expend to join a new organization is equal to this level of organizational attractiveness, multiplied by the job seeker's expectancy of receiving a job offer from the organization (Arnold, 1981; Vroom, 1964; Wanous et al., 1983). ET predicts that a job seeker's final job choice will therefore be the most attractive organization that makes an employment offer (Mitchell, 1974; Sheridan et al., 1975). However, as described previously, job choice is nearly always represented through proxies in studies of recruitment (Chapman et al., 2005). Attitudinal variables vary in their ability to approximate real job choices, and some attitudinal variables may be closer proxies for job choice behavior than others. While offer acceptance intentions are currently the most proximal measures to job choice decisions that are measured in the literature, they stop short of capturing actual job choices (Chapman et al., 2005). Given this limitation, the measurement of job choice behavior in studies of recruitment may reveal differences between predictors of applicant attraction and predictors of job offer acceptance. This study aims to move the needle by capturing what drives candidates' job choice decisions.

Job seekers on the passive end of the job seeking behavior continuum may have different objectives than more active job seekers during the job search, which may have implications for recruitment practices in organizations. As human capital is an important strategic resource, it is important for research to identify the factors and mechanisms that may influence job choice decisions for these relatively passive job seekers. To this end, I

present a model that applies ET as a theoretical framework to the recruitment of job seekers from the most passive end of the continuum to the most active end of the continuum and aims to explain these factors and mechanisms (see Figure 1). Below, I reference each box in the model as I propose hypotheses regarding the literature gaps discussed above.

Figure 1

Proposed Moderating Effect of Job Seeking Behavior Frequency on the Relationship Between Cognitive Evaluations of Job Roles and Organizational Attraction.



2.5 Hypotheses Development

ET may operate differently and have new empirical implications when applied to job seekers on the passive end of the job seeking behavior continuum. Relatively speaking, job seekers that are more passive and are being recruited by organizations may have a different decision-making process than more active job seekers. Specifically, job seekers on the passive end of the continuum may place different values on criteria used

evaluate potential jobs than do active job seekers, experience increased beliefs that they will be offered employment if they apply for a job, and may have increased beliefs that certain outcomes or rewards will be associated with their entry into a new organization or job. As a result, they may be more likely to experience increased organizational attraction. These differences are delineated here into six hypotheses and three research questions (RQs).

Organizational attraction (Figure 1, Box 8) is associated with other recruitment outcomes in studies of recruitment (Chapman et al., 2005), and is considered to be the primary mechanism for attaining human capital (Cable & Turban, 2001). ET predicts that a job seeker's final job choice will be the most attractive organization that makes an employment offer (Mitchell, 1974; Sheridan et al., 1975).

Part of the challenge that applicants face during the recruitment process is evaluating recruitment signals (Figure 1, Box 1) to determine how much value they place on different potential employment outcomes that they expect to be associated with each signal. Job seekers on the passive end of the continuum may place different weights on criteria used to evaluate potential roles than do job seekers on the active end of the continuum. Specifically, relatively passive job seekers may experience differences in the valence component of the ET equation (Figure 1, Box 6) when evaluating potential jobs. Valence is characterized by the degree to which a job seeker places value on an employment-related outcome (Coleman & Irving, 1997; Vroom, 1964; Wanous et al., 1983). As job seekers on the passive end of the continuum may already be employed, it is possible they may differ from active job seekers in their prioritization (i.e., value appraisal) of the signaled attributes of potential job roles. Job seekers on the active end of

the continuum may be more concerned with key job and organizational attributes that meet their minimum requirements such as pay and total hours worked (Figure 1, Box 2). However, relatively passive job seekers who have already attained their minimum requirements may have the flexibility to shift their focus toward attaining the most optimal job and organizational attributes such as a desirable organizational image or the availability of advancement opportunities. That is, job seekers on the passive end of the job seeking behavior frequency continuum (Figure 1, Box 7) may differentially place value on the signaled rewards (e.g., desirable job and organizational attributes) associated with a given employment outcome (e.g., the acceptance of a new job). Relatively passive job seekers may therefore prioritize (i.e., assign value to) job and organizational attributes differently than do relatively active job seekers when evaluating potential job roles (Figure 1, Box 3). Therefore, it is important to examine how job seekers across the job seeking behavior frequency continuum rate the importance of different job and organizational attributes.

RQ1a: How is job seeking behavior frequency related to importance ratings of job and organizational attributes?

RQ1b: How does job seeking behavior frequency predict importance ratings of job and organizational attributes?

If job seekers on the passive end of the continuum prioritize (i.e., assign value to) job and organizational attributes differently than do relatively active job seekers when evaluating potential job roles, this may result in different valences (Figure 1, Box 6) being assigned to different job and organizational attributes (Figure 1, Box 2). In this case, some job and organizational attributes may be more effective than others for

attracting job seekers on different ends of the job seeking behavior frequency continuum. If a job seeker finds the outcomes associated with entry into a new job role to be particularly desirable (e.g., places high value on the job and organizational attributes associated with the role), then that job seeker may experience more organizational attraction (Figure 1, Box 8) than a job seeker who does not find those job and organizational attributes to be particularly desirable. Accordingly, I hypothesize that valence evaluations are correlated with organizational attraction.

Hypothesis 1: Valence evaluations of job roles are positively correlated with organizational attraction.

I also hypothesize a moderation effect of job seeking behavior frequency on the relationships between valence evaluations of job roles and organizational attraction. Specifically, for job seekers on the active end of the continuum, high valence evaluations may lead to higher levels of organizational attraction. Similarly, for job seekers on the passive end of the continuum, high valence evaluations may lead to higher levels of organizational attraction. That is, high valence evaluations may lead to higher levels of organizational attraction, regardless of job seeking behavior frequency. However, relatively active job seekers may be engaging in job seeking behaviors more frequently than relatively passive job seekers because they have a stronger want or need for new jobs. Due to their increased want or need for jobs, relatively active job seekers with low valence evaluations may still experience higher levels of organizational attraction than relatively passive job seekers in the same situation. Conversely, in instances of low valence evaluations, job seekers at the passive end of the continuum may experience lower levels of organizational attraction because they do not need or want new jobs as

much as relatively active job seekers and they have the flexibility to focus on attaining roles with optimal job and organizational attributes. The relationship between valence evaluations and organizational attraction may be stronger for relatively passive job seekers than for relatively active job seekers because relatively active job seekers may be more likely to accept jobs even in cases of low valence evaluations. That is, in instances of low valence evaluations, job seekers on the active end of the continuum may be more likely to experience higher levels of organizational attraction and be willing to consider jobs that satisfy only their minimum requirements, while job seekers on the passive end of the continuum in the same situation may have lower levels of organizational attraction because they do not have the same level of need to consider new jobs.

Hypothesis 2: Job seeking behavior frequency moderates the relationship between valence evaluations of job roles and organizational attraction, such that as job seeking behavior frequency increases, the relationship between valence evaluations of job roles and organizational attraction decreases.

In addition, job seekers may feel more attraction toward organizations that they feel are very likely to extend job offers. If job seekers feel more hopeful or optimistic that they will receive an offer, they may also feel more positive and optimistic feelings about the job or the organization in general. That is, expectancy evaluations of job roles (Figure 1, Box 4) may be correlated with applicant attraction (Chapman et al., 2005).

Hypothesis 3: Expectancy evaluations of job roles are positively correlated with organizational attraction.

Job seekers on different ends of the job seeking behavior frequency continuum may also experience differences in the expectancy component of the ET equation. Job

seeking behavior frequency (Figure 1, Box 7) may moderate the relationship between expectancy evaluations of job roles (Figure 1, Box 4) and organizational attraction (Figure 1, Box 8). In the context of recruitment, expectancy is based upon a job seeker's past experiences, level of self-efficacy, and the perceived difficulty of the objective of receiving an employment offer (Chiang & Jang, 2008).

High expectancy evaluations may lead to higher levels of organizational attraction, regardless of job seeking behavior frequency. Job seekers across the continuum may experience increased organizational attraction outcomes if they feel that recruiting organizations are very interested in hiring them (i.e., they have high expectancy of receiving a job offer). If job seekers on the passive end of the continuum are being actively recruited by organizations, this may signal to these job seekers that they are more likely to receive a job offer if they apply for the job and remain in the recruitment process (Schwab et al., 1987; Wanous, 1977). Job seekers on the passive end of the continuum are more likely to have already attained their minimum requirements for job and organizational attributes and may have increased self-efficacy due to past or current employment experiences that have affirmed their skills and abilities. This, coupled with increased perceptions of desirability as candidates, may lead relatively passive job seekers to perceive that the objective of receiving an employment offer is less difficult. As a result, they may experience increased levels of organizational attraction (Figure 1, Box 8; Rynes, 1989). In addition, if job seekers on the active end of the continuum experience increased beliefs that they will be offered employment if they apply for a job, they may also be more likely to experience higher levels of organizational attraction due to their pressing want or need to find a job.

In instances of low expectancy evaluations, job seekers on the passive end of the continuum may still experience high levels of organizational attraction. However, job seekers on the active end of the continuum with low expectancy evaluations may experience lower levels of organizational attraction than relatively passive job seekers in the same situation because they may have lower levels of self-efficacy. Low levels of self-efficacy can prevent individuals from taking actions to achieve a goal, as self-efficacy is a necessary input for undertaking a task (Bandura, 1977). If relatively active job seekers believe they will not receive an employment offer (i.e., the goal of receiving an offer is too difficult), then they may lose interest in the job opportunity and instead choose to focus their job seeking efforts elsewhere (i.e., toward jobs for which they feel they are more likely to receive an employment offer). That is, in instances of low expectancy evaluations, job seekers on the active end of the job seeking behavior frequency continuum may be more likely to experience lower levels of organizational attraction.

> Hypothesis 4: Job seeking behavior frequency moderates the relationship between expectancy evaluations of job roles and organizational attraction, such that as job seeking behavior frequency increases, the relationship between expectancy evaluations of job roles and organizational attraction increases.

Furthermore, job seekers may feel more attraction toward organizations if they have increased beliefs that their entry into a new organization or job role may result in desirable job and organizational attributes or characteristics such as opportunities for promotion or pay increases. If job seekers have these beliefs, then they may experience

increased organizational attraction. That is, instrumentality evaluations of job roles (Figure 1, Box 5) may be correlated with applicant attraction (Figure 1, Box 8).

Hypothesis 5: Instrumentality evaluations of job roles are positively correlated with organizational attraction.

Job seekers on different ends of the job seeking behavior frequency continuum may experience differences in the instrumentality component of the ET equation (Figure 1, Box 5) when evaluating potential job roles. Job seeking behavior frequency (Figure 1, Box 7) may moderate the relationship between instrumentality evaluations of job roles (Figure 1, Box 5) and organizational attraction (Figure 1, Box 8). In the context of recruitment, instrumentality is based upon job seekers' perceptions of whether their entry into a new organization or job role may result in desirable job and organizational attributes or characteristics (Coleman & Irving, 1997; Vroom, 1964; Wanous et al., 1983). High instrumentality evaluations may lead to higher levels of organizational attraction, regardless of job seeking behavior frequency. Job seekers may experience increased organizational attraction outcomes if they believe that certain outcomes or rewards will be associated with their entry into a new organization or job role (i.e., they have high instrumentality evaluations). If they have these beliefs, job seekers may experience increased feelings of hope or optimism about the job, which may lead to increased organizational attraction (Figure 1, Box 8).

Job seekers on the active end of the continuum may be engaging in job seeking behaviors more frequently than relatively passive job seekers because they have a stronger want or need for new jobs than relatively passive job seekers. Due to the pressing need for jobs, job seekers on the active end of the continuum may choose to

focus their time and efforts away from seeking jobs they believe will not result in desirable job and organizational attributes or characteristics upon entry. Therefore, in instances of low instrumentality evaluations, relatively active job seekers may experience lower levels of organizational attraction than relatively passive job seekers in the same situation because they have an increased want or need for jobs and want to make the best use of their time and job seeking efforts.

> Hypothesis 6: Job seeking behavior frequency moderates the relationship between instrumentality evaluations of job roles and organizational attraction, such that as job seeking behavior frequency increases, the relationship between instrumentality evaluations of job roles and organizational attraction increases.

Finally, it is important to further examine the job and organizational attributes that influence applicants' organizational attraction and job choice decisions. Organizational attraction (Figure 1, Box 8) is considered to be the primary mechanism for attaining talented employees (Cable & Turban, 2001). Several theories of behavioral prediction (e.g., theory of reasoned action, Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977; theory of planned behavior, Ajzen, 1991) link attitudes about behavior to intentions and subsequent behavior. ET predicts that a job seeker's final job choice will be the most attractive organization that makes an employment offer (Mitchell, 1974; Sheridan et al., 1975). While a large amount of recruitment research has measured the relationship between job and organizational attributes and job choice decisions (e.g., Chapman & Webster, 2006; Wanous et al., 1983), job choice as an outcome is nearly always represented through proxies such as job pursuit intentions or offer acceptance intentions (Chapman et al., 2005). This use of proxies creates the risk of spurious inflation of job choice relationships because

employment-related attitudes or intentions may be related to each other (Wanous et al., 1983). In addition, applicant attraction may exist in the absence of the organization tendering a job offer. Predictor variables operationalized as perceptions or attitudes are often conceptually close to outcome variables, which may preclude the refutation of findings (Alvesson, 2020; Antonakis, 2017). In order to establish a more thorough understanding of factors that influence actual employment decisions, it is critical to identify the most important job and organizational attributes that influence organizational attraction and offer acceptance as distinct constructs.

RQ2: What job and organizational attributes are the most important predictors of applicant attraction?

RQ3: What factors influence applicants' job choice decisions?

2.6 The Current Study

This research aims to explain how job seekers on different ends of the job seeking behavior frequency continuum may process the different motivational elements involved in the recruitment process. The contribution of the following study includes the reconceptualization of active and passive job seeking as different levels of job seeking behavior frequency on a continuum. This study also aims to address the lack of theoretical insight into the cognitive processes involved in the recruitment of relatively passive job seekers by applying ET to identify the mechanisms that attract talent on different ends of the continuum. This study also determines which types of recruitment signaling (i.e., job and organizational attributes) are the most important predictors of organizational attraction and contributes to a better understanding of the factors that influence candidates' job choice decisions.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Overview of Study

To address the above hypotheses, I conducted an online survey study. Participants completed an online Qualtrics survey that included measures of organizational attributes, expectancy evaluations, instrumentality evaluations, valence evaluations, job seeking behavior frequency, organizational attraction, control variables, and demographic variables.

3.2 Open Data and Materials

This study followed best practices in open science in order to make the findings beneficial for academic and practitioner stakeholders. The study was preregistered on the Open Science Framework (www.osf.io/g2m6j/?view_only=7d16008f36b649a48d98e884a0beee65). Data have been made anonymous and publicly available along with an R Markdown file to ensure analytic reproducibility. Study materials have been shared and a transparency checklist has been completed (Aczel et al., 2020).

