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## Attracting Talent Across Cultures: The Impact of Cultural Values on Generating and Maintaining Applicants

Emily Twichell

DePaul University, [etwichel@depaul.edu](mailto:etwichel@depaul.edu)

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ATTRACTING TALENT ACROSS CULTURES:  
THE IMPACT OF CULTURAL VALUES ON GENERATING AND MAINTAINING  
APPLICANTS

A Dissertation  
Presented in  
Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

BY  
EMILY A. TWICHELL

JUNE, 2012

Department of Psychology  
College of Liberal Arts and Sciences  
DePaul University  
Chicago, Illinois

DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

Suzanne T. Bell, Ph.D.

Chairperson

Douglas F. Cellar, Ph.D

Annette J. Towler, Ph.D.

Erich C. Dierdorff, Ph.D

Joel Whalen, Ph.D.

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## VITA

The author was born in Amherst, New York on June 26<sup>th</sup>, 1984. She graduated from Brockport High School and received a Bachelor of Science degree from Baldwin-Wallace College in 2006. She received a Master of Arts degree in Industrial/Organizational Psychology from DePaul University in 2009 and a Doctorate degree from the same university in 2012. She now practices as a recruitment process consultant in Chicago, Illinois.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

With the increase of globalization, managers are focusing on ways to better compete with organizations at both national and international levels. At the international level, managers face new challenges for how to recruit and manage individuals from many different cultures and backgrounds. In order to stay competitive, multinational organizations need to be able to attract the best talent possible from the various countries in which they operate (Schuler & Rogocsky, 1998). Many organizations are currently facing difficulties in being able to recruit international talent, mainly because they lack the knowledge necessary to effectively attract that talent (Scullion, 1994). One explanation for this challenge is that individuals from different cultures have different values and are not drawn to organizations in the same way or for the same reasons (Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010; Ma & Allen, 2009). This suggests that recruitment strategies may need to be catered to the culture of the talent that is being pursued.

Despite the fact that many organizations are engaged in the challenge of attracting talent from various nations and cultures, there is a lack of research that would help guide organizations in the right direction (Budhwar & Sparrow, 2002; Ployhart, 2006; Ma & Allen, 2009; Stone, Stone-Romero, & Lukaszewski, 2007). The purpose of this dissertation is to determine if the cultural values, or ways of thinking and behaving that develop based on societal upbringing, of job applicants have direct effects or moderate certain aspects of the recruitment process. Many findings on culture and human resources demonstrate that the success of a system (e.g., compensation, selection, performance review) may depend on the cultural values of the individual (Aycan, Kanungo, Mendonca, Yu, Deller, Stahl, & Kurshid, 2000; Schuler & Rogocsky, 1998; Ryan, McFarland, Baron, & Page, 1999). The current study adds to these

results by uncovering which recruitment strategies are more or less effective for which cultures, as well as identifying those strategies that are universally successful in attracting talent across cultures. Being able to effectively draw on the best talent from all over the globe will allow an organization greater versatility and power in facing competitors in the global arena.

The potential impact of values on recruitment is discussed across the phases of Barber's process model of recruitment (Barber, 1998). Barber's phases include 1. Generating applicants (e.g., attracting potential applicants to submit applications for employment), 2. Maintaining applicant status (e.g., preventing applicants from dropping out during the interview process), 3. Influencing job choice (e.g., persuading the applicant to accept the job offer). Hofstede's cultural value dimensions were integrated with the above recruitment model in order to determine culture's influence on generating and maintaining applicants. Incorporating the five dimensions of power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism-collectivism, masculinity-femininity, and time orientation give a comprehensive view of culture in relation to recruitment outcomes.

Overall, the current goal of the research is to determine how the above cultural dimensions impact the relationship between recruitment practices and outcomes during the recruitment phases of generating and maintaining applications. This is accomplished by determining to what extent recruitment factors (i.e., reasons for applying to a job; job posting information; application length; perceptions of recruiter knowledge, friendliness, and enthusiasm; time delays) impact organizational attraction and job pursuit intentions across cultures. Furthermore, findings contribute understanding for how culture impacts recruitment outcomes before and after an application is submitted by determining culture's role in what attracts individuals to apply to jobs and how experiences in the recruitment process contribute to

further pursuit of the opportunity. The following pages will review literature on recruitment and cultural values, leading into a rationale and hypotheses for how the two topics are related.

### The Recruitment Process

In order for an organization to thrive, it must be able to attract the right talent that will drive its success. Thus, recruitment may be viewed as the foundation on which other organizational processes are built, as it is responsible for whether individuals will be attracted to an organization and acts as the first step in building an effective workforce (Rynes & Barber, 1990). This is consistent with the definition of recruitment as including “those practices and activities carried out by the organization with the primary purpose of identifying and attracting potential employees” (Barber, 1998, p. 5). Many factors including recruiter communications, how the opportunity is messaged, what sources are used, and attributes of the job each impact how likely an individual will be to apply for a job or accept an offer of employment.

Although most agree that recruitment is a critical human resources function, the magnitude of the impact of various aspects of recruitment on job choice is debated. Early research indicates that recruitment plays a major role in filling job vacancies with high quality talent and promotes an organizational image that will attract more talent to apply (Murphy, 1986). However, later findings suggest that recruitment experience explains very little variance in applicant decisions, once factors such as job characteristics are accounted for (Rynes & Barber, 1990; Taylor & Bergmann, 1987). This suggests that perceptions of job and organizational characteristics are more important than how this information is presented to the job seekers through the recruitment process. Additionally, because most studies of recruitment effects are based on self report surveys of college students, rather than carried out in the field, results may be questioned due demand characteristics (Rynes & Cable, 2003).