3.3 Participants

I conducted a power analysis using G*Power to determine the required sample size for this study. I calculated the number of participants needed to detect a medium effect size ($f^2 = .15$) of cognitive evaluations of job roles on organizational attraction. This power analysis resulted in a required sample size of $N = 127$ to detect a medium effect size at .80 power with an alpha of .05. Given the potential challenges associated with data collection during the recession due to the COVID-19 pandemic, I increased the sample size to account for the possibility of capturing fewer job seekers on the passive

end of the job seeking behavior frequency continuum in the sample. The final sample consisted of 157 participants, which allowed me to detect this medium effect size at .90 power with an alpha of .05. I recruited participants using Amazon's Mechanical Turk (MTurk). This sample was diverse enough to give a good representation of the workforce in the United States and had a similar average age and proportion of women to men. The sample included job seekers across the full continuum of job seeking behavior frequency. The data from the job seeking behavior index used in this study were normally distributed. In order to be eligible for participation in this study, participants were required to speak English fluently, live in the United States, and be at least 18 years of age. Participants were also required to be employed for at least 30 hours per week and have accepted a new job role within the past six months. A verbal protocol analysis conducted during the qualitative component of pilot analyses confirmed that participants found the survey items about their past perceptions to be clear and understandable. MTurk participant selection filters limited participants to workers in the United States with an MTurk human intelligence task (HIT) approval rate of at least 90 percent. Participants were assigned randomly generated participant identification numbers by MTurk.

3.4 Incentive

Participants were compensated financially for their participation in this study. The survey took approximately 15 minutes for participants to complete. Each participant received $2.50 through MTurk's compensation system in exchange for their participation in the survey. This compensation amount was chosen because it corresponds with the minimum hourly wage in the United States ($7.25; *Minimum Wage*, 2020) plus $0.68 as a

small additional incentive. Participants received the full compensation amount if they completed the survey.

3.5 Procedure

This study consisted of an anonymous online survey administered to the sample of MTurk participants. Participants were recruited for study participation using MTurk's participant pool and signed up online. If they decided to participate in this study, participants were first directed to an online consent form. Immediately after the completion of the survey, participants entered their randomly generated MTurk participant identification numbers which were used to distribute their compensation.

The survey had three screener questions to ensure that participants were fluent in English, at least 18 years of age, currently employed at least 30 hours per week, and had accepted a new job within the past six months. The survey then asked about participants' tenure at their current job and if they were already employed at any job at the time when they accepted their job offer. The survey included measures of importance rankings of organizational attributes, valence evaluations, instrumentality evaluations, and expectancy evaluations for the participants' current jobs. Next, the survey included measures of organizational attraction, job seeking behavior frequency, and a qualitative question about the top three factors that influenced participants' decisions to accept their current jobs. Finally, demographic information was collected. Upon completion of the survey, participants were linked to a debriefing and given the opportunity to enter their randomly generated participant identification numbers to receive their compensation on MTurk.

3.6 Pilot Study

Prior to data collection, I conducted a pilot study consisting of a qualitative component and a quantitative component. The qualitative component consisted of a verbal protocol analysis to investigate the face validity of the survey. A total of six interviewees were invited to participate in recorded interview sessions on Zoom. The interviews lasted between 20 and 35 minutes. In accordance with best practices, three of these interviews were conducted with social scientists and three interviews were conducted with individuals who were not social scientists (i.e., laypersons; Mason et al., 2020). During the recorded sessions, I informally interviewed each participant to talk through the survey and gain an understanding of how they were interacting with the survey. Participants shared their computer screens and were invited to discuss their thoughts and questions as they navigated through the survey. At the conclusion of each interview, I asked each participant if they noticed anything confusing about the survey content. I took notes on the comments that interviewees made during the interviews.

This process generated a few important insights about the format of the survey, including a suggestion to add repeating headers to carry down on the measure of job seeking behavior frequency. Participants confirmed that the survey items about their past perceptions were straightforward and understandable, and felt that they were able to effectively report these past perceptions in the survey. In general, the participants found that the content of the survey was clear and understandable. Following this verbal protocol analysis, I made changes to the survey format in Qualtrics to improve the clarity and interpretability of the survey.

The quantitative component of the pilot study was conducted with 52 participants on MTurk to further ensure that the procedure ran smoothly and the survey instructions and components were clear to participants. These participants were each compensated with $2.50 through MTurk's compensation system in exchange for their participation in the pilot survey. These pilot study participants were not included in the main study sample. No changes were made to the survey or study design based on the quantitative portion of the pilot study.

3.7 Attention Checks

Instructional attention checks (Kung et al., 2018; Oppenheimer et al., 2009) were built into the online survey in order to ensure that MTurk bots and careless survey participants did not qualify for the survey. These included the following two questions: "It is important that you pay attention to this study. Please check 'Strongly disagree,'" and "Walked on the moon" as a response option in the measure of job seeking behavior frequency. This second attention check required a response of "No". The survey link was clicked a total of 550 times. 358 participants agreed to the consent form and qualified to take the survey based on the screener questions. 188 survey respondents completed the survey and passed the first two attention checks. If one of these attention checks was failed, participants were routed to the end of the survey. The qualitative measure of job choice decision factors served as an additional screening method for careless survey respondents and bots. These three free-text response items allowed me to screen for random strings of words and symbols, excerpts of text pasted from the internet, and responses generated by artificial intelligence about unrelated topics that did not respond to the survey questions. I removed an additional 31 participants from the study sample

based on this secondary screening method, resulting in a final sample size of 157 participants. Together, these screening and attention check measures served to strengthen the quality of the data.

3.8 Measures

3.8.1 Demographic Questions

Demographic information collected included age, gender, race, ethnicity, industry, work experience, and level of education.

3.8.2 Control Variables

3.8.2.1 Control Variables for H2, H4, and H6. I followed best practices for the use of control variables in this study (Becker, 2005; Bernerth & Aguinis, 2016). I included years of work experience and level of education in my analyses for Hypotheses 2, 4, and 6 as potentially relevant control variables in order to remove the variance in organizational attraction that is associated with these non-focal variables (Bernerth & Aguinis, 2016; Carlson & Wu, 2012). Empirical research suggests possible relationships between years of work experience and organizational attraction and between level of education and organizational attraction. Human capital theory (Becker, 1964) proposes years of work experience and level of education as predictors of attitudes and behaviors with the reasoning that knowledge accumulated over time allows individuals to obtain valuable advantages. These advantages may include more desirable jobs, higher pay, and increased access to resources (Ng & Feldman, 2009; Strober, 1990). This suggests that these variables could predict organizational attraction, as individuals with more years of work experience or higher levels of education might be able to apply for jobs that are more desirable, have higher pay, or have increased access to resources.

Empirical research has found mixed results regarding the relationship between years of work experience and organizational attraction. It is possible that individuals with prior work experience with organizations similar to those to which they have applied might have more realistic expectations about the features of the jobs they have applied for (Breaugh, 2008). If this is the case, then these individuals may have increased levels of organizational attraction if they feel their expectations are likely to be met if they accept a job offer. In addition, it is possible that applicants with more work experience might be recruited more actively by organizations than applicants with less work experience (Swider et al., 2015), which could lead to higher levels of applicant attraction. Conversely, applicants with more experience may be more discerning in their evaluations of job roles (Kristof-Brown et al., 2002; Young et al., 1993), while applicants with fewer years of work experience might be less discerning and more likely to experience higher levels of attraction (Young et al., 1993).

Empirical research is more limited regarding the relationship between level of education and organizational attraction and the majority of research on organizational attraction focuses on individuals with higher levels of education (Evertz & Süß, 2017). Research has found relationships between education on specific subject areas and organizational attraction. For example, Evans and Davis (2011) theorized that education on corporate citizenship may lead to more systematic processing of job role information related to corporate citizenship, which might increase applicants' understandings of related job role expectations and responsibilities and thereby increase applicant attraction. Perceived corporate citizenship was found to positively influence organizational attraction for applicants that had received prior education on the subject (Evans & Davis,

2011). It is also possible that applicants with higher levels of education may be recruited more actively by organizations than applicants with lower levels of education, which could lead to higher levels of applicant attraction.

Given these relationships, these variables may represent alternative explanations for relationships between the focal variables in this study. It is possible that the relationships between cognitive evaluations of job roles and organizational attraction are not influenced by job seeking behavior frequency as my hypotheses suggest but are instead influenced by applicant characteristics such as years of work experience and level of education. Years of work experience and level of education can be measured reliably. In order to rule out alternative explanations for the unique relationships between cognitive evaluations of job roles and organizational attraction, it is necessary to parse out the variance between years of work experience, level of education, and cognitive evaluations of job roles.

3.8.2.2 Control Variables for RQ1b. I included years of work experience, level of education, age, and gender in my analyses for RQ1b as potentially relevant control variables in order to remove the variance in importance ratings of job and organizational attributes that is associated with these non-focal variables (Bernerth & Aguinis, 2016; Carlson & Wu, 2012). Perceptions of job and organizational characteristics may differ based on these characteristics of individual job seekers. First, the knowledge gained from additional years of working for organizations over time might influence what individuals find to be the most important attributes of a job or organization. Knowledge of the characteristics of jobs and organizations accumulated over the years may affect what job and organizational attributes applicants value the most, and what is important to them

could change as they gain additional years of work experience. For example, one study found that the importance of promotion opportunities decreases for individuals with greater than 25 years of work experience, relative to individuals who have one to two years of work experience (Sutherland, 2012). Similarly, the knowledge gained from additional time spent in school or attaining higher levels of education might influence what individuals find to be the most important attributes of a job or organization (Sutherland, 2012). While research on these differences is limited, some research has found that as the level of education increased, applicants placed more importance on type of work and less importance on job security (Jurgensen, 1978).

In addition, age may influence what applicants find to be the most important attributes of a job or organization. Knowledge accumulated over the years could affect what job and organizational attributes applicants value the most, and applicants' priorities may shift as they age (Sutherland, 2012). For example, a younger applicant might place a high level of importance on growth and career advancement opportunities, while an older applicant might place more importance on attaining a job with a more desirable work-life balance or a pleasant work environment. Some studies have found that the preferences of younger applicants are more likely to change than those of older applicants (Tolbert & Moen, 1998). There is very limited empirical evidence of these time-related changes in preferences for job and organizational attributes, as the vast majority of relevant research has been conducted with young participants (e.g., Lueptow, 1992). Data used for research on job and organizational characteristics are often collected from college students or individuals who have recently graduated from college and are searching for their first

career job, which calls into question the generalizability of results to the broader population (Tolbert & Moen, 1998).

Finally, gender may influence what applicants find to be the most important attributes of a job or organization. The empirical research on gender differences in preferences for job and organizational attributes is mixed and suggests that women could value job and organizational attributes differently than men (e.g., Jurgensen, 1978; Scozzaro & Subich, 1990; Tolbert & Moen, 1998; Wiersma, 1990). Some research has found that men find pay to be more important than other job and organizational attributes, while women may be more focused on professional growth or relationships with colleagues (Bartol & Manhardt, 1979; Bigoness, 1988). It is possible that gender differences in preferences for job and organizational attributes might be a result of role conflict with nonwork roles (Wiersma, 1990) and could result in women finding roles with attributes such as flexible hours or locations more attractive than roles that conflict with family obligations (Chapman et al., 2005). It is also possible that these gender differences may be decreasing due to shifting societal norms regarding gender roles (Barber & Daly, 1996). Meta analyses of job attribute preferences have found significant differences between the job attribute preferences for men and women (Konrad et al., 2000). Some research shows gender differences shifting over time (e.g., Jurgensen, 1978), which highlights the possibility that published research may not be representative of the current preferences of different genders.

Given these relationships, these variables might represent alternative explanations for relationships between the focal variables in this study. It is possible that the relationships between job seeking behavior frequency and importance ratings of job and

organizational attributes are not influenced by job seeking behavior frequency as my hypotheses suggest but are instead influenced by applicant characteristics such as years of work experience, level of education, age, and gender. These applicant characteristics can be measured reliably. In order to rule out alternative explanations for the unique relationships between job seeking behavior frequency and importance ratings of job and organizational attributes, it is necessary to parse out the variance between years of work experience, level of education, age, gender, and job seeking behavior frequency.

3.8.3 Job and Organizational Attributes

Job and organizational attributes were assessed by asking respondents to rank order their perceptions of the importance of a series of job and organizational attributes (Judge & Bretz, 1992; Turban & Eyring, 1993) during the time when they accepted their current jobs. These included total hours worked, pay, type of work, opportunities for career advancement, location in the city, state, or country, organizational image, size of the organization, and work environment. These items were derived from a meta-analysis on applicant attraction by Chapman et al. (2005). Responses for these attributes were reverse coded from 1 (i.e., least important) to 8 (i.e., most important).

3.8.4 Valence

Rank ordering as a measure of valence does not capture valence (i.e., a job seeker's expected level of satisfaction) in its purest form (Wanous et al., 1983). While some research has found importance rankings and anticipated satisfaction to have no difference as measures of valence (e.g., Pecotich & Churchill, 1981), other research has found that valence operationalized as attractiveness (De Leo & Pritchard, 1974; Tubbs et

al., 1991) or desirability (Lawler & Suttle, 1973) is a better measure than importance (Van Eerde & Thierry, 1996).

Valence was assessed for participants' current job roles. Specifically, participants were asked to evaluate their perceptions of the eight job and organizational attributes (i.e., total hours worked, pay, type of work, opportunities for career advancement, location in the city, state, or country, organizational image, size of the organization, and work environment) for their current jobs when they first started at their jobs (Lawler & Suttle, 1973) on a scale from 1 to 5 with anchors of "least desirable" to "most desirable." These items were preceded by the message, "Here, we have again listed the same job and organizational attributes. We are now are asking you to think about them in a different way. This time, we would like to know how *desirable* you thought each of these attributes were *for the job you have now*, back when you first started the job." I calculated a composite valence evaluation score. Cronbach's alpha and omega coefficients were calculated (Cortina et al., in press; α = .72; ω = .73, 95% CI [.64, .80]).

3.8.5 Instrumentality

In order to measure instrumentality, respondents indicated how much a series of outcomes (i.e., desirable job and organizational attributes) were associated with entry into their jobs (Van Eerde & Thierry, 1996). Respondents indicated how "typical" (i.e., instrumental; Wanous et al., 1983) the eight attributes (i.e., desirable total hours worked, desirable pay, desirable type of work, desirable opportunities for career advancement, desirable location in the city, state, or country, desirable organizational image, desirable size of the organization, and desirable work environment) were for their current jobs when they first started at their jobs, on a five-point scale with anchors from "not typical

at all" to "extremely typical." These items were preceded by the message, "One more time, we have listed the same job and organizational attributes. We are now asking you to think about them in another new way. This time, we would like to know how *typical* you thought each of these attributes were *for the job you have now*, back when you first started the job." I calculated a composite instrumentality evaluation score and Cronbach's alpha and omega coefficients (α = .79; ω = .80, 95% CI [.72, .88]).