Despite these suggestions, recent meta-analytic findings demonstrate that multiple predictors (e.g., timing, recruiter effects, and job characteristics) impact recruitment outcomes (e.g., organizational attraction, job pursuit intentions and job choice; Chapman, Uggerslev, Carroll, Piasentin, & Jones, 2005). This is mainly due to the fact that these predictors influence how the work environment is perceived, which is strongly linked to attraction. Because applicants usually do not have knowledge of the actual environment, they use information gathered through job postings and interactions with the organization to develop perceptions about the organization (Rynes, Bretz, & Gerhart, 1991). Where positive information and experiences translate to more positive perceptions of the work environment, negative information and experiences lead to perceptions that the work environment will be undesirable. As a result, organizational practices impact attraction throughout the recruitment process – having an inevitable effect on whether applicants will accept a job offer (Chapman et al., 2005).

Because the recruitment process can occur over an extended period of time, past research divided recruitment into phases that can be studied either in isolation (one phase at a time) or as a continuous process (as in longitudinal studies). Rynes and Barber (1990) first defined three recruitment stages from the perspective of the applicant, which include: submitting an application, participating in interviews and other screening procedures, and deciding between offers of employment. Within these stages, the individuals being recruited transition from being potential applicants, to applicants, to selectees (i.e., receiving offers of employment). Following this logic, but incorporating the employer's perspective, Barber (1998) established three phases of recruitment that are recognized in recent literature: generating applicants, maintaining applicant status, and job choice. These phases will be explained in detail in the following section.

### Generating applicants

During the first phase of recruitment (generating applicants), an organization is responsible for reaching out to individuals and persuading them to apply for an employment opportunity (Barber, 1998). During this phase, the organization must decide who to target for the opportunity and what types of sources to use (e.g., websites, hiring events). Potential applicants then use their general impressions of the organization (referred to as organizational image) and reactions to recruitment materials to guide application decisions (Barber & Roehling, 1993; Cober, Brown, Blumental, Doverspike, & Levy, 2000). Here, what is known about the organization before starting a job search and what is learned during recruitment are both important in forming perceptions that impact recruitment outcomes.

The main outcome variables assessed during the phase of generating applicants is attraction to the organization and job pursuit intentions, or intentions of applying to a job. In the majority of studies, organizational attraction is a subjective measure of how an organization is evaluated (Chapman et al., 2005). However, attraction can also have objective properties, as when the success of a recruitment process is judged based on attracting an ideal number of individuals to the organization (Barber, 1998). Attraction can be specifically measured in relation to the job, organization, or both and may also be inferred based on global evaluations of an organization as an overall good place to work (Chapman et al., 2005). In contrast to organizational attraction, job pursuit intentions imply further action beyond the passive feeling of attraction (Highhouse, Lievens, & Sinar, 2003). Intentions are often measured by directly asking individuals whether they would accept a job offer, go on a first or second interview, or recommend the company to a friend.

Because participants in the current study have already shown interest in an organization by applying to a job, a level of attraction and intentions to pursue employment can be assumed. This is consistent with the idea that desire to submit an application is the most relevant component of job pursuit intentions during the process of generating applicants (Chapman et al., 2005). In terms of attraction, reasons for applying for a job are assessed to determine what attracted applicants to apply to an organization. In order to differentiate those who may have greater attraction and pursuit intentions than others, applicants are asked the extent to which they would recommend the position to a friend. This item is supported as an indicator of job pursuit intentions as it suggests that an individual is willing to invest future behavior in promotion of the organization based on their attraction (Highhouse, Lievens, & Sinar, 2003; Ployhart & Ryan, 1998). In research examining the underlying components of organizational pursuit measures, Highhouse et al. (2003) found that recommending a friend to apply loads primarily on the latent factor of job pursuit intentions, as well as on the factor of prestige (i.e., judgments of company reputation) and is moderately correlated with organizational attraction items. Thus, recommending a friend should be a good indication of the extent to which respondents found an organizational desirable, beyond submitting an application.

#### Maintaining applicants

Maintaining applicant status is the second phase of the recruitment process. Here, the organization's goal is to keep the current applicants interested in the organization and willing to pursue a job opportunity (Barber, 1998). During this phase, applicants may undergo a variety of selection and screening procedures, such as interviews and tests, which inform the organization of their qualifications for the position. In turn, the applicants acquire information about the organization that will allow them to make a job choice decision if an offer is made. This may

involve comparing multiple job choices and weighing the pro's and con's of each opportunity. At this point in the process, applicants are often actively communicating with representatives of the organization. Similar to the previous phase, how the applicant perceives these interactions can have effect on whether or not the applicant stays in the applicant pool (Chapman et al., 2005). Research indicates that selection procedures, recruiter perceptions, time delays, and perceived alternatives, which each take place during this phase, impact recruitment outcomes.

Both organizational attraction and job pursuit intentions are relevant outcomes during the maintaining applicants phase. In fact, researchers assert that organizational attraction has relevance throughout the recruitment process, and should be measured as such (Allen, Mahto, & Otondo, 2007; Barber, 1998). In addition to referencing a particular level of attraction, organizational attraction may be based on overall evaluation of the organization, such as positive or negative perceptions (Chapman et al., 2005; Smither, Reilly, Millsap, Pearlman, & Stoffey, 1993). Although the current study does not assess initial organizational attraction, change in organizational attraction is based on the extent of positive or negative changes in the perception of the organization after submitting an application. This means that the main focus of organizational attraction at this phase is in determining the extent that an organization can impact a change in attraction, rather than overall attraction level. Similar to generating applicants, recommending the company to a friend is used as a measure of job pursuit intentions for maintaining applicants, as it suggests general interest in staying in the applicant pool and is correlated with both organizational attraction and pursuit behaviors (Highhouse et al., 2003).

#### Job choice

During the final phase of recruitment, the applicant decides whether or not to accept a job offer that they received (Barber, 1998). Because this phase is centered on the applicant's

evaluation and decision about an organization, most research on this phase focuses on the applicant, rather than the actions of the organization. Here, both the factors that impact job acceptance, as well as the processes by which decisions are made, are relevant to understanding job choice. While the overall success of the recruiting process depends on whether or not high quality applicants accept the job offer, the purpose of the current study is to focus on early recruitment factors and outcomes. As a result, job choice is not a measured outcome in this research. However, research on job pursuit outcomes finds that while both attraction and prestige lead to intentions, intentions are a more direct predictor of actual pursuit behavior (Highhouse et al., 2003). This finding is consistent with other recruitment studies outlining the path of organizational attitudes leading to job pursuit behavior indirectly through intentions (Allen et al., 2004; Allen et al., 2007, Chapman et al., 2005). Given this, measuring both attraction and pursuit intentions should offer some insight into whether or not a job offer would eventually be accepted, although a direct case for job choice cannot be made.

### Cultural Value Dimensions

Recently, researchers have suggested that the relationships between factors of the recruitment process and outcomes, such as attraction and pursuit intentions, may vary based on cultural values (Ma & Allen, 2009; Stone et al., 2007). Although the relationships have yet to be empirically examined, there is much research on cultural values and how they effect different processes in the workplace, including selection, motivation, leadership, teams and communication to name a few (Gelfand, Erez, & Aycan, 2007). Cultural values stem from the social environments in which people are raised, resulting in a way of thinking, feeling, and behaving that is similar to those in the same environment. Consistent with Hofstede's definition, the current research defines culture as "the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes

the members of one group or category of people from others” (Hofstede et al., 2010, p. 6).

Cultural values are deeply held preferences that are learned through experiencing and identifying with a particular culture.

The first researcher to popularize the idea of cultural values and their impact on the workplace was Geert Hofstede, who conducted a study spanning fifty countries using survey data collected from employees of a large international organization (International Business Machines [IBM]) (Hofstede, 1980). Through this study, Hofstede determined that, while business problems are similar across nations, how the solutions to these problems were handled differed in terms of a few consistent factors. These factors represent dimensions, or aspects of culture that can be measured in relation to other cultures. Hofstede’s original research resulted in the four cultural dimensions of power distance, individualism-collectivism, masculinity-femininity, and uncertainty avoidance. These dimensions correspond respectively to the issues of social inequality and relationship with authority, relationship between individuals and groups, implications of being born as a man or woman, and ways of dealing with ambiguity. Later research conducted by Misho Minkov incorporated a broader span of countries, resulting in an additional dimension that is recognized by Hofstede as short- vs. long-term orientation (also known as Confucian Work Dynamism), relating to how the future, past and present are emphasized (The Chinese Connection, 1987). Short vs. long term orientation will be referred to as time orientation.

#### Individualism-collectivism

Of Hofstede’s five dimensions, individualism-collectivism, which represents the tendency for individuals within a country to identify with an in-group, is the most widely researched, covering topics ranging from well-being to conflict resolution (Hofstede et al., 2010).

When studying the concepts of individualism and collectivism at the country level, these two concepts actually represent two opposing ends of one dimension, such that countries high on individualism are low in collectivism and vice versa. At the individual level, individualism and collectivism can be viewed as two separate dimensions, in which one person can be high or low on both (Oyserman, Coon, & Kemmelmeier, 2002).

As part of a collectivist culture, individuals are integrated into a strong, cohesive in-group from birth, learning to think of themselves as part of a “we” (Hofstede, 1980). This relationship is sustained throughout the lifespan, where individuals are dependent upon the group (made up of mainly extended family and family friends) for support and security in exchange for loyalty. Here, the in-group is the main source of one’s identity, rather than the self, and goals are generally focused on satisfying and protecting the group in order to maintain group loyalty. Contrary to this, individualist cultures emphasize the interests of the individual over the group and people think of themselves as “I”. In these cultures, ties between individuals are loose and effort must be made to form relationships with others. Levels of individualism and collectivism are correlated with national wealth, as wealthier countries are more likely to break away from the collectivist dependence on the group and evolve towards an emphasis on the individual (Hofstede et al., 2010).

In relation to work, individualist cultures promote goals that stress the employees’ independence from the organization, such as having personal time, freedom, and challenging work (Hofstede et al., 2010). In these organizations, hiring is based on the individual and work is much more task focused, rather than relationship focused. This results in a more competitive market culture, where individuals are focused on getting ahead (Gardner, Reithel, Foley, Coglisier, & Walumba, 2009). Collectivist workplaces differ in that workers are much more

dependent on the organization and have goals that concern training and working conditions. Similar to the relationship with family, the employer and work environment become part of the in-group, in which individuals provide loyalty to the organization in exchange for protection. In collectivist organizations, personal relationships take precedence over work performance in both hiring and completing work tasks. This creates a more family-like work environment in which people are more likely to interact with each other both professionally (as part of work-teams) and informally (Bochner & Hesketh, 1994; Gardner et al., 2009). It is speculated that flexible work schedules may matter less to collectivist cultures due to greater support both within the workplace and at home (Spector et al., 2007).