In order to determine the distinctiveness of the valence and instrumentality measures, I conducted a confirmatory factor analysis. I ran a one-factor model and a two-factor model to determine whether valence evaluations and instrumentality evaluations were best represented as one or two factors. Table 17 shows the results of these analyses. Considering fit statistics, the two-factor model showed a better fit to the data than the one-factor model. The two-factor model showed a smaller chi-square magnitude and a lower root-mean-square-errors-of-approximation (RMSEA). In addition, the comparative fit index (CFI) and Tucker-Lewis index (TLI) values increased for the two-factor model, indicating that the two-factor model had a better fit than the one-factor model. However, neither model had good fit, as these two indices were below the recommended cutoffs of .90. In addition, the Akaike Information Criterion (AIC) increased from 6117.28 to 6671.73, indicating a reduction in model fit (Matsunaga, 2008). In the one-factor model, two items had factor loadings below .40 and did not load reliably onto the factor. In the two-factor model, the same two items had factor loadings below .40, but these factor loadings were higher than their loadings in the first model. The items in the second model loaded more reliably on their predicted factors. These results suggest that valence evaluations and instrumentality evaluations are best represented as two separate factors,

as the two-factor model was better supported. As the two factors are correlated, individuals with higher valence evaluations of jobs may also have higher instrumentality evaluations of those same jobs. However, according to the analysis, the factors are distinct enough that it is more appropriate to measure them separately.

Table 17

Confirmatory Factor Analysis Model Fit Indices for Valence and Instrumentality

Model	CFI	TLI	χ^2	*df*	AIC	RMSEA
One factor	.64	.58	369.78 (.000)	104	6117.28	.13
Two factor	.67	.62	343.43 (.000)	103	6671.73	.12

Note. $N = 157$. The two-factor model includes valence evaluations and instrumentality evaluations. The one-factor model combines these two factors. CFI = comparative fit index; TLI = Tucker-Lewis index; χ^2 = Chi-Square; df = degrees of freedom; AIC = Akaike Information Criterion; RMSEA = root-mean-square error of approximation. Exact *p* values are provided (two-tailed tests).

3.8.6 Expectancy

In order to capture expectancy as a subjective probability of an action or effort (i.e., applying for a job role) leading to an outcome (i.e., receiving a job offer) (Tubbs et al., 1991; Vroom, 1964; Wanous et al., 1983), participants responded to one survey item.

This item was preceded by the message, “Next, we would like to know what you thought the likelihood was of being accepted into your current job. When you first applied for this job, did you think you were going to get it?” They then indicated their answer to the question, “What do you think was the likelihood of you being accepted into your current role?” on a five-point scale with verbal anchors from “no chance at all” to “extremely good chance.”

3.8.7 Organizational Attraction

Organizational attraction was measured with a three-item measure based on three common variations in item types used in the measurement of attraction (Chapman et al., 2005). Participants were asked the extent to which they agreed with the following statements when they first started at their jobs: “This job was attractive to me” (e.g., Saks et al., 1994; Van Eerde & Thierry, 1996), “I wanted to work for this company” (e.g., Macan & Dipboye, 1990), and “I thought this organization was one of the best employers to work for in my region” (e.g., Smither et al., 1993) on a five-point scale with anchors from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.” I calculated a composite organizational attraction score and Cronbach’s alpha and omega coefficients (α = .59; ω = .62, 95% CI [.46, .71]). These three items were chosen in order to capture the full conceptual breadth of the construct rather than to strengthen the internal consistency of the measure.

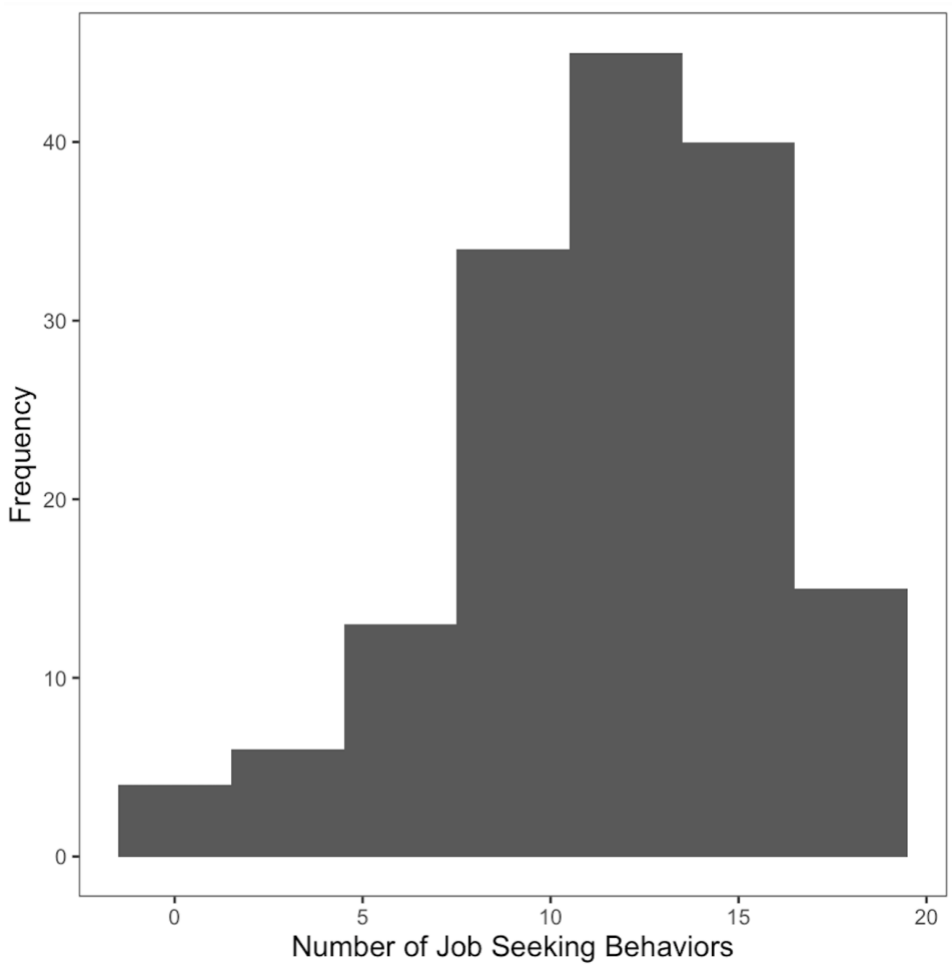
3.8.8 Job Seeking Behavior Frequency

Job seeking behavior frequency was measured by asking participants about their job seeking behaviors during the time before they accepted their current jobs. Participants were asked to indicate whether or not they engaged in a series of 17 behaviors (e.g., submitted a job application, interviewed for a job, wrote a cover letter, contacted an

employment agency) within the three-month time period before they accepted their current jobs. Participants responded to each item with a "Yes" or "No" response. The items in this measure are based on common job seeking behaviors discussed in Chapman et al. (2005), Saks and Ashforth (2000), Van Hoye and Saks (2008), and Van Hoye (2018). This measure was scored as a sum of all the items (i.e., "Yes" = 1, "No" = 0). If participants indicated that they had submitted a job application or interviewed for a job, they were asked follow-up questions to determine the frequency of these behaviors during the three-month time period before they accepted their current jobs. I examined the distribution of the job seeking behavior index used in this study using a histogram and found that the distribution of the data appeared to be consistent with a normal distribution ($\bar{x}$ = 11.46, SD = 4.05, median = 12, mode = 11; see Figure 2). In addition, a QQ plot was consistent with normally distributed data.

Figure 2

Histogram of Job Seeking Behavior Frequency.



3.8.9 Job Choice Decision Factors

In order to measure the factors that influenced job choice decisions, participants were asked to list the top three factors that influenced their decision to accept their current job. Participants were given three free-text response boxes, each with a 25-character minimum, to describe their job choice decision factors.

3.9 Analysis

The data for the 188 participants that passed the first two attention checks and completed the survey were exported from Qualtrics into an Excel csv file. These data

were then screened to remove an additional 31 invalid responses as indicated by the qualitative attention checks in the surveys. The software R was used for analyses and to create an R Markdown file. Descriptive statistics were run to examine means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations for all the study variables.

3.9.1 Method for evaluating H1, H3, and H5

In order evaluate hypotheses H1, H3, and H5, I examined a correlation matrix to determine the extent to which the variables of interest related to each other.

3.9.2 Method for Evaluating H2, H4, and H6

In order to evaluate H2, H4, and H6, I used ordinary least squares (OLS) regression. Variables used in regression analyses were mean centered. For each of these hypotheses, I first computed an interaction term. Next, I fit a multiple regression model with the independent variables and the interaction term as predictors. I then tested whether the regression coefficient for the interaction term was statistically significant and interpreted the moderation effect. These analyses controlled for level of education and years of work experience.

3.9.3 Method for Evaluating RQ1a

In order evaluate RQ1a, I examined a correlation matrix to determine the extent to which the variables of interest related to each other.

3.9.4 Method for Evaluating RQ1b

In order to evaluate RQ1b, eight hierarchical regression analyses were performed to evaluate the unique influence of job seeking behavior frequency on each job and organizational attribute, controlling for age, gender, level of education, and years of work

experience. The control variables were entered as predictors in the first model and job seeking behavior frequency was entered in the second model.

3.9.5 Method for Evaluating RQ2

In order to evaluate RQ2, I used relative weights analysis (RWA). Sample size requirements for RWA are similar to requirements for other regression-based analyses (Tonidandel & LeBreton, 2011). RWA takes into account each predictor variable's contribution in addition to its contribution in combination with other predictor variables (Johnson & Lebreton, 2004). This analysis allows the calculation of the relative contribution of each job and organizational attribute towards explaining variance in organizational attraction and addresses issues caused by predictors being correlated with each other. This is achieved by transforming the predictor variables to generate a new set of predictors that are orthogonal to each other and at the same time maximally related to the original set of predictors (Tonidandel & LeBreton, 2011). I calculated the proportion of variance in organizational attraction that was attributed to each job and organizational attribute.

3.9.6 Method for Evaluating RQ3

In order to determine what factors influenced applicants' job choice decisions, I used qualitative analyses. I used open and axial coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Strauss, 1987) to categorize, describe, and conceptualize the data. This method was chosen because it allowed for the inductive derivation of meaning from the qualitative data. All participant responses were coded in an iterative fashion, and individual responses were often coded with multiple codes. While all participant responses for all three job choice decision factors were coded, no new codes were generated once the data for the first two

job choice decision factors had been coded. After the initial coding phase was completed, the codes were grouped into concepts and then categorized, and descriptions were developed for each of the categories.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

Survey data were analyzed for 157 survey respondents. The average age of respondents was 37.21 years (*SD* = 10.43). 62.4 percent of respondents were men and 37.6 percent of respondents were women. This is similar to the labor force composition in the United States, where the average age is 38.9 years and approximately 53 percent of the labor force are men and 47 percent are women (*Labor Force Characteristics*, 2020). All participants had at least a high school degree or equivalent level of education and 77.1 percent of participants had a bachelor's degree or higher level of education. Respondents had an average of 12.92 years of work experience (*SD* = 8.34) and 74.5 percent of respondents were employed when they accepted their current jobs. Means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations can be found in Table 1. Means and standard deviations indicated that the sample exhibited acceptable variability in responses for each variable, and the variables were not so highly correlated that they risked measuring the same construct. There was a large amount of variation in responses for the number of job applications submitted ($\bar{x}$ = 11.51, *SD* = 20.08). This large standard deviation may have occurred because some job board websites allow users to apply to open job listings in bulk or have easy-apply buttons that allow users to complete many job applications in a relatively short amount of time.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Valence Evaluations	3.98	.53	-							
2. Instrumentality Evaluations	3.88	.58	0.55 (.000)	-						
3. Expectancy Evaluations	3.93	.73	0.32 (.000)	0.23 (.004)	-					
4. Organizational Attraction	4.17	.57	0.55 (.000)	0.48 (.000)	0.25 (.002)	-				
5. Job Seeking Behavior Frequency	11.46	4.05	0.18 (.022)	0.10 (.200)	0.14 (.085)	0.00 (.984)	-			
6. Number of Job Applications	11.51	20.08	0.02 (.818)	-0.09 (.286)	-0.24 (.005)	0.04 (.661)	-0.01 (.926)	-		
7. Number of Interviews	3.85	3.15	0.04 (.634)	0.06 (.483)	-0.07 (.407)	-0.01 (.911)	0.25 (.004)	0.28 (.002)	-	
8. Age	37.21	10.43	0.05 (.556)	-0.04 (.633)	0.03 (.745)	0.04 (.605)	-0.02 (.758)	-0.17 (.055)	-0.10 (.244)	-
9. Years of Work Experience	12.92	8.34	-0.01 (.888)	-0.03 (.712)	-0.11 (.168)	0.03 (.691)	-0.15 (.062)	-0.05 (.544)	-0.09 (.298)	0.76 (.000)

Note. $N = 157$; Exact p values are provided (two-tailed tests).

4.1 H1, H3, and H5

4.1.1 H1: Valence evaluations of job roles are positively correlated with organizational attraction.

Valence evaluations of job roles had a significant, strong, positive correlation with organizational attraction, $r = .55$, $p = .000$. This finding provides support for H1 and indicates that higher valence evaluations are associated with increased organizational attraction.

4.1.2 H3: Expectancy evaluations of job roles are positively correlated with organizational attraction.

Expectancy evaluations of job roles had a significant, moderate, positive correlation with organizational attraction, $r = .25$, $p = .002$. This finding aligns with H3 and suggests that higher expectancy evaluations are associated with increased organizational attraction.

4.1.3 H5: Instrumentality evaluations of job roles are positively correlated with organizational attraction.

Instrumentality evaluations of job roles had a significant, strong, positive correlation with organizational attraction, $r = .48$, $p = .000$. This finding provides support for H5 and indicates that higher instrumentality evaluations are associated with increased organizational attraction.

4.2 H2, H4, and H6

4.2.1 H2: Job seeking behavior frequency moderates the relationship between valence evaluations of job roles and organizational attraction, such that as job

seeking behavior frequency increases, the relationship between valence evaluations of job roles and organizational attraction decreases.

Results of the moderated multiple regression analysis for H2 are displayed in Table 2. Valence evaluations, job seeking behavior frequency, level of education, and years of work experience were entered in Model 1, and the interaction term was entered in Model 2. In Model 1, the predictors accounted for 32.7 percent of the variance in organizational attraction, $R^2 = .327$, $F(7, 146) = 10.15$, $p = .000$. Valence evaluations of job roles were a statistically significant predictor of organizational attraction, $\beta = .54$, $p = .000$. In Model 2, the interaction term (valence evaluations x job seeking behavior frequency) was entered. This model accounted for 33.0 percent of the variance in organizational attraction, $R^2 = .330$, $F(8, 145) = 8.94$, $p = .000$. Valence evaluations of job roles were a statistically significant predictor of organizational attraction, $\beta = .54$, $p = .000$. The interaction term accounted for an additional 0.3 percent of variance in the criterion, $\Delta R^2 = .003$, $p = .423$, meaning that an additional 0.3 percent of variance in organizational attraction was due to the interaction between valence evaluations and job seeking behavior frequency. However, this interaction term was not statistically significant, thus H2 is not supported.