#### Power distance

Power distance is one of Hofstede's cultural dimensions that is highly researched, although not to the same extent as individualism-collectivism. Similar to individualism-collectivism, power distance represents an aspect of dependence, although rather than focusing on individuals' dependence on groups (as with individualism), power distance represents the extent that individuals in a society are dependent on those with greater power (Hofstede, 1980). Countries that are high on power distance tend to have large gaps in the distribution of power, with a very few people able to assert power over the majority. In countries with low power distance, this gap is smaller (with more people being able to assert control) and individuals in lower positions are more likely to work with their superiors in making decisions that affect themselves (Hofstede, 1980).

In the workplace, a society's level of power distance is most likely to affect the relationship between employees and their superiors, but also extends to other work factors (Hofstede et al., 2010). In high power distance societies, organizational hierarchies tend to be

taller and a very few individuals in superior positions exert control over the majority. While individuals in low power distance societies are likely to reject this type of organizational structure, individuals in high power distance countries tend to prefer the hierarchy and protection and security it offers (Gardner et al., 2009). This is mainly because individuals in high power distance cultures feel comfortable and prefer their superiors to have a more direct leadership style and exert control over decisions (Khatri, 2009; Taras, Kirkman, & Steel, 2010). Consistent with this, individuals in low power distance countries have been shown to resist self-management in work teams, indicating that the ability to self manage conflicts with their culture (Kirkman & Shapiro, 2001). This is a stark contrast to low power distance countries, where subordinates expect to be consulted by their superiors about matters that concern them and to work interdependently (Gardner et al., 2009; Hofstede et al., 2010).

Additional research on power distance and the workplace finds that, because of wide gaps in power, developmental opportunities are rare and often only provided for those few individuals in the position of power (Khatri, 2009). Thus, the majority of job seekers in these cultures do not expect to be offered these opportunities in potential positions. Furthermore, the reputation of the organization is more important in high power distance cultures, as people are more likely to place importance on the image of their workplace as compared with the opportunities that are offered internally (e.g., salary, advancement) (Stone, Johnson, Stone-Romero, & Hartman, 2006).

### Uncertainty avoidance

Uncertainty avoidance is one of Hofstede's cultural dimensions that has not been researched extensively, but has various implications in the workplace, including organizational tenure, work-life balance, abidance by rules or authority, and innovation (Hofstede et al., 2010;

Rapp, Bernardi, & Bosco, 2011). The basic premise underlying uncertainty avoidance is a search for truth or need to believe in an absolute truth, which is often translated to a belief in religion or God (Hofstede, 1993). Consistent with this, uncertainty avoidance represents the extent that members of a certain culture are threatened by ambiguous and unknown information, leading to expressed anxiety and stress and a need for predictability.

Due to a need for structure and clearly interpretable information, countries high in uncertainty avoidance tend to have more laws (both formal and informal) (Hofstede, 1980). This is also true in the workplace where high uncertainty avoidance is positively correlated with direct leadership and negatively correlated with participative leadership (Taras et al., 2010). Similarly, employees are more focused on developing an expertise or specializing in a certain area, allowing them to master information. Contrary to this, countries lower in uncertainty avoidance are more likely to support a workforce with a wide range of skills that they utilize in various situations (Hofstede et al., 2010). Specific to human resources practices, managers of cultures high in uncertainty avoidance attempt to gain more information about applicants during selection by using a greater variety of test types, conducting more interviews (particularly structured interviews), and auditing their practices regularly (Ryan et al., 1999). This demonstrates that individuals within high uncertainty avoidance cultures seem to have a greater need to gather more information in order to decrease ambiguity and increase predictability during recruitment.

### Masculinity-femininity

The next cultural dimension that is predicted to impact recruitment outcomes is masculinity-femininity, which effects how similar men and women are expected to behave in terms of gender roles (Hofstede, 1980). Masculine cultures have a defined set of socially accepted behaviors for each gender, with men generally concentrated on personal achievement,

competition and challenge, and women focused on family and care taking, quality of life, and tenderness. In these cultures, masculine behaviors dominate and are more likely to lead to success. Feminine cultures differ in that gender roles are less emphasized, with society as a whole embracing more feminine values of modesty, concern for others, and cooperation. Similar to long-term vs. short-term orientation, little research has been conducted on the dimension of masculinity-femininity, most likely because it is not widely recognized in the literature as a legitimate cultural dimension (Hofstede et al., 2010). This is due to the fact that masculinity-femininity is the only one of Hofstede's dimensions that is not correlated with national wealth, as both masculine and feminine cultures are equally likely to be wealthy or poor.

Despite the fact that masculinity-femininity is not always recognized as a relevant cultural dimension, it does have the potential to impact the workplace. While managers in masculine cultures are results focused and allocate rewards based on performance (equity), managers in feminine cultures have greater concern for their employees and reward them based upon greatest need (equality) (Hofstede et al., 2010). For masculine societies, this prompts workers to value recognition, high earnings, and potential advancement in the organization (Gelade, Dobson, & Auer, 2008). Additionally, individuals in masculine cultures have been shown to prefer challenging work that may lead to further recognition and personal success (Hofstede et al., 2010; Merritt, 2000). Contrary to this, workers in feminine societies value compromise, consideration for fellow employees, working in a location that is desirable to the family, and job security. Here, cooperation and having a good relationship with one's superior is critical (Gelade et al., 2008).

#### Time orientation

Recruitment outcomes may also differ based upon whether a country has a long- or short-term orientation, which represents a country's propensity to view the passing of time in terms of emphasis on the past, present, or future (Hofstede & Bond, 1988). The long-term vs. short-term dimension was not part of Hofstede's original study on IBM, as it was not considered an important component of life in the countries that were studied. However, later research measured values of individuals in East Asia and uncovered a new factor, originally termed Confucian Work Dynamism (The Chinese Culture Connection, 1987). This factor was judged as important on the basis that it was not highly correlated with existing factors but was correlated with average gross national growth, suggesting that nations high on this dimension (i.e., having a long-term orientation) are able to grow and develop faster than those who are low (i.e., having a short-term orientation).

The connection of this factor with national development makes sense on the basis that nations that are high on the dimension (indicative of long-term orientation), have a tendency to value both persistence and thrift. Thus, the focus is on the future, as individuals in these countries will work hard and save for long-term benefits, even if it means struggle or discomfort in the short-term (Hofstede et al., 2010). Individuals of countries that score lower on the dimension (indicative of short-term orientation) are more likely to act in a way that benefits their immediate needs and give less thought to how it will have long term effects. This is supported by findings demonstrating that individuals in short-term orientated (STO) cultures are more likely to engage in compulsive buying, while those in long-term orientated (LTO) cultures are more likely to save money or be frugal in their spending (Bearden, Money, & Nevins, 2006).

In addition to varying in behavior, individuals in countries scoring differently on time orientation are likely to perceive time differently. For example, individuals in South Eastern and

South American countries (which tend to have a LTO) tend to view time as endless or continuous with a focus on events unfolding in phases. This is a strong contrast to individuals in North American, Germanic, and Scandinavian countries (which tend to have a STO) who view time as forward, linear, and as something that can be wasted or lost (Brislin & Kim, 2003; Saunders, Slyke, & Vogel, 2004). Here, individuals in STO countries are more apt to see a long process/event/meeting as a “waste of time”, while individuals in LTO countries would be less concerned with the length of time passing by.

#### Dimension methodology

In order to quantify cultural differences, all of the countries included in Hofstede’s research have a score for each of the above dimensions. After measuring each nation extensively on the cultural dimensions, these scores represent individuals from a particular nation’s tendency to uphold each value. Thus, countries scoring high on one dimension have individuals who tend to approach problems regarding that dimension differently than individuals in those countries that are low on the dimension. The reasoning behind why individuals from a certain culture can be coded the same on a given value dimension, while others are coded differently, lies in the collective experience of growing up in the same environment. Individuals from the same culture are influenced by common societal factors from birth including norms for dressing, speaking, and interacting with authority, to name a few, which leads to similar mental programming. Hence, Hofstede’s scores reflect how individuals in a specific culture tend to think, feel or behave based on how they were brought up in society. Following Hofstede’s original research, many studies have been conducted which both confirm the above dimensions, as well as uncover new cultural value dimensions.

Replicating Hofstede's approach to studying culture values, Schwartz surveyed college students and elementary teachers in over sixty countries and developed seven country-level dimensions named conservatism, hierarchy, mastery, affective autonomy, intellectual autonomy, egalitarian commitment, and harmony (Schwartz & Bardi, 2001). Hofstede's individualism-collectivism dimension correlates highly with all but two of Schwartz's dimensions, indicating great overlap between the two models. Cultural research conducted by House (1991) focuses mainly on leadership, rather than the workplace in general. In the study known as the GLOBE (Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness) project, House collected data from over sixty societies and extended Hofstede's dimensions by splitting the masculinity-femininity dimension into two (assertiveness and gender egalitarianism) and adding two additional dimensions (humane orientation and performance orientation). A Third researcher, Fons Trompenaars, developed seven dimensions based on early sociology research, of which three were later found to correlate with individualism-collectivism and power distance (Trompenaars, 1993). Thus, three separate cross-national studies have helped to verify Hofstede's model of cultural values to some extent, contributing to the validity of his dimensions.

Despite the fact that Hofstede's dimensions are the most widely used and cited in cultural values literature, the model is not without its criticisms (Kirkman, Lowe, & Gibson, 2006; Oyserman et al., 2002; Sivakumar & Nakata, 2001). Some feel that four or five cultural dimensions are not comprehensive enough to explain cultural differences and that this model neglects critical factors. Another question concerns the generalizability of Hofstede's findings, as all original data was collected in one company. As a result, the cultural dimensions may be due to IBM's specific culture and may not hold the same meaning when applied in other

organizations (Sivakumar & Nakata, 2001). Despite these claims, successive researchers have verified Hofstede's dimensions, indicating that his findings are not attributed to studying one organization, and have failed to indicate that the model is missing critical factors (Sondergaard, 1994).

The majority of speculation regarding Hofstede's model centers on using Hofstede's value scores as a proxy for a cultural dimension instead of directly measuring the dimension (Oyserman et al., 2002). When researchers use these scores as variables in their own studies, an assumption is made that Hofstede's findings will directly apply to their research, which may not be the case. One reason for this is the amount of time that has passed since Hofstede's original study was carried out, which is over 30 years. Critics wonder whether culture has the ability to change over time, which could result in Hofstede's scores being incorrect representations of current cultures (Sivakumar & Nakata, 2001). Additionally, because Hofstede's study was carried out on a single organization, findings may not be relevant to other organizational settings. Despite this, validation research by Hofstede demonstrates that his dimensions correlate with other measures of culture, such as national wealth, savings, and religion, and that these correlations have not changed over time, suggesting that the dimensions are stable (Hofstede et al., 2010).