Table 2

Test for Interactive Effect of Valence Evaluations and Job Seeking Behavior Frequency on Organizational Attraction

	Predictor	*b*	*SE b*	β	R^2	ΔR^2	*F*
Model 1					.327		10.15 (.000)
	(Intercept)	4.06 (.000)	.12				
	Valence Evaluations	0.59 (.000)	.08	.54			
	Job Seeking Behavior Frequency	-0.01 (.349)	.01	-.07			
	Associate Degree	0.25 (.127)	.17	.14			
	Bachelor's Degree	0.11 (.386)	.13	.10			
	Master's Degree	0.08 (.577)	.15	.06			
	Ph.D.	-.13 (.632)	.27	-.04			
	Years of Work Experience	0.00 (.884)	.00	.01			
Model 2					.330	.003 (.423)	8.94 (.000)
	(Intercept)	4.06 (.000)	.12				
	Valence Evaluations	0.58 (.000)	.08	.54			
	Job Seeking Behavior Frequency	-0.01 (.483)	.01	-.05			
	Associate Degree	0.26 (.114)	.17	.14			
	Bachelor's Degree	0.11 (.388)	.13	.10			
	Master's Degree	0.08 (.601)	.15	.05			
	Ph.D.	-0.16 (.553)	.28	-.05			
	Years of Work Experience	0.00 (.886)	.00	.01			
	Valence × Job Seeking Behavior Frequency	-0.01 (.422)	.02	-.06			

Note. $N = 157$. Exact *p* values are provided (two-tailed tests). ΔR^2 = Change in R^2 from prior model.

4.2.2 H4: **Job seeking behavior frequency moderates the relationship between expectancy evaluations of job roles and organizational attraction, such that as job seeking behavior frequency increases, the relationship between expectancy evaluations of job roles and organizational attraction increases.**

Results of the moderated multiple regression analysis for H4 are displayed in Table 3. Expectancy evaluations, job seeking behavior frequency, level of education, and years of work experience were entered in Model 1, and the interaction term was entered in Model 2. In Model 1, the predictors accounted for 12.0 percent of the variance in organizational attraction, $R^2 = .120$, $F(7, 146) = 2.85$, $p = .008$. Expectancy evaluations of job roles were a statistically significant predictor of organizational attraction, $\beta = .24$, $p = .003$. In Model 2, the interaction term (expectancy evaluations x job seeking behavior frequency) was entered. This model accounted for 12.3 percent of the variance in organizational attraction, $R^2 = .123$, $F(8, 145) = 1.95$, $p = .013$. Expectancy evaluations of job roles were a statistically significant predictor of organizational attraction, $\beta = .22$, $p = .014$. The interaction term accounted for an additional 0.3 percent of variance in the criterion, $\Delta R^2 = .003$, $p = .514$, meaning that an additional 0.3 percent of variance in organizational attraction was due to the interaction between expectancy evaluations and job seeking behavior frequency. However, this interaction term was not statistically significant, which suggests that H4 is not supported.

Table 3

Test for Interactive Effect of Expectancy Evaluations and Job Seeking Behavior Frequency on Organizational Attraction

	Predictor	*b*	*SE b*	β	R^2	ΔR^2	*F*
Model 1					.120		2.85 (.008)
	(Intercept)	4.02 (.000)	.13				
	Expectancy Evaluations	0.19 (.003)	.06	.24			
	Job Seeking Behavior Frequency	0.00 (.884)	.01	.01			
	Associate Degree	0.36 (.058)	.19	.20			
	Bachelor's Degree	0.21 (.160)	.15	.18			
	Master's Degree	-0.04 (.833)	.17	-.03			
	Ph.D.	-0.28 (.371)	.31	-.08			
	Years of Work Experience	0.00 (.792)	.01	.02			
Model 2					.123	.003 (.514)	2.54 (.013)
	(Intercept)	4.02 (.000)	.13				
	Expectancy Evaluations	0.17 (.014)	.07	.22			
	Job Seeking Behavior Frequency	0.00 (.757)	.01	.03			
	Associate Degree	0.37 (.055)	.19	.20			
	Bachelor's Degree	0.21 (.156)	.15	.18			
	Master's Degree	-0.03 (.878)	.17	-.02			
	Ph.D.	-0.31 (.325)	.32	-.09			
	Years of Work Experience	0.00 (.788)	.01	.02			
	Expectancy × Job Seeking Behavior Frequency	-0.01 (.514)	.02	-.06			

Note. $N = 157$. Exact p values are provided (two-tailed tests). ΔR^2 = Change in R^2 from prior model.

4.2.3 H6: **Job seeking behavior frequency moderates the relationship between instrumentality evaluations of job roles and organizational attraction, such that as job seeking behavior frequency increases, the relationship between instrumentality evaluations of job roles and organizational attraction increases.**

Results of the moderated multiple regression analysis for H6 are displayed in Table 4. Instrumentality evaluations, job seeking behavior frequency, level of education, and years of work experience were entered in Model 1, and the interaction term was entered in Model 2. In Model 1, the predictors accounted for 26.6 percent of the variance in organizational attraction, $R^2 = .266$, $F(7, 146) = 7.57$, $p = .000$. Instrumentality evaluations of job roles were a statistically significant predictor of organizational attraction, $\beta = .46$, $p = .000$. In Model 2, the interaction term (instrumentality evaluations x job seeking behavior frequency) was entered. This model accounted for 26.7 percent of the variance in organizational attraction, $R^2 = .267$, $F(8, 145) = 6.61$, $p = .000$. Instrumentality evaluations of job roles were a statistically significant predictor of organizational attraction, $\beta = .47$, $p = .000$. The interaction term accounted for an additional 0.1 percent of variance in the criterion, $\Delta R^2 = .001$, $p = .682$, meaning that an additional 0.1 percent of variance in organizational attraction was due to the interaction between instrumentality evaluations and job seeking behavior frequency. However, this interaction term was not statistically significant, which suggests that H6 is not supported.

Table 4

Test for Interactive Effect of Instrumentality Evaluations and Job Seeking Behavior Frequency on Organizational Attraction

	Predictor	*b*	*SE b*	β	R^2	ΔR^2	*F*
Model 1					.266		7.57 (.000)
	(Intercept)	4.09 (.000)	.12				
	Instrumentality Evaluations	0.46 (.000)	.07	.46			
	Job Seeking Behavior Frequency	-0.00 (.971)	.01	-.00			
	Associate Degree	0.24 (.170)	.17	.13			
	Bachelor's Degree	0.11 (.400)	.14	.10			
	Master's Degree	-0.05 (.729)	.15	-.04			
	Ph.D.	-0.32 (.258)	.28	-.09			
	Years of Work Experience	0.00 (.847)	.01	.01			
Model 2					.267	.001 (.682)	6.61 (.000)
	(Intercept)	4.09 (.000)	.12				
	Instrumentality Evaluations	0.46 (.000)	.07	.47			
	Job Seeking Behavior Frequency	-0.00 (.892)	.01	-.01			
	Associate Degree	0.24 (.168)	.17	.13			
	Bachelor's Degree	0.12 (.389)	.14	.10			
	Master's Degree	-0.05 (.728)	.15	-.04			
	Ph.D.	-0.31 (.280)	.29	-.09			
	Years of Work Experience	0.00 (.882)	.01	.01			
	Instrumentality × Job Seeking Behavior Frequency	0.01 (.682)	.02	.03			

Note. $N = 157$. Exact *p* values are provided (two-tailed tests). ΔR^2 = Change in R^2 from prior model.

In order to further investigate these findings, I included all variables for H2, H4, H6, and their interactions in one model. The results for this analysis are displayed in Table 18. Valence evaluations, instrumentality evaluations, expectancy evaluations, job seeking behavior frequency, level of education, and years of work experience were entered in Model 1, and their interaction terms were entered in Model 2. In Model 1, the predictors accounted for 37.5 percent of the variance in organizational attraction, R^2 = .375, $F(9,144) = 9.61$, $p = .000$. Valence evaluations, $\beta = .38$, $p = .000$, and instrumentality evaluations, $\beta = .25$, $p = .002$, were statistically significant predictors of organizational attraction. In Model 2, the interaction terms were entered. This model accounted for 41.3 percent of the variance in organizational attraction, $R^2 = .413$, $F(20, 133) = 4.68$, $p = .000$. Valence evaluations, $\beta = .45$, $p = .000$, and instrumentality evaluations, $\beta = .22$, $p = .020$, were statistically significant predictors of organizational attraction. The interaction terms accounted for an additional 3.8 percent of variance in the criterion, $\Delta R^2 = .038$, $p = .244$. However, these interaction terms were not statistically significant, which further supports that H2, H4, and H6 are not supported.

Table 18

Test for Interactive Effect of Valence Evaluations, Instrumentality Evaluations, Expectancy Evaluations, and Job Seeking Behavior Frequency on Organizational Attraction

	Predictor	*b*	*SE b*	β	R^2	ΔR^2	*F*
Model 1					.375		9.61 (.000)
	(Intercept)	4.11 (.000)	.12				
	Valence Evaluations	0.42 (.000)	.09	.38			
	Instrumentality Evaluations	0.25 (.002)	.08	.25			
	Expectancy Evaluations	0.06 (.303)	.06	.07			
	Job Seeking Behavior Frequency	-0.01 (.348)	.01	-.07			
	Associate Degree	0.21 (.191)	.16	.12			
	Bachelor's Degree	0.06 (.649)	.13	.05			
	Master's Degree	-0.01 (.930)	.15	-.01			
	Ph.D.	-.18 (.509)	.27	-.05			
	Years of Work Experience	0.00 (.805)	.00	.02			
Model 2					.413	.038 (.244)	4.68 (.000)
	(Intercept)	4.07 (.000)	.13				
	Valence Evaluations	0.49 (.000)	.11	.45			
	Instrumentality Evaluations	0.22 (.020)	.09	.22			
	Expectancy Evaluations	0.08 (.278)	.07	.10			
	Job Seeking Behavior Frequency	-0.01 (.262)	.01	-.10			
	Associate Degree	0.27 (.135)	.18	.15			
	Bachelor's Degree	0.10 (.485)	.14	.09			
	Master's Degree	0.01 (.956)	.16	.01			
	Ph.D.	-0.36 (.232)	.30	-.10			
	Years of Work Experience	0.00 (.867)	.00	.01			
	Valence × Instrumentality	-0.04 (.780)	.13	-.02			
	Valence × Expectancy	0.13 (.349)	.14	.10			
	Instrumentality × Expectancy	0.17 (.321)	.17	.13			
	Valence × Job Seeking Behavior Frequency	-0.02 (.462)	.03	-.09			
	Instrumentality × Job Seeking Behavior Frequency	0.00 (.849)	.02	.02			
	Expectancy × Job Seeking Behavior Frequency	0.01 (.543)	.02	.06			
	Valence × Instrumentality × Expectancy	-0.35 (.068)	.19	-.22			
	Valence × Instrumentality × Job Seeking Behavior Frequency	-0.01 (.831)	.04	-.03			
	Valence × Expectancy × Job Seeking Behavior Frequency	0.01 (.873)	.04	.02			
	Instrumentality × Expectancy × Job Seeking Behavior Frequency	0.07 (.057)	.03	.27			
	Valence × Instrumentality × Expectancy × Job Seeking Behavior Frequency	-.060 (.244)	.05	-.21			

Note. $N = 157$. Exact *p* values are provided (two-tailed tests). ΔR^2 = Change in R^2 from prior model.

4.3 RQ1a: How is job seeking behavior frequency related to importance ratings of job and organizational attributes?

Means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations can be found in Table 5. Means and standard deviations indicated that the sample exhibited acceptable variability in responses for each variable, and the variables were not so highly correlated that they risked measuring the same construct. Job seeking behavior frequency had a statistically significant, moderate, negative correlation with importance ratings of pay, r = -.25, p = .001., a statistically significant, moderate, positive correlation with importance ratings of opportunities for career advancement, r = .34, p = .000, a statistically significant, moderate, positive correlation with importance ratings of organizational image, r = .24, p = .003, and a statistically significant, weak, positive correlation with importance ratings of size of the organization, r = .16, p = .040. Job seeking behavior frequency was not significantly correlated with importance ratings of total hours worked, type of work, location in the city, state, or country, or work environment.

Table 5

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations for Job Seeking Behavior Frequency and Job and Organizational Attributes

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Job Seeking Behavior Frequency	11.46	4.05	-							
2. Total Hours Worked	5.20	1.82	-0.15 (.066)	-						
3. Pay	6.36	1.90	-0.25 (.001)	0.18 (.027)	-					
4. Type of Work	5.89	1.92	-0.07 (.388)	-0.02 (.828)	0.01 (.929)	-				
5. Opportunities for Career Advancement	4.77	1.98	0.34 (.000)	-0.31 (.000)	-0.24 (.002)	-0.25 (.002)	-			
6. Location in the City, State, or Country	4.60	2.01	-0.11 (.189)	-0.18 (.021)	-0.20 (.011)	-0.14 (.077)	-0.31 (.000)	-		
7. Organizational Image	2.56	1.49	0.24 (.003)	-0.18 (.026)	-0.19 (.017)	-0.36 (.000)	0.20 (.012)	-0.19 (.019)	-	
8. Size of the Organization	2.45	1.81	0.16 (.040)	-0.04 (.588)	-0.36 (.000)	-0.36 (.000)	0.06 (.473)	-0.06 (.436)	0.12 (.136)	-
9. Work Environment	4.17	2.02	-0.11 (.158)	-0.39 (.000)	-0.20 (.011)	0.03 (.669)	-0.13 (.110)	-0.01 (.944)	-0.18 (.028)	-0.25 (.001)

Note. $N = 157$; Exact p values are provided (two-tailed tests).

4.4 RQ1b: How does job seeking behavior frequency predict importance ratings of job and organizational attributes?

Job seeking behavior frequency was a statistically significant predictor of importance ratings of pay (β = -.18, p = .03) and of opportunities for career advancement (β = .25, p = .002). Job seeking behavior frequency was not a statistically significant predictor of importance ratings of the other attributes. These findings show that the most active job seekers may be willing to accept lower pay and could place high value on jobs at organizations with opportunities for promotions and advancement. Full results for these analyses are detailed below.

4.4.1 Total Hours Worked

Results of the hierarchical regression analysis to evaluate the unique influence of job seeking behavior frequency on importance ratings of total hours worked are displayed in Table 6. In Model 1, the predictors accounted for 3.2 percent of the variance in importance ratings of total hours worked, R^2 = .032, F(7, 146) = 0.69, p = .684. None of the variables entered were statistically significant predictors of importance ratings of total hours worked. Model 2 accounted for 5.1 percent of the variance in importance ratings of total hours worked, R^2 = .051, F(8, 145) = 0.98, p = .452. Job seeking behavior frequency was not a statistically significant predictor of importance ratings of total hours worked, β = -.15, p = .086, and did not account for a statistically significant percentage of variance in the criterion ΔR^2 = .020, p = .682.