In addition to the above criticism, researchers have demonstrated that there is cultural variation within countries, meaning that different populations within one country may score differently on the same dimension (Ryan et al., 1999). For example, while some countries are relatively homogeneous in relation to cultural values (such as Japan), other countries can have multiple distinct sub-cultures (such as Canada). Thus, it may be inappropriate to apply one score to an entire country, as certain groups of individuals will not reflect that level of the dimension.

One recommendation for this problem is to compute effect sizes, which can be used as an indication of how much cultural variation exists within countries. Small country effect sizes suggest that countries may vary on cultural dimensions, indicating that one should proceed with caution when attributing country differences to culture. Another suggestion is to only study variation between countries that have the maximum differences on a certain culture score (Sivakumar & Nakata, 2001). For example, comparing a country that scores extremely high on one dimension (e.g., India on power distance) to another country that scores extremely low on the same dimension (e.g., Sweden). This will result in a clearer picture of variation between countries by exacerbating the effects of between country differences.

A final problem with utilizing Hofstede's dimension scores concerns applying the scores to individual participants, based on the country to which they belong, and making individual-level inferences. Hofstede, himself, argues against this practice, as his factors did not replicate at the individual level (Hofstede, 1980). Here, he states that there are structural differences between the dimensions at individual- and country-levels, resulting in the need for different dimensions at each level. However, because Hofstede used dated analytical methods that failed to test the similarity of value structures across levels directly, the validity of this conclusion is questioned. More recent research using multivariate techniques indicate that values at the individual and country level are more similar than suggested by Hofstede (Fischer, Vauclair, Fontaine, & Schwartz, 2010). Additionally, a recent meta-analysis shows that Hofstede's four main dimensions have equal predictive power of outcomes at the country and individual levels (Taras et al., 2010).

Although there has been some criticism of Hofstede's studies, his model remains one of the most heavily researched and empirically supported cross-cultural models available. In fact,

most researchers encourage further investigation of Hofstede's model, as long as it is carried out while taking certain precautions. For instance, including a broad range of countries, sampling strategically, conducting multi-level analyses, incorporating contextual moderators, and studying multiple dimensions are some recommendations that have been made for carrying out future research using Hofstede's model (Kirkman et al., 2006; Sivakumar & Nakata, 2001). Based on the extensive research and literature collected on Hofstede's model, the current study utilizes Hofstede's value dimensions and scores in studying cultural differences in the recruitment process. In doing so, the limitations of the model are addressed and the above recommendations for strengthening the model are incorporated where applicable. These strategies are further elaborated on in the Method section.

#### Generating Applicants and Culture

The earliest part of the recruitment process in which cultural differences are observable is during the first phase of generating applicants. As stated earlier, this phase involves the organization taking steps to attract job seekers to their opportunities and persuading them to apply (Barber, 1998). Research has uncovered many findings that give insight into the best ways that information and content can be leveraged in recruitment materials (such as job postings) to attract job seekers (Allen et al., 2007; Barber & Roehling, 1993; Cober et al., 2000; Cober, Brown, Keeping, & Levy, 2004; Feldman, Bearden, & Hardesty, 2006; Yuce & Highhouse, 1998). The current research focuses on online job postings as the main source of gaining job and organizational information, as this is what current respondents view immediately prior to attempting to apply to a position.

### Online recruitment

Recent literature on web recruitment highlights online job advertisements as a critical component in successfully generating applicants (Allen et al., 2007; Cober et al., 2000; Cober et al., 2004). These findings are consistent with existing recruitment theory, in that attraction is related to objective attributes about the job and organization, subjective judgments of organizational image and interactions with the source (e.g., website, recruiters) (Turban, Forret, & Hendrickson, 1998). Through the job posting, job seekers gain information about both the job and the organization, leading to the formation of attitudes toward the organization. These attitudes then have a direct impact on the job seekers' intentions to apply for the job (Allen, Van Scotter, & Otondo, 2004). In these instances, websites can be considered analogous to recruitment contacts, such as recruiters, since this oftentimes is the only avenue of information that the job seeker has received from the organization prior to applying (Allen et al., 2007). Attraction that results based on interactions with job postings contribute to the level of interest the job seeker has in that job/employer, preferences for that employer (either positive or negative), or the probability of submitting an application (Cober et al., 2004). All of these variables will be explored either directly, or indirectly as part of the current study, starting with initial motivations to apply for a job followed by characteristics of the job posting and application.

Because online job postings are now a main source of job and organizational information, the type of information offered has been shown to play a critical role in the application decision. Results from a meta-analysis on applicant attraction indicate that perceived work environment is one of the strongest predictors of attraction to the job and organization (Chapman et al., 2005). Thus, for applicants whose main source of information about the work environment is through

job postings, how the posting portrays the environment becomes essential. Job seekers have been shown to attend to information relating to compensation, advancement and developmental opportunities, location, and challenging work when forming perceptions (Cable & Graham, 2000; Cable & Judge, 2003; Turban et al., 1998). Characteristics of the job that play the largest role in whether or not a job seeker would consider applying to a position include salary, benefits and location (Barber & Roehling, 1993). Based on this research, these factors should be common reasons for why individuals apply to certain organizations.