Table 6

Test for Effect Job Seeking Behavior Frequency on Importance Ratings of Total Hours Worked

	Predictor	*b*	*SE b*	β	R^2	ΔR^2	*F*
Model 1					.032		0.69 (.684)
	(Intercept)	4.83 (.000)	.46				
	Associate Degree	0.73 (.259)	.64	.12			
	Bachelor's Degree	0.38 (.433)	.49	.11			
	Master's Degree	0.41 (.475)	.57	.09			
	Ph.D.	-1.07 (.302)	1.04	-.09			
	Gender (Woman)	0.03 (.917)	.33	.01			
	Years of Work Experience	-0.01 (.737)	.03	-.04			
	Age	0.02 (.511)	.02	.09			
Model 2					.051	.020 (.682)	0.98 (.452)
	(Intercept)	4.74 (.000)	.12				
	Job Seeking Behavior Frequency	-0.07 (.086)	.01	-.15			
	Associate Degree	0.65 (.892)	.17	.11			
	Bachelor's Degree	0.51 (.168)	.14	.14			
	Master's Degree	0.56 (.389)	.15	.13			
	Ph.D.	-0.78 (.728)	.29	-.07			
	Gender (Woman)	-0.00 (.280)		-.00			
	Years of Work Experience	-0.02 (.882)	.01	-.08			
	Age	0.02 (.682)	.02	.11			

Note. $N = 157$. Exact *p* values are provided (two-tailed tests). ΔR^2 = Change in R^2 from prior model.

4.4.2 Pay

Results of the hierarchical regression analysis to evaluate the unique influence of job seeking behavior frequency on importance ratings of pay are displayed in Table 7. In Model 1, the predictors accounted for 10.8 percent of the variance in importance ratings of pay, R^2 = .108, F(7, 146) = 2.54, p = .017. Years of work experience, β = .27, p = .037, and age, β = -.28, p = .029, were statistically significant predictors of importance ratings of pay. Model 2 accounted for 13.7 percent of the variance in importance ratings of pay, R^2 = .137, F(8, 145) = 2.87, p = .005. Years of work experience, β = .23, p = .074, and age, β = -.2, p = .051, were no longer statistically significant predictors of importance ratings of pay. Job seeking behavior frequency was a statistically significant predictor of importance ratings of pay, β = -.18, p = .031, and accounted for a statistically significant percentage of variance in the criterion ΔR^2 = .028, p = .031.

Table 7

Test for Effect Job Seeking Behavior Frequency on Importance Ratings of Pay

	Predictor	*b*	*SE b*	β	R^2	ΔR^2	*F*
Model 1					.108		2.54 (.017)
	(Intercept)	6.55 (.000)	.46				
	Associate Degree	0.46 (.477)	.64	.08			
	Bachelor's Degree	-0.21 (.678)	.49	-.05			
	Master's Degree	-1.00 (.080)	.57	-.22			
	Ph.D.	-0.26 (.800)	1.04	-.02			
	Gender (Woman)	0.20 (.536)	.33	.05			
	Years of Work Experience	0.06 (.037)	.03	.27			
	Age	-0.05 (.029)	.02	-.28			
Model 2					.137	.028 (.031)	2.87 (.005)
	(Intercept)	6.45 (.000)	.45				
	Job Seeking Behavior Frequency	-0.09 (.031)	.04	-.18			
	Associate Degree	0.36 (.566)	.63	.06			
	Bachelor's Degree	-0.06 (.906)	.49	-.02			
	Master's Degree	-0.81(.155)	.57	-.17			
	Ph.D.	0.13 (.898)	1.04	.01			
	Gender (Woman)	0.16 (.631)	.32	.04			
	Years of Work Experience	0.05 (.074)	.03	.23			
	Age	-0.05 (.051)	.02	-.25			

Note. $N = 157$. Exact *p* values are provided (two-tailed tests). ΔR^2 = Change in R^2 from prior model.

4.4.3 Type of Work

Results of the hierarchical regression analysis to evaluate the unique influence of job seeking behavior frequency on importance ratings of type of work are displayed in Table 8. In Model 1, the predictors accounted for 9.8 percent of the variance in importance ratings of type of work, $R^2 = .098$, $F(7, 146) = 2.28$, $p = .031$. Gender (i.e., identifying as a woman) was a statistically significant predictor of importance ratings of type of work, $\beta = -.20$, $p = .017$. Model 2 accounted for 9.9 percent of the variance in importance ratings of type of work, $R^2 = .099$, $F(8, 145) = 1.98$, $p = .053$. Gender was a statistically significant predictor of importance ratings of type of work, $\beta = -.20$, $p = .018$. Job seeking behavior frequency was not a statistically significant predictor of importance ratings of type of work, $\beta = .01$, $p = .929$, and did not account for a statistically significant percentage of variance in the criterion $\Delta R^2 = .000$, $p = .929$.

Table 8

Test for Effect Job Seeking Behavior Frequency on Importance Ratings of Type of Work

	Predictor	*b*	*SE b*	β	R^2	ΔR^2	*F*
Model 1					.098		2.28 (.031)
	(Intercept)	6.30 (.000)	.46				
	Associate Degree	0.73 (.263)	.65	.12			
	Bachelor's Degree	-0.10 (.838)	.50	-.03			
	Master's Degree	-0.71 (.216)	.57	-.15			
	Ph.D.	-0.17 (.873)	1.05	-.01			
	Gender (Woman)	-0.80 (.017)	.33	-.20			
	Years of Work Experience	0.03 (.350)	.03	.12			
	Age	-0.00 (.976)	.02	-.00			
Model 2					.099	.000 (.929)	1.98 (.053)
	(Intercept)	6.31 (.000)	.47				
	Job Seeking Behavior Frequency	0.00 (.929)	.04	.01			
	Associate Degree	0.73 (.264)	.65	.12			
	Bachelor's Degree	-0.11 (.831)	.51	-.03			
	Master's Degree	-0.72 (.218)	.58	-.15			
	Ph.D.	-0.18 (.863)	1.07	-.02			
	Gender (Woman)	-0.79 (.018)	.33	-.20			
	Years of Work Experience	0.03 (.350)	.03	.12			
	Age	-0.00 (.968)	.02	-.01			

Note. $N = 157$. Exact p values are provided (two-tailed tests). ΔR^2 = Change in R^2 from prior model.

4.4.4 Opportunities for Career Advancement

Results of the hierarchical regression analysis to evaluate the unique influence of job seeking behavior frequency on importance ratings of opportunities for career advancement are displayed in Table 9. In Model 1, the predictors accounted for 12.9 percent of the variance in importance ratings of opportunities for career advancement, $R^2 = .129$, $F(7, 146) = 3.07$, $p = .005$. Having a master's degree was a statistically significant predictor of importance ratings of opportunities for career advancement, $\beta = .32$, $p = .010$. Model 2 accounted for 18.3 percent of the variance in importance ratings of opportunities for career advancement, $R^2 = .183$, $F(8, 145) = 4.06$, $p = .000$. Having a master's degree was a statistically significant predictor of importance ratings of opportunities for career advancement, $\beta = .26$, $p = .031$. Job seeking behavior frequency was a statistically significant predictor of importance ratings of opportunities for career advancement, $\beta = .25$, $p = .002$, and accounted for a statistically significant percentage of variance in the criterion $\Delta R^2 = .055$, $p = .002$.

Table 9

Test for Effect Job Seeking Behavior Frequency on Importance Ratings of Opportunities for Career Advancement

	Predictor	*b*	*SE b*	β	R^2	ΔR^2	*F*
Model 1					.129		3.07 (.005)
	(Intercept)	4.08 (.000)	.47				
	Associate Degree	-0.26 (.683)	.66	-.04			
	Bachelor's Degree	0.78 (.122)	.51	.20			
	Master's Degree	1.52 (.010)	.58	.32			
	Ph.D.	1.73 (.106)	1.06	.14			
	Gender (Woman)	-0.10 (.772)	.33	-.02			
	Years of Work Experience	-0.05 (.129)	.03	-.19			
	Age	0.02 (.464)	.02	-.09			
Model 2					.183	.055 (.002)	4.06 (.000)
	(Intercept)	4.23 (.000)	.46				
	Job Seeking Behavior Frequency	0.12 (.002)	.04	.25			
	Associate Degree	-0.14 (.830)	.64	-.02			
	Bachelor's Degree	0.58 (.248)	.50	.15			
	Master's Degree	1.24 (.031)	.57	.26			
	Ph.D.	1.16 (.272)	1.05	.09			
	Gender (Woman)	-0.03 (.926)	.32	-.01			
	Years of Work Experience	-0.03 (.267)	.03	-.14			
	Age	0.01(.701)	.02	.05			

Note. $N = 157$. Exact *p* values are provided (two-tailed tests). ΔR^2 = Change in R^2 from prior model.

4.4.5 Location in the City, State, or Country

Results of the hierarchical regression analysis to evaluate the unique influence of job seeking behavior frequency on importance ratings of location in the city, state, or country are displayed in Table 10. In Model 1, the predictors accounted for 6.8 percent of the variance in importance ratings of location, $R^2 = .068$, $F(7, 146) = 1.53$, $p = .161$. Gender (i.e., identifying as a woman) was a statistically significant predictor of importance ratings of location, $\beta = .21$, $p = .016$. Model 2 accounted for 7.5 percent of the variance in importance ratings of location, $R^2 = .075$, $F(8, 145) = 1.46$, $p = .176$. Gender was a statistically significant predictor of importance ratings of location, $\beta = .20$, $p = .019$. Job seeking behavior frequency was not a statistically significant predictor of importance ratings of location, $\beta = -.08$, $p = .324$, and did not account for a statistically significant percentage of variance in the criterion $\Delta R^2 = .006$, $p = .324$.

Table 10

Test for Effect Job Seeking Behavior Frequency on Importance Ratings of Location in the City, State, or Country

	Predictor	*b*	*SE b*	β	R^2	ΔR^2	*F*
Model 1					.068		1.53 (.161)
	(Intercept)	4.51 (.000)	.49				
	Associate Degree	-0.77 (.267)	.69	-.12			
	Bachelor's Degree	-0.23 (.659)	.53	-.06			
	Master's Degree	0.07 (.915)	.61	.01			
	Ph.D.	-1.94 (.083)	1.11	-.15			
	Gender (Woman)	0.86 (.016)	.35	.21			
	Years of Work Experience	0.05 (.098)	.03	.22			
	Age	-0.04 (.112)	.03	-.21			
Model 2					.075	.006 (.324)	1.46 (.176)
	(Intercept)	4.46 (.000)	.49				
	Job Seeking Behavior Frequency	-0.04 (.324)	.04	-.08			
	Associate Degree	-0.81 (.241)	.69	-.13			
	Bachelor's Degree	-0.16 (.762)	.53	-.04			
	Master's Degree	0.16 (.796)	.62	.03			
	Ph.D.	-1.75 (.125)	1.13	-.14			
	Gender (Woman)	0.83 (.019)	.35	.20			
	Years of Work Experience	0.05 (.134)	.03	.20			
	Age	-0.04 (.143)	.03	-.19			

Note. $N = 157$. Exact p values are provided (two-tailed tests). ΔR^2 = Change in R^2 from prior model.

4.4.6 Organizational Image

Results of the hierarchical regression analysis to evaluate the unique influence of job seeking behavior frequency on importance ratings of organizational image are displayed in Table 11. In Model 1, the predictors accounted for 11.1 percent of the variance in importance ratings of organizational image, $R^2 = .111$, $F(7, 146) = 2.61$, $p = .014$. None of the variables entered were statistically significant predictors of importance ratings of organizational image. Model 2 accounted for 13.1 percent of the variance in importance ratings of organizational image, $R^2 = .131$, $F(8, 145) = 2.73$, $p = .008$. Job seeking behavior frequency was not a statistically significant predictor of importance ratings of organizational image, $\beta = .15$, $p = .075$, and did not account for a statistically significant percentage of variance in the criterion $\Delta R^2 = .019$, $p = .075$.

Table 11

Test for Effect Job Seeking Behavior Frequency on Importance Ratings of Organizational Image

	Predictor	*b*	*SE b*	β	R^2	ΔR^2	*F*
Model 1					.111		2.61 (.014)
	(Intercept)	2.51 (.000)	.36				
	Associate Degree	-0.69 (.170)	.50	-.15			
	Bachelor's Degree	-0.03 (.947)	.38	-.01			
	Master's Degree	0.26 (.560)	.44	.07			
	Ph.D.	1.59 (.051)	.81	.17			
	Gender (Woman)	0.18 (.487)	.25	.06			
	Years of Work Experience	-0.04 (.059)	.02	-.24			
	Age	0.02 (.394)	.02	.11			
Model 2					.131	.019 (.075)	2.73 (.008)
	(Intercept)	2.58 (.000)	.35				
	Job Seeking Behavior Frequency	0.05 (.075)	.03	.15			
	Associate Degree	-0.63 (.207)	.50	-.13			
	Bachelor's Degree	-0.12 (.756)	.38	-.04			
	Master's Degree	0.14 (.761)	.44	.04			
	Ph.D.	1.33 (.103)	.81	.14			
	Gender (Woman)	0.21 (.414)	.25	.07			
	Years of Work Experience	-0.04 (.102)	.02	-.21			
	Age	0.01 (.520)	.02	.08			

Note. $N = 157$. Exact *p* values are provided (two-tailed tests). ΔR^2 = Change in R^2 from prior model.

4.4.7 Size of the Organization

Results of the hierarchical regression analysis to evaluate the unique influence of job seeking behavior frequency on importance ratings of size of the organization are displayed in Table 12. In Model 1, the predictors accounted for 11.4 percent of the variance in importance ratings of size of the organization, $R^2 = .114$, $F(7, 146) = 2.68$, $p = .012$. Having a master's degree, $\beta = .26$, $p = .032$, and age, $\beta = .26$, $p = .046$, were statistically significant predictors of importance ratings of size of the organization. Model 2 accounted for 11.9 percent of the variance in importance ratings of size of the organization, $R^2 = .119$, $F(8, 145) = 2.44$, $p = .017$. Having a master's degree was a statistically significant predictor of importance ratings of size of the organization, $\beta = .25$, $p = .048$. Age was no longer a statistically significant predictor of importance ratings of size of the organization, $\beta = .24$, $p = .060$. Job seeking behavior frequency was not a statistically significant predictor of importance ratings of size of the organization, $\beta = .08$, $p = .369$, and did not account for a statistically significant percentage of variance in the criterion $\Delta R^2 = .005$, $p = .369$.