Job seekers also use these characteristics and perceptions of the work environment as cues for whether or not they would be a good match with an organization, known as judgments of organizational fit. The amount of fit that an individual perceives is directly related to attraction throughout the recruitment process (Harold & Ployhart, 2008). Here, it is critical for employers to offer enough information about the job and organization to allow job seekers to formulate these perceptions of fit. A main component of fit perceptions are values, in that individuals prefer organizations whose characteristics match their own personal values, which may be a result of cultural or religious background (Schneider, Goldstein, & Smith, 1995). Thus, fit may play a large role in whether certain recruitment practices are more or less effective in different cultures.

Contributing to perceptions of fit, individual differences, including personality and values do impact whether or not job seekers will be attracted to and want to pursue opportunities in an organization. Findings show that individuals with high need for achievement are attracted to organizations that are more oriented toward individuals and emphasize achievement (Bretz, Ash, & Dreher, 1989; Judge & Bretz, 1992). Relating to cultural values, reputation is a more important job factor for individuals that are high in power distance (Stone et al., 2006).

Additionally, researchers hypothesize that strategies for recruiting applicants may vary based on the culture of each country (Ma & Allen, 2009; Stone et al., 2007). For example, Ma and Allen (2009) predict that informal recruitment sources (e.g., referrals) will be utilized more in collectivist cultures, while active sources (e.g., job postings) will be utilized more in masculine cultures.

Given the above findings and hypotheses, it is likely that individuals from countries with different cultural values will vary in how important certain employment factors (e.g., salary, advancement opportunities, training) are during the application process. Thus, while some factors will be a top reason for applying to a job for individuals of one culture, these same factors may not even be a consideration for individuals of a different culture. The following paragraphs outline how cultures should differ in terms of individuals' reasons for applying for jobs by investigating employment factors that have been previously linked to cultural values. These factors include: salary, training and development, advancement opportunities, reputation, and work-life balance. Following this, other factors that influence generating applicants, such as job posting content and application length are discussed.

#### Reasons for applying

Higher salary is linked to organizational attraction and is one of the top factors that job seekers look for when deciding whether or not to apply to an organization (Barber & Roehling, 1993; Cable & Judge, 1994). Although it is expected that salary will be important across cultures, it may be more critical for individuals of certain cultures. Individuals in STO cultures are more likely to value things that can satisfy their immediate needs over things that are considered an investment in long-term benefits (Bearden et al., 2006). Given that salary is a benefit that is experienced immediately after starting a new job, this may make an organization

offering high salary seem more desirable to individuals in STO cultures. Contrary to this, individuals in LTO cultures are more willing to sacrifice immediate benefits and experience struggles or discomfort in the present if it means better outcomes in the future (Hofstede, 1980). While money is still desirable, other factors that will pay out greater in the long run (such as training and potential for advancement) may take precedence over an initially high salary offering. Based on these differences, it is likely that salary will be cited as a reason for applying to a job to a greater extent in STO cultures rather than LTO cultures. Due to the fact that salary is such a critical factor when making employment decisions, and there is no reason to believe that importance of salary should differ between cultures aside from time orientation, salary should be chosen as a reason for applying equally across all other cultures.

Opposite of salary, developmental opportunities, such as training and mentoring, are benefits that are accrued over a longer period of time and realized in the future. Training opportunities have been shown to effect perceptions of organizational reputation, job pursuit intentions, and recommending the job to a friend (Cable & Graham, 2000; Cober et al, 2004). Additionally, training opportunities are attractive to job seekers in the sense that they allow the building of skills that can contribute to advancement in the organization and greater success later in one's career. However, because this does not fulfill an immediate desire, it is likely that this will be less important to individuals in STO cultures. On the other hand, individuals in LTO cultures, who are more likely to value and persist toward future goals, are probably more likely to apply to jobs because of training opportunities (Hofstede et al., 2010). Hofstede's research has also shown that training is important in collectivist cultures, which are more likely to have a long-term orientation, and where expanding one's skills through training is seen as an opportunity to further contribute to the overall wellbeing of the group or organization. However,

training is often not an option in high power distance cultures where there is less opportunity to advance and use additional skills. Because of this, it is less likely for organizations within high power distance countries to advertise training opportunities and for individuals to cite it as a reason for applying to a particular organization (since it is not offered), as compared to other cultures where this option is advertised and available. As a result, training may be cited more as a reason for applying in collectivist cultures (as compared to individualist cultures) and less in high power distance cultures (as compared with low power distance cultures). Unlike individualism, time orientation and power distance, training is predicted to be chosen equally across cultures based on masculinity and uncertainty avoidance.

Another employment factor with a focus on the future is the opportunity to advance in the organization. Similar to training, this factor has been shown to result in perceiving an organization as more reputable, which has a direct effect on organizational attraction (Cable & Graham, 2000). Despite the fact that, similar to salary, this is likely an important job factor across cultures, it may be more important for individuals in cultures who have a tendency to be independently ambitious in the workplace. Because individuals in individualist cultures operate under the rule that “it’s every man for himself” and emphasize personal achievement, it is likely that advancement opportunities will be a more popular reason for applying. In collectivist cultures where teamwork is more prevalent and the achievement of the group is the main goal, opportunities that involve advancing beyond one’s co-workers may be less relevant or desirable. For similar reasons, advancement opportunities is likely to be a reason to apply to a job to a greater extent in masculine cultures, as compared with feminine cultures. This reflects the fact that individuals in masculine cultures are more focused on personal recognition and achievement, where as individuals in feminine cultures have more focus on cooperation and

treating others with consideration and are less concerned with personal outcomes (Gelade, Dobson, & Auer, 2008). However, there is no reason to believe that time orientation, power distance, and uncertainty avoidance will lead to differing preferences for advancement opportunities. Thus, these cultures are likely to choose advancement equally as a reason for applying.