Table 12

Test for Effect Job Seeking Behavior Frequency on Importance Ratings of Size of the Organization

	Predictor	*b*	*SE b*	β	R^2	ΔR^2	*F*
Model 1					.114		2.68 (.012)
	(Intercept)	2.11 (.000)	.44				
	Associate Degree	-0.34 (.580)	.61	-.06			
	Bachelor's Degree	0.28 (.555)	.47	.08			
	Master's Degree	1.17 (.032)	.54	.26			
	Ph.D.	0.76 (.444)	.99	.07			
	Gender (Woman)	-0.08 (.807)	.31	-.02			
	Years of Work Experience	-0.05 (.075)	.03	-.23			
	Age	0.05 (.046)	.02	.26			
Model 2					.119	.005 (.369)	2.44 (.017)
	(Intercept)	2.15 (.000)	.44				
	Job Seeking Behavior Frequency	0.03 (.369)	.04	.08			
	Associate Degree	-0.30 (.623)	.61	-.05			
	Bachelor's Degree	0.22 (.644)	.48	.06			
	Master's Degree	1.09 (.048)	.55	.25			
	Ph.D.	0.60 (.551)	1.00	.05			
	Gender (Woman)	-0.06 (.854)	.31	-.02			
	Years of Work Experience	-0.05 (.102)	.03	-.21			
	Age	0.04 (.060)	.02	.24			

Note. $N = 157$. Exact p values are provided (two-tailed tests). ΔR^2 = Change in R^2 from prior model.

4.4.8 Work Environment

Results of the hierarchical regression analysis to evaluate the unique influence of job seeking behavior frequency on importance ratings of work environment are displayed in Table 13. In Model 1, the predictors accounted for 9.4 percent of the variance in importance ratings of work environment, $R^2 = .094$, $F(7, 146) = 2.16$, $p = .041$. Having a master's degree was a statistically significant predictor of importance ratings of work environment, $\beta = -.34$, $p = .006$. Model 2 accounted for 9.5 percent of the variance in importance ratings of work environment, $R^2 = .095$, $F(8, 145) = 1.90$, $p = .064$. Having a master's degree was a statistically significant predictor of importance ratings of work environment, $\beta = -.34$, $p = .008$. Job seeking behavior frequency was not a statistically significant predictor of importance ratings of work environment, $\beta = -.04$, $p = .647$, and did not account for a statistically significant percentage of variance in the criterion $\Delta R^2 = .001$, $p = .647$.

Table 13

Test for Effect Job Seeking Behavior Frequency on Importance Ratings of Work Environment

	Predictor	*b*	*SE b*	β	R^2	ΔR^2	*F*
Model 1					.094		2.16 (.041)
	(Intercept)	5.11 (.000)	.49				
	Associate Degree	0.15 (.829)	.69	.02			
	Bachelor's Degree	-0.89 (.097)	.53	-.22			
	Master's Degree	-1.70 (.006)	.61	-.34			
	Ph.D.	-0.63 (.575)	1.11	-.05			
	Gender (Woman)	-0.30 (.394)	.35	-.07			
	Years of Work Experience	0.01 (.818)	.03	.03			
	Age	-0.00 (.974)	.03	-.00			
Model 2					.095	.001 (.647)	1.90 (.064)
	(Intercept)	5.09 (.000)	.49				
	Job Seeking Behavior Frequency	-0.02 (.647)	.04	-.04			
	Associate Degree	0.13 (.853)	.69	.02			
	Bachelor's Degree	-0.85 (.115)	.54	-.21			
	Master's Degree	-1.66 (.008)	.62	-.34			
	Ph.D.	-0.53 (.637)	1.14	-.04			
	Gender (Woman)	-0.31 (.380)	.35	-.07			
	Years of Work Experience	0.01 (.871)	.03	.02			
	Age	0.00 (.982)	.03	.00			

Note. $N = 157$. Exact *p* values are provided (two-tailed tests). ΔR^2 = Change in R^2 from prior model.

4.5 RQ2: What job and organizational attributes are the most important predictors of applicant attraction?

Results of this RWA are displayed in Table 14. The RWA results indicate that a weighted linear combination of the eight job and organizational attributes explained roughly 6 percent of the variance in the criterion, $R^2 = 0.06$. The raw relative weight column provides importance estimates of predictors using the metric of relative effect sizes (LeBreton et al., 2007; Tonidandel & LeBreton, 2015). These weights can be interpreted as the proportion of variance in organizational attraction that is attributed to each job and organizational attribute. Out of the eight job and organizational attributes, the most important predictor of organizational attraction was total hours worked which explained roughly 1.7 percent of the variance in organizational attraction, followed by work environment which explained roughly 1.6 percent of the variance in organizational attraction and type of work which explained roughly 1.1 percent of the variance in organizational attraction. The predictor that explained the least amount of organizational attraction was location in the state, city, or country, which explained roughly 0.0 percent of the variance in organizational attraction.

Table 14

Relative Weight Analysis Results Using Organizational Attraction as the Criterion (R^2 =.0554; F[7,43] = 1.248, p = .280)

Predictor	RW	RS-RW
Total Hours Worked	0.0165	29.74%
Pay	0.0030	5.33%
Type of Work	0.0113	20.35%
Opportunities for Career Advancement	0.0037	6.76%
Location in the State, City, or Country	0.0013	2.39%
Organizational Image	0.0020	3.61%
Size of the Organization	0.0016	2.81%
Work Environment	0.0161	29.00%

Note. N = 157. RW = raw relative weight (within rounding error raw weights will sum to R^2); RS-RW = relative weight rescaled as a percentage of predicted variance in the criterion variable attributed to each predictor (within rounding error rescaled weights sum to 100%).

4.6 RQ3: What factors influence applicants' job choice decisions?

In total, I analyzed 4,184 words, consisting of 19,028 characters of text. The mean number of words for each response was 8.88, and the standard deviation was 4.03. In total, I identified 16 decision factors to categorize the qualitative data. The themes (i.e.,

decision factors) for each of the three responses, descriptions of the themes, code counts, and examples of participants' words are displayed in Table 15.

The five most common themes across all three responses were Pay, Location, Type of Work, Growth Opportunities, and Hours. Pay was the most common theme for the first job choice decision factor, with 51.6 percent of respondents reporting Pay as the top factor that influenced their decision to accept their current job. The next most common themes for the first job choice decision factor were Type of Work and Location. Hours was the most common theme for the second job choice decision factor, with 21.7 percent of respondents reporting Hours as the second factor that influenced their decision to accept their current job. The next most common themes for the second job choice decision factor were Pay and Location. Growth Opportunities was the most common theme for the third job choice decision factor, with 17.8 percent of respondents reporting Growth Opportunities as the third factor that influenced their decision to accept their current job. The next most common themes for the third job choice decision factor were Location and Type of Work.

While many themes overlapped conceptually with the job and organizational attributes measured in the survey, several other themes emerged. The job choice decision factors that did not overlap conceptually with the job and organizational attributes measured in the survey included Manager and Coworkers, Job Satisfaction, Health and Safety, Benefits, Work-Life Balance, Flexibility, Culture and Values, Job Security, and Offer Timing.

Table 15

Job Choice Decision Factors

Decision Factor 1			
Theme	**Description**	**Count**	**Exemplary Quote**
Pay	A desirable salary or pay increase	81	"How much I'd be paid at the job."
Type of Work	The nature of the job itself, including job tasks and job requirements	20	"The type of work that I needed to do."
Location	Location of the work site in the city, state, or country, as well as the ease and length of the commute to work	19	"The location of the job site in relation to where I live."
Growth Opportunities	Opportunities for career development and advancement, including future promotion and salary increase opportunities, learning opportunities, networking and exposure opportunities, and the ability to gain additional experience on the job	13	"Better chances of career advancement or growth."
Work Environment	The characteristics of the physical work environment, including level of comfort and level of noise	9	"An easier and cleaner job, in a quieter environment."
Manager and Coworkers	The qualities and characteristics of the manager and coworkers, including their level professionalism, friendliness, and trustworthiness	8	"Are the team members people you'd love to work with."
Benefits	Benefits provided to employees such as healthcare and insurance plans, retirement savings plans, and paid vacation or sick leave	6	"My current job provides benefits and perks."
Hours	The number of hours per week offered for employment	6	"The hours of work you get each week."
Work-Life Balance	The ability to fulfill family and personal needs outside of working hours without competing work demands	5	"Good work-life balance with amount of hours/stress involved."
Flexibility	The ability to make changes to work schedules or structures as needed so as not to conflict with other obligations	5	"Want a flexible timing to manage my personal life."
Job Satisfaction	The enjoyment or contentment an employee derives from their job	5	"The kind of work is something I enjoy doing."
Job Security	The level of assurance an employee feels that they will be able to keep or rely on their current job	4	"I could use the money, and this meant more of it more reliably."
Offer Timing	The availability of an open job position at an organization and the timing of an offer during a person's job search	4	"If they are hiring and accepting applications."
Culture and Values	The organization's ideals and principles, including its values, mission, and traditions	4	"I really loved the mission behind the organization."
Health and Safety	Measures that are designed to protect employees in the workplace, including cleanliness, level of danger and safety precautions at the workplace	4	"And it had to follow safety measures."
Organizational Image	The public impression of an organization, including its reputation and perceived image	3	"Reputation of the organization."

Decision Factor 2			
Theme	**Description**	**Count**	**Exemplary Quote**
Hours	The number of hours per week offered for employment	34	"The hours of work you get each week."
Pay	A desirable salary or pay increase	31	"How much I'd be paid at the job."
Location	Location of the work site in the city, state, or country, as well as the ease and length of the commute to work	27	"The location of the job site in relation to where I live."
Type of Work	The nature of the job itself, including job tasks and job requirements	21	"The type of work that I needed to do."
Growth Opportunities	Opportunities for career development and advancement, including future promotion and salary increase opportunities, learning opportunities, networking and exposure opportunities, and the ability to gain additional experience on the job	19	"Better chances of career advancement or growth."
Manager and Coworkers	The qualities and characteristics of the manager and coworkers, including their level professionalism, friendliness, and trustworthiness	13	"Are the team members people you'd love to work with."
Flexibility	The ability to make changes to work schedules or structures as needed so as not to conflict with other obligations	13	"Want a flexible timing to manage my personal life."
Work Environment	The characteristics of the physical work environment, including level of comfort and level of noise	10	"An easier and cleaner job, in a quieter environment."
Health and Safety	Measures that are designed to protect employees in the workplace, including cleanliness, level of danger and safety precautions at the workplace	10	"And it had to follow safety measures."
Benefits	Benefits provided to employees such as healthcare and insurance plans, retirement savings plans, and paid vacation or sick leave	8	"My current job provides benefits and perks."
Job Satisfaction	The enjoyment or contentment an employee derives from their job	8	"The kind of work is something I enjoy doing."
Work-Life Balance	The ability to fulfill family and personal needs outside of working hours without competing work demands	5	"Good work-life balance with amount of hours/stress involved."
Culture and Values	The organization's ideals and principles, including its values, mission, and traditions	5	"I really loved the mission behind the organization."
Organizational Image	The public impression of an organization, including its reputation and perceived image	4	"Reputation of the organization."
Offer Timing	The availability of an open job position at an organization and the timing of an offer during a person's job search	1	"If they are hiring and accepting applications."
Job Security	The level of assurance an employee feels that they will be able to keep or rely on their current job	0	"I could use the money, and this meant more of it more reliably."

Decision Factor 3			
Theme	**Description**	**Count**	**Exemplary Quote**
Growth Opportunities	Opportunities for career development and advancement, including future promotion and salary increase opportunities, learning opportunities, networking and exposure opportunities, and the ability to gain additional experience on the job	28	"Better chances of career advancement or growth."
Type of Work	The nature of the job itself, including job tasks and job requirements	26	"The type of work that I needed to do."
Location	Location of the work site in the city, state, or country, as well as the ease and length of the commute to work	26	"The location of the job site in relation to where I live."
Pay	A desirable salary or pay increase	22	"How much I'd be paid at the job."
Manager and Coworkers	The qualities and characteristics of the manager and coworkers, including their level professionalism, friendliness, and trustworthiness	20	"Are the team members people you'd love to work with."
Work Environment	The characteristics of the physical work environment, including level of comfort and level of noise	19	"An easier and cleaner job, in a quieter environment."
Hours	The number of hours per week offered for employment	19	"The hours of work you get each week."
Job Satisfaction	The enjoyment or contentment an employee derives from their job	16	"The kind of work is something I enjoy doing."
Health and Safety	Measures that are designed to protect employees in the workplace, including cleanliness, level of danger and safety precautions at the workplace	11	"And it had to follow safety measures."
Benefits	Benefits provided to employees such as healthcare and insurance plans, retirement savings plans, and paid vacation or sick leave	10	"My current job provides benefits and perks."
Work-Life Balance	The ability to fulfill family and personal needs outside of working hours without competing work demands	9	"Good work-life balance with amount of hours/stress involved."
Flexibility	The ability to make changes to work schedules or structures as needed so as not to conflict with other obligations	6	"Want a flexible timing to manage my personal life."
Organizational Image	The public impression of an organization, including its reputation and perceived image	6	"Reputation of the organization."
Culture and Values	The organization's ideals and principles, including its values, mission, and traditions	4	"I really loved the mission behind the organization."
Job Security	The level of assurance an employee feels that they will be able to keep or rely on their current job	3	"I could use the money, and this meant more of it more reliably."
Offer Timing	The availability of an open job position at an organization and the timing of an offer during a person's job search	3	"If they are hiring and accepting applications."

In order to complement these results, I conducted topic modeling as a supplemental exploratory analysis. Topic modeling is a "framework of unsupervised machine learning algorithms that identify clusters of words that co-occur together" and allows researchers to measure latent topics in text (Banks, Woznyj, et al., 2018, p. 454). I used Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA; Blei, 2012; Blei et al., 2003) to determine the emerging topics by applying a Bayesian hierarchical mixture model. I rank-ordered words (i.e., tokens) for each topic to identify frequently occurring words and then generated and examined representative documents, word clouds, and a network structure of topics (Banks, Woznyj, et al., 2018; Blei, 2012). I inductively and iteratively labeled and defined the emerging topics to obtain an interpretable and parsimonious topic solution that represented the data (Banks et al., 2019; Cowan & Fox, 2015).

12 topics were identified in the final topic model. These topics demonstrated significant conceptual overlap with the results for RQ3. The topic labels and their operational definitions are displayed in Table 16. One topic in the model (i.e., Fit with Culture and Coworkers) had conceptual overlap with both the Culture and Values theme and the Manager and Coworkers theme in the RQ3 results. Three job choice decision factors from the RQ3 results (i.e., Job Security, Health and Safety, and Organizational Image) did not emerge in the final topic model results. This finding was concordant with the results for RQ3, as these three themes were among the most infrequently observed during the coding process for the RQ3 analyses. These results demonstrated convergence with the findings for RQ3.

Table 16

Topic Modeling Results

Job Choice Decision Factors	
Topic Label	**Definition**
Pay	An increase in pay or salary
Location	The convenience of the location of the job, including distance and commute time
Type of Work	The nature of the job itself, including job tasks, requirements, and responsibilities
Hours	The total number of hours worked each day and the work schedule
Growth Opportunities	Career advancement and development opportunities, including networking opportunities, promotion opportunities, and opportunities to gain experience, skills, and knowledge
Work Environment	The physical conditions and characteristics of the work environment
Fit with Culture and Coworkers	The fit an employee feels with the culture and values of the organization and the qualities and personalities of their coworkers or team, such as friendliness, helpfulness, kindness, trustworthiness, and positivity
Benefits	Benefits provided to employees, including compensation packages, healthcare and insurance plans, and retirement savings plans
Flexibility	The flexibility of scheduling of work hours, work location arrangements, and remote working opportunities
Work-Life Balance	The ability to balance work with other obligations such as family needs
Job Satisfaction	The enjoyment an employee derives from their job, including how interesting the job is and how engaged the employee feels
Offer Timing	The availability of an open job position at an organization and the timing of an offer during a person's job search

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to discover the job and organizational attributes that influence the job choice decisions of applicants across the job seeking behavior frequency continuum and to help explain how job seekers on each end of the continuum process the different motivational elements involved in the recruitment process. This study aimed to address several gaps in the literature on job seekers. First, this study aimed to change the conversation on passive job seekers. Active and passive job seekers are generally presented in the literature as belonging to two distinct categories. This study changes the conversation by reconceptualizing active and passive job seeking and emphasizing that all individuals fall on a continuum of job seeking behavior frequency. As most recruitment research has been conducted with active job seekers and is limited in understanding the employment decisions of relatively passive applicants (Chapman et al., 2005), this study aimed to challenge past assumptions regarding passive and active job seekers by more explicitly researching applicants across the full continuum of job seeking behavior frequency. In addition, this study aimed to address the lack of theoretical insight into the cognitive processes involved in the recruitment of job seekers across the continuum by applying expectancy theory to attempt to identify the mechanisms that attract talent on different ends of the continuum. Finally, this study sought to better understand the elements that applicants consider when making job choices. Meta-analytic evidence points to a small percentage of studies measuring job choice; out of 71 total recruitment studies, only 14 focused on job choice measures (Chapman et al., 2005). However, these studies used proxies such as “job pursuit intentions” or “likelihood of

offer acceptance" as operationalizations of job choice. This study sought to establish a more thorough understanding of the factors that influence actual job choice decisions by retrospectively asking applicants how they made their job choice decisions with the goal of better understanding the key factors in their decision processes.

5.1 Theoretical and Practical Implications

These results suggest intriguing theoretical and practical implications regarding applicants' job choice decisions. The first theoretical implication of this study is the reconceptualization of active and passive job seeking behavior. Active job seekers are described in the literature as employed with low job security, underemployed, or unemployed with no income (Nikolaou, 2014; Picard, 2013), while passive job seekers are described as individuals who are currently employed and would consider taking new jobs but are not actively searching for them (Breaugh, 2013; SHRM, 2019; Van Hoye & Saks, 2008). Although the literature has conceptualized active and passive job seekers as belonging to two distinct categories, this representation of active and passive job seekers is misleading because any job seeker can engage in any number or type of job seeking behaviors. This study moves the literature forward by addressing the misrepresentation of active and passive job seekers in the literature and conceptualizing and measuring job seeking behavior on a continuum in order to capture the full range of job seekers, from the most active to the most passive.

The second theoretical implication suggested by these results is that organizational attraction is not a sufficient proxy for job choice behavior. The use of proxies in studies of job choice may result in the misspecification of models and presents a problem for theory building and testing because the usefulness of a theory is derived

from its ability to correctly identify and provide a rationale for relationships between constructs (Greenberg et al., 1988; Shaffer et al., 2016). Weak definitions of constructs and inaccurate estimates of relationships between constructs can lead to weak theory development and low validity in theory testing (Banks, Gooty, et al., 2018; MacKenzie, 2003). While previous studies of job choice decisions have used proxies such as "job pursuit intentions" or "likelihood of offer acceptance" as operationalizations of job choice behavior (Uggerslev et al., 2012), this study has gone a step further by retrospectively asking employees who have accepted a job in the past six months how they made their job choice decision in order to better understand the key factors in their decision processes. While previous research has highlighted this challenge (Chapman et al., 2005), these data provide evidence that predictors of organizational attraction are not necessarily predictors of job choice decisions.

The third theoretical implication of this study is that it provides insight into the currently limited understanding of cognitive processes involved in the recruitment of job seekers on each end of the job seeking behavior frequency continuum. As hypothesized, cognitive evaluations of jobs were all significantly, positively correlated with organizational attraction, which is consistent with the literature (Chapman et al., 2005). However, job seeking behavior frequency did not moderate relationships between cognitive evaluations of job roles and organizational attraction. The lack of support for the moderation hypotheses may indicate that my data provided a poor test of my hypotheses. While MTurk does allow researchers to quickly generate large amounts of high-quality data and capture samples that are relatively representative of the general population compared to student samples (Buhrmester et al., 2016; Goodman et al., 2013),

concerns have been raised about decreases in the quality of data from MTurk (Stokel-Walker, 2018). Computer programs (e.g., bots) have been designed to complete HITs automatically (McCreadie et al., 2010). While data screening and attention checks can mitigate these concerns, some research using MTurk samples has failed to replicate findings that are well established in the literature. In addition, researchers have found decreases in reliability and validity of personality measures administered to MTurk samples, as well as increases in failed responses to indicators of validity (Chmielewski & Kucker, 2020). It is possible that these factors may have contributed to the lack of statistically significant findings for my moderation hypotheses.

These findings do not necessarily indicate that ET cannot provide insight into the cognitive processes involved in applicant attraction. ET was designed to be used in within-person studies to determine relative motivation. While ET is commonly used in between-person studies, the application of this theory to a between-person study may not be appropriate (Pinder, 2008). It is also possible that another theory such as person-organization fit theory (Kristof, 1996), social identity theory (Tajfel, 1978), goal setting theory (Lee et al., 1989; Locke & Latham, 2002), objective factor theory (Behling et al., 1968), or self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2000) may better explain these relationships. It is important to note that these theories make the assumption that job seekers are rational and that they base their final job choices on a relatively objective evaluation of the benefits of a job. However, job applicants may not have fully free choices of employers or careers. Other factors such as the scarcity of jobs, competition for jobs, emotions, or the desire to enhance their social identities could affect job seekers' decision-making processes. It is possible that this unfounded assumption of rationality

may have contributed to the lack of statistically significant findings for my moderation hypotheses.

The fourth implication suggested by these results is that applicants' true reasons for accepting job offers are different than their importance ratings of job and organizational attributes. That is, while applicants may state certain preferences for the importance of different job and organizational attributes, their priorities are different when it comes to their actual job choice behavior. The results detail which job and organizational attributes are the most important predictors of organizational attraction and offer acceptance. The finding of work environment as one of the most important predictors of organizational attraction aligns with previous research. However, the finding of total hours worked as the most important predictor of organizational attraction was surprising and is less aligned with previous research which has found work environment to be the most important predictor of organizational attraction, followed by organizational image, type of work, location, pay, total hours worked, and size of the organization (Chapman et al., 2005). The results for the factors that influenced job choice decisions were not only informative and interesting in and of themselves but were especially intriguing in light of the results for the predictors of organizational attraction. In direct contrast with the results for the most important predictors of attraction, the majority of respondents listed pay as the top reason for accepting their current job. The top reasons respondents provided for why they accepted their new jobs were markedly different from their importance ratings of job and organizational attributes.

This finding may signal a social desirability bias in how individuals respond to questions about what is important to them. That is, when asked questions of this nature,

individuals might be more likely to report that they prioritize broader organizational attributes such as work environment and organizational image. However, when candidates make actual job choice decisions, attributes more specific to the job role such as pay and location could be the core factors that are considered. In light of these findings, it may be useful for future studies to investigate whether measures of job and organizational attribute importance may be measuring candidates' values rather than the factors that influence their behavior. Research on response behavior has found that individuals may ascribe socially desirable traits to themselves or respond to surveys in ways that conform with societal norms (Ganster et al., 1983). There is also a possibility for some context-specific social desirability bias in the recruitment process. For example, applicants are often taught to provide certain answers in interview contexts. Applicants are often counseled to focus on discussing job and organizational attributes such as career opportunities and organizational image and to not mention attributes such as pay during interviews. However, these specific effects may not have affected the data in this study because the participants were not participating in interviews during the study. In addition, this study was retrospective, so participants had no cause to be concerned about whether they would receive offers for the jobs they were evaluating. If the data in this study are to be trusted, then money might be the factor that is the single most important driver of job offer acceptance, followed by location, type of work, opportunities for career advancement, and hours worked.

A fifth implication of these findings is that they might provide a foundation for future studies that aim to inform the tailoring of organizational policies and practices to best attract job seekers toward the passive end of the continuum, which could lead to

advantageous recruitment outcomes. This study sought to better understand the possible differences between relatively active and relatively passive job seekers' decision-making processes by investigating the relationships between job seeking behavior frequency and importance ratings of job and organizational attributes. These findings provide some support for the assertion that applicants who actively engage in job seeking behaviors may place high value on jobs at large, prestigious organizations with opportunities for promotions and advancement. Increased job seeking behavior frequency was found to significantly predict increased importance ratings for opportunities for career advancement and decreased importance ratings of pay. While the negative correlation coefficient associated with importance ratings of pay was an interesting and somewhat surprising finding, it could support the possibility that passive job seekers are passive in part due to their pay-related career goals having already been met. It is also possible that there could have been some level of restriction in the range of potential pay levels being evaluated by each participant, resulting in pay receiving less weight in applicants' considerations than other job and organizational attributes that may have had greater variability (Rynes et al., 1983). That is, noncompensatory strategies might be used at the beginning of applicants' job choice considerations, leading them to withdraw from consideration any jobs for which the level of pay does not meet their minimum requirements (Chapman et al., 2005; Osborn, 1990). It is possible that the correlation coefficient is negative because seekers who are extremely active are desperate for any job they can get. These job seekers may be unhappy in their current job and desperate to leave, so they may readily accept jobs with low pay or less pay than their current job. Active job seekers may have a lower reservation wage than passive job seekers because

they have an increased want or need to secure a new job. This relationship between job seeking behavior frequency and importance ratings of pay could be an interesting avenue for future research.

Taken together, these findings highlight the possibility that job seekers with lower job seeking behavior frequency (i.e., more passive job seekers) might place different levels of value on the signaled rewards (e.g., desirable job and organizational attributes) that are associated with employment outcomes (e.g., the acceptance of a new job). That is, job seekers on the passive end of the continuum may prioritize or assign value to job and organizational attributes such as pay and opportunities for advancement differently than relatively active job seekers when they are evaluating potential jobs. These findings provide a starting point for future research that seeks to inform the tailoring of organizational policies and practices to best attract job seekers on the passive end of the continuum, which could lead to advantageous recruitment outcomes such as the reallocation of recruitment resources, reduced sourcing time for candidates, and increased offer acceptance.

5.2 Limitations and Future Directions

This study also has several limitations. First, the design of this study does create the potential for cognitive biases to affect participants' responses. For example, the design creates the possibility for bias due to escalation of commitment because individuals who have already accepted jobs might evaluate them more favorably. It is also possible that respondents' cognitive evaluations of job roles in this study were affected by the recency effect, such that participants who accepted their current roles most recently (e.g., less than one month ago) may be more likely to recall their initial

perceptions and evaluations of the job as favorable than participants who accepted their current roles less recently (e.g., between five and six months ago). These possible effects of cognitive biases might be mitigated with alternate designs in future studies of job choice decisions. For example, it could be advantageous to conduct a longitudinal within-person study that uses experience sampling to track applicants through the job choice decision process. Future repeated measures studies on job choice decisions may provide additional insight into applicant behavior and experiences during the job search process. However, the design used in this study still has advantages over other studies that measure attitudes or intentions as proxies for job choice decisions (Chapman et al., 2005).

Second, this study was not powered to detect the interaction effects in my moderation hypotheses. I conducted a post hoc power analysis to determine the actual power attained with my sample size and effect sizes for the moderation hypotheses. The achieved level of power to detect the smallest ΔR^2 value found in this study (i.e., ΔR^2 = .001, p = .682) was .08, so the sample size of 157 participants did not yield enough power for testing the interaction term. In order to detect this effect size at .80 power with an alpha of .05, my sample would have needed to include at least 5,683 participants.

A third shortcoming of this study is that it fails to explicitly compare active and passive job seekers. This dichotomization of job seeking behavior is a particularly challenging research goal, given the continuous nature of job seeking behavior frequency. While the ability to measure and compare two distinct categories would be useful in both theoretical and practical contexts, the division of job seekers into two artificial categories would not be an accurate representation of the nature of job seekers and job seeking behavior. As discussed in Section 3.8.8, I examined the distribution of the job seeking

behavior index used in this study and found that the distribution of the data appeared to be consistent with a normal distribution. As the data were not clustered, they did not show apparent groups of "active" and "passive" job seekers.

In order to further investigate the utility of using a continuous index of job search behavior frequency over an artificially dichotomized measure, I compared the results obtained using the continuous index in this study with an artificially dichotomized index of job seeking behavior. These results did not lead to conclusions different than those reached with the use of a continuous index of job seeking behavior frequency. While the original results for H2, H4, and H6 were not statistically significant, this finding highlights the possibility that the introduction of a continuous index may not provide additional utility above and beyond the utility of a dichotomous measure and may conflict with the principle of parsimony. However, context must be taken into account in the decision to artificially dichotomize measures and the default method chosen by researchers should be to avoid dichotomization unless it is necessary (Foster et al., 2017). If the results generated with the dichotomous predictor variable had been statistically significant, this would not necessarily indicate that the model using the dichotomous predictor was more accurate (Irwin & McClelland, 2003), but might instead indicate that the analysis had resulted in an inaccurate estimate of the true relationships between the variables due to sampling error. These findings do not necessarily indicate that the continuous measure of job seeking behavior frequency will not produce new conclusions in a different research context or with a different set of data. As discussed above, the lack of statistically significant results may be related to the use of an MTurk sample and may be unrelated to the use of a continuous measure. In addition, different job seeking

behaviors require different levels of effort on the part of job seekers (e.g., submitting a job application might be considered a more active job seeking behavior than perusing an online job board). To this end, it could be beneficial for future studies to investigate the levels of effort required (i.e., the weights of job seeking behaviors) for applicants to engage in different job seeking activities.

Further consideration of this limitation also brings into focus the possible issues with the use of a continuous index of job search behavior. That is, the use of such an index relies on the assumption that incremental changes in numbers of job seeking behaviors are equivalent (e.g., a change from one to two job seeking behaviors has the same effect as a change from nine to ten job seeking behaviors). Future research may wish to investigate this assumption of incremental changes as well as the possibility of non-linear effects in measures of job seeking behavior frequency. If such non-linear effects exist, it could support the establishment of levels (e.g., “very active”) of job seeking behavior based on different categories of job seeking behaviors.

A third avenue for future research in this area is the expansion of the range of organizational attributes measured in studies of job choice. The results for RQ3 highlighted that the range of job choice decision factors considered by applicants is broader than the list of eight job and organizational attributes offered to respondents in the survey questions for RQ1 and RQ2. Future studies on job and organizational attributes and job seeking behavior should take this into account and measure a broader range of job and organizational attributes.

Fourth, future research on job seekers may wish to measure marital status and parental status as control variables because they might affect preferences for job and

organizational attributes and job offer acceptance decisions (Brett & Reilly, 1988; Judge & Bretz, 1992). Individuals who are married or have children might be less likely to decide to move to a new location for a job or could have more limited hours available to work due to childcare responsibilities (Chapman et al., 2005; Wiersma, 1990). While it is possible that marital status and parental status could have a larger impact on these relationships for women than for men, measuring gender and location as control variables might not account for the effects of marital status on the variables of interest.

A fifth limitation of this study is the low reliability of the key outcome variable. While it is possible that this may have affected the findings, the lower alpha and omega coefficients may have resulted from the measure having a small number of indicators (i.e., three items). In addition, these three items were chosen in order to capture the full conceptual breadth of the construct rather than to strengthen the internal consistency of the measure, and were based on three common variations in item types used in the measurement of organizational attraction (Chapman et al., 2005). The first and second item in the measure have more conceptual overlap than the third item, which measures the degree to which an employer is more desirable than others. An applicant may find a job or organization attractive even if, or perhaps because, the employer is not the most prestigious employer in the region. However, the second and third item are more strongly correlated than the other items. The low reliability of this measure of organizational attraction poses the risk that these results may not show the true association between the variables measured in this study (Loken & Gelman, 2017).

As a sixth and final consideration, a closely related research topic that could be of theoretical and practical interest is the investigation of the most common reasons why job

offers are rejected. While one of the goals of this study was to discover the job and organizational attributes that influence the choices of job seekers across the job seeking behavior frequency continuum, it has focused on job and organizational attributes that lead to job offer acceptance rather than attributes that lead to job offer rejection (i.e., noncompensatory factors; Osborn, 1990). Predictors of organizational attraction and job offer acceptance could be interdependent (Chapman et al., 2005; Rottenberg, 1956). For example, an applicant might be willing to work in an undesirable location or during inconvenient hours if the level of pay for the job position is very desirable. In order to better understand the key factors in applicants' decision processes, this literature area may benefit from further study of obstacles to offer acceptance behavior.

5.3 Conclusions

This study goes a step further than studies of job offer acceptance intentions by retrospectively asking employees who have accepted a job in the past six months how they made their job choice decisions, with the goal of better understanding the job and organizational attributes that influence the job choices of applicants across the job seeking behavior frequency continuum. This study changes the conversation on passive job seekers and challenges past assumptions regarding passive and active job seekers by more explicitly researching applicants across the full continuum of job seeking behavior frequency. The contribution of this study includes the reconceptualization of job seeking behavior on a continuum, the determination of which types of recruitment signaling (i.e., job and organizational attributes) are the most important predictors of organizational attraction, and a better understanding of the factors that influence candidates' job choice decisions.

This research also aimed to address the lack of theoretical insight into the cognitive processes involved in the recruitment of active and passive job seekers by applying expectancy theory to identify the mechanisms that attract talent on different ends of the job seeking behavior frequency continuum. While the related moderation hypotheses were not statistically significant, this study establishes a foundation for future research on how job seekers on different ends of the continuum process the different motivational elements involved in the recruitment process. These findings may also provide a foundation for future studies that aim to inform the tailoring of organizational policies and practices to best attract relatively passive job seekers, which could lead to advantageous recruitment outcomes such as the reallocation of recruitment resources, reduced sourcing time for candidates, and increased offer acceptance.

The findings of this study also provide evidence that organizational attraction is not a sufficient proxy for job choice behavior. Results reveal the job and organizational attributes that are the most important predictors of organizational attraction and suggest that the range of job choice decision factors considered by applicants is broader than those commonly studied in research on applicant attraction and job choice. Applicants' true reasons for accepting job offers were different than their importance ratings of job and organizational attributes. This research highlights that the measurement of job choice must be considered a measurement of applicant behavior rather than a measure of employment-related attitudes or intentions.

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APPENDIX: SURVEY INSTRUMENT

General Instructions

As you complete the survey, please give the questions your full attention. If a particular question does not make sense to you, just interpret it as best as you can. If you feel uncomfortable answering any questions, you can withdraw from the survey at any point (however, if you withdraw from the survey before getting to the end, do not follow the survey instructions, or incorrectly answer any attention check questions, you will not receive compensation). If you complete the entire survey, you will receive $2.50.

There is no right or wrong response to any of these questions. We are sincerely interested in your personal feelings and experiences. Your name will not be directly linked to these data – we strongly encourage you to be as honest as possible. Please do not overthink your responses. We want your initial reaction to each question.

Screener Questions

First, we would like to ask some questions to determine if you are eligible to participate. Please answer these questions truthfully.

Are you at least 18 years of age?
Yes/No
Inclusion: Yes
Are you currently employed at least 30 hours per week?
Yes/No
Inclusion: Yes
Have you accepted a new job within the past 6 months?
Yes/No
(Offer acceptance)
Inclusion: Yes

LOGIC: If "no" to any of the above, redirect to:
Thank you for your interest in participating. Unfortunately, you are not eligible to participate in this study at this time.

LOGIC: If "yes" to all, continue survey.

When did you accept your current job?

_____ less than 1 month ago
_____ between 1 and 2 months ago
_____ between 2 and 3 months ago
_____ between 3 and 4 months ago
_____ between 4 and 5 months ago
_____ between 5 and 6 months ago

Variable name: TENURE; LESS THAN ONE MONTH AGO=1, BETWEEN 1 AND 2 MONTHS AGO=2, ETC.

Were you already employed when you accepted your current job?
Yes/No
Variable name: EMPLOYED; YES=1, NO=0

The following questions ask you about your job seeking behavior. Please take time to read the questions thoroughly and respond truthfully.

Job and Organizational Attributes

Items derived from Chapman et al. (2005).
Scoring: reverse items

To begin, we would like to ask you several questions about your current job. Please think back to the time when you accepted your current job.

When you were considering job options, you probably took many factors into account, such as the required hours or type of work.

How *important* were each of the following factors <u>when you were making your job choice</u>?
Please rank the following job and organizational attributes in order of what their importance was to you, with 1 being the most important.

To rank the items, drag and drop each item.

1.	Total hours worked
2.	Pay
3.	Type of work
4.	Opportunities for career advancement
5.	Location in the city, state, or country
6.	Organizational image
7.	Size of the organization
8.	Work environment

Valence Evaluations

Items derived from Lawler & Suttle (1973) and Van Eerde & Thierry (1996). Defined as a job seeker's expected level of satisfaction. Worded for retrospective study.
Scoring: mean of all items

Here, we have again listed the same job and organizational attributes. We are now are asking you to think about them in a different way.

This time, we would like to know how *desirable* you thought each of these attributes were *for the job you have now*, back when you first started the job.

	Please evaluate your perceptions of the following attributes for your current job when you first started at your job.	**Extremely undesirable**	**Somewhat undesirable**	**Neither desirable nor undesirable**	**Somewhat desirable**	**Extremely desirable**
1.	Total hours worked	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Pay	1	2	3	4	5
3.	Type of work	1	2	3	4	5
4.	Opportunities for career advancement	1	2	3	4	5
5.	Location in the city, state, or country	1	2	3	4	5
6.	Organizational image	1	2	3	4	5
7.	Size of the organization	1	2	3	4	5
8.	Work environment	1	2	3	4	5

Instrumentality Evaluations

Items derived from Van Eerde & Thierry (1996) and Wanous et al. (1983). Defined as the belief that certain outcomes or rewards will be associated with entry into a new organization or job role. Worded for a retrospective study.
Scoring: mean of all items

One more time, we have listed the same job and organizational attributes. We are now asking you to think about them in another new way.

This time, we would like to know how *typical* you thought each of these attributes were *for the job you have now*, back when you first started the job.

Please indicate how typical you thought the following attributes were for your current job <u>when you first started at your job</u>.		**Extremely atypical**	**Somewhat atypical**	**Neither typical nor atypical**	**Somewhat typical**	**Extremely typical**
1.	Desirable total hours worked	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Desirable pay	1	2	3	4	5
3.	Desirable type of work	1	2	3	4	5
4.	Desirable opportunities for career advancement	1	2	3	4	5
5.	Desirable location in the city, state, or country	1	2	3	4	5
6.	Desirable organizational image	1	2	3	4	5
7.	Desirable size of the organization	1	2	3	4	5
8.	Desirable work environment	1	2	3	4	5

Expectancy Evaluations

Items derived from Tubbs et al. (1991), Vroom (1964), and Wanous et al. (1983). Defined as the subjective probability of an action or effort (i.e., applying for a job role) leading to an outcome (i.e., receiving a job offer). Worded for retrospective study.

Next, we would like to know what you thought the likelihood was of being accepted into your current job. When you first applied for this job, did you think you were going to get it?

		Extremely unlikely	**Somewhat unlikely**	**Neither likely nor unlikely**	**Somewhat likely**	**Extremely likely**
1.	What do you think the likelihood was of getting the job?	1	2	3	4	5

Organizational Attraction

Items are three common variations in item types used in the measurement of attraction (Chapman et al., 2005), derived from Saks et al. (1994), Van Eerde & Thierry (1996), Macan & Dipboye (1990), and Smither et al. (1993).
Scoring: mean of all items. Number 4 is attention check.

Next, we would like to know how *attractive* your current job was to you, <u>back when you first started</u>.

	Please indicate the extent to which you agreed with the following statements <u>when you first started at your current job.</u>	**Strongly disagree**	**Somewhat disagree**	**Neither agree nor disagree**	**Somewhat agree**	**Strongly agree**
1.	This job was attractive to me.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	I wanted to work for this company.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	I thought this organization was one of the best employers to work for in my region.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	It is important that you pay attention to this study. Please select 'Strongly disagree'.	1	2	3	4	5

Job Seeking Behavior Frequency

Items are based on common job seeking behaviors discussed in Chapman et al. (2005), Saks & Ashforth (2000). Three-month window and items 10 and 11 from Saks & Ashforth (2000). Items 5, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15 from Van Hoye & Saks (2008). Items 16 and 17 from Van Hoye (2018). Other items very common in all sources.
Scoring: YES=1, NO=0. *sum of all items. Number 9 is attention check.*

Back when you were searching for jobs, you may have done things like submitting job applications and attending interviews.

We would like to know about your job seeking behaviors during the time <u>before you accepted your current job</u>.

	Please indicate if you engaged in the following behaviors <u>within the 3 months before you accepted your current job</u>.	**Yes**	**No**
1.	Requested a letter of recommendation		
2.	Updated your resume		
3.	Interviewed for a job		
4.	Spoken on the phone or exchanged emails with a recruiter		
5.	Looked at job postings on a job board or job search website		

6.	Submitted a job application		
7.	Visited the websites of companies with available jobs		
8.	Wrote a cover letter		
9.	Walked on the moon		
10.	Networked to develop relationships with professional contacts		
11.	Conducted informational interviews to find out about careers and jobs that you were interested in pursuing		
12.	Analyzed your interests and abilities to determine the best job for you		
13.	Visited a potential job site		
14.	Contacted an employment agency		
15.	Contacted employers for information about jobs		
16.	Asked people you know about possible job leads		
17.	Attended a networking or recruitment event		
18.	Made a follow-up call about the status of a job application		

LOGIC: If "yes" to number 6 in SEEKING, continue survey. If "no" to number 6, SKIP next question

If you had to make an estimate, about how many job applications would you say you submitted during the 3 months before you accepted your current job?

LOGIC: If "yes" to number 3 in SEEKING, continue survey. If "no" to number 3, SKIP next question

If you had to make an estimate, about how many interviews would you say you attended during the 3 months before you accepted your current job?

Job Choice Decision Factors

Variable name: CHOICE

Please list the top three factors that influenced your decision to accept your current job.

Demographic

Your answers to the following items will help us interpret the results of the survey.

1. Your Gender:
_____Man
_____Woman
_____Transwoman/transfeminine
_____Transman/transmasculine
_____Nonbinary, gender non-conforming, trans, or genderqueer
_____My identity is not listed

2. Your Race (please select all that apply):
_____ American Indian/Alaska Native _____Black or African American
_____Asian _____Caucasian/White
_____Native Hawaiian or other pacific islander _____Other, please specify: _____

3. Your Ethnicity: _____Hispanic/Latino (any race) _____Not Hispanic/Latino

4. Your Age: _____

5. Highest level of education completed (check ONE):
If currently enrolled, highest degree received
_____ Some high school
_____ High school degree or equivalent
_____ Associate degree
_____ Bachelor's degree
_____ Master's degree
_____ Ph.D.
_____ Other (please specify)

6. Total Years of Work Experience: _____

7. Industry (check ONE):
_____ Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting

_____ Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation
_____ Broadcasting
_____ College, University, and Adult Education
_____ Other Education Industry
_____ Computer and Electronics Manufacturing
_____ Other Manufacturing
_____ Construction
_____ Finance and Insurance
_____ Government and Public Administration
_____ Health Care and Social Assistance
_____ Homemaker
_____ Hotel and Food Services
_____ Information Services and Data Processing
_____ Other Information Industry
_____ Legal Services
_____ Military
_____ Mining
_____ Primary/Secondary (K-12) Education
_____ Publishing
_____ Real Estate, Rental and Leasing
_____ Religious
_____ Retail
_____ Scientific or Technical Services
_____ Software
_____ Telecommunications
_____ Transportation and Warehousing
_____ Utilities
_____ Wholesale
_____ Other Industry

Debriefing

We appreciate your taking the time to complete this survey. Thank you for participating.

Your validation code is: #####. To receive payment for participating, click "Accept HIT" in the Mechanical Turk window, enter this validation code, then click "Submit".

Information about the Study

The goal of this study was to learn about the behaviors of passive job seekers. The benefits of this study to society could be important if this and related work ultimately lead to changes in recruitment practices in organizations.

We would like to emphasize that there are no correct responses in this study. We were looking at people's natural responses. Also, your responses will be anonymous because

they will be analyzed as part of a group of responses (e.g., everyone who answered these questions will be grouped together).

Questions or Concerns?

We are happy to answer any questions that you might have about this study. Please email Claire Mansfield (cabberge@uncc.edu) with your questions or concerns.

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, or wish to obtain information, ask questions, or discuss any concerns about this study with someone other than the researchers, please contact the Office of Research Protections and Integrity at uncc-irb@uncc.edu or at (704)687-1871.

Again, we greatly appreciate your participation in this study. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Claire Mansfield, M.A.
Ph.D. Candidate
UNCC Organizational Science

George Banks, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Management
UNCC Belk College of Business