Reputation, also known as organizational image, is another factor that may lead to a personal sense of worth for employees. Reputation has an impact on attraction and job pursuit because individuals are interested in working for organizations that they are know are successful and for which they can be proud to work (Cable, Aiman-Smith, Mulvey and Edwards, 2000; Cable & Turban, 2003). While reputation is related to both organizational attraction and job pursuit intentions, working for a highly reputable company may more heavily influence these outcomes for individuals in certain cultures. Based on the previous finding that reputation is more important for individuals in high-power distance cultures (Stone et al., 2006), it is likely that this factor may be a top reason for applying to a greater extent for individuals in high power distance cultures than for individuals in low power distance cultures. This relationship makes sense, seeing as though internal opportunities such as organizational advancement, increases in salary, and developmental opportunities are quite limited in organizations of low power distance countries (Hofstede et al., 2010). As a result, applicants may be more likely to look for external factors (such as reputation) of the organization rather than what can be attained internally. As reputation is a highly important employment factor that applicants base their decisions on, and there is no additional research to support further cultural differences, power distance should be the only cultural value to result in differences of reasons for applying.

Work-life balance is an additional factor that may be more or less relevant in certain cultures. In the U.S., work-life balance has been shown to impact both job and life satisfaction to the extent that pressures from either side of life spill over and detract from the other (Adams, King, & Daniel, 1996). Greater family support is one way that can help ameliorate conflict between work and family life. On the organizational side, employers can offer flexible schedules, opportunities to work from home, and greater vacation time (Halpern, 2005). Given that individuals in collectivist cultures are more centered on family life, it is possible that family support is greater and there is less need for organizations to facilitate work-life balance through employment offerings (Spector et al., 2007). However, in individualist cultures where there may be lower familial support and having a healthy work-life balance is not accepted by all organizations, this may be something for which job seekers specifically look. Based on this logic, it is expected that work-life balance will be a more important reason for applying to a job for individuals of individualist cultures, as opposed to individuals of collectivist cultures. Aside from individualism, there is no support for preferences of work-life balance to be based on other cultural values. Thus, work-life balance will be chosen equally as a reason for applying based on cultural differences in individualism, power distance, uncertainty avoidance, and time orientation.

#### Job posting length and content

As discussed above, job seekers may differ in their motivations for applying to a job based on their culture. These motivations for applying are likely prevalent before interacting with a job posting, as individuals may already know what they want in a job opportunity (e.g., flexible work hours, expansive benefits package). In an effort to seek out these factors, individuals then visit a job board and review job postings. At this stage in the job search, factors

such as posting content and amount of information in the advertisement start to impact whether or not an individual will be likely to apply (Allen et al., 2007). In terms of posting length, research on student samples indicate that length is directly related to attractiveness, in that postings with more information are rated as more attractive than postings with less information (Barber & Roehling, 1993; Yuce & Highhouse, 1998). It is speculated that when not enough information about the job or organization is offered, job seekers may attribute this to the company not caring enough to provide a quality advertisement, which leads to other negative assumptions about the employer (Barber & Roehling, 1993). Additionally, organizations that do provide more info (especially with a high variety of topics) have a competitive advantage over organizations providing less info, as they have a greater chance to pique the job seeker's interest by describing their employment offering in more detail.

The type of information described in the posting may also impact the relationship between job posting length and attractiveness. Greater amounts of relevant information (e.g., descriptions of working conditions and environment) in a job posting were found to lead to greater attraction than greater amounts of less relevant information (e.g., ambiguous information about work and company culture) (Yuce & Highhouse, 1998). Additionally, some warn that while ads with greater specificity are rated as being more informative, only specific information about the job, company, and work context lead to greater intentions to complete an application, with job information having the greatest impact (Feldman et al., 2006). Supporting the idea that job information may have more of an impact than company information is the finding that job information has a direct relationship with intentions to pursue employment, while organizational information impacts intentions indirectly through attitudes (Allen et al., 2007). Thus, it may be more important to provide greater detail about the responsibilities of the job, which directly

relates to what employees will perform on a daily basis, rather than information regarding the company itself, which may only peripherally impact daily activities.

Given the above findings demonstrating the relationship between posting length, attraction, and pursuit intentions, it is predicted that postings in the current study that are perceived as not having enough job or company information will be perceived as less attractive, and as a result, be rated lower on whether job seekers would recommend the job to a friend. It is predicted that this relationship will be stronger for job information than company information. Furthermore, culture should moderate the relationship between posting length on pursuit intentions, given that certain cultures have different levels of tolerance for ambiguous information. Specifically, the dimension of uncertainty avoidance is directly related to stress that results from ambiguous or unpredictable situations (Hofstede, 1980). For individuals in cultures that are high in uncertainty avoidance, job postings that are short and do not communicate the desired information should result in lower pursuit intentions due to increased strain from not knowing what the job entails. Although individuals in low uncertainty avoidance cultures will still have less interest in the organization, it should be to a lesser extent, since ambiguous information is more likely to be accepted in these cultures. Overall, the relationship between lack of posting information and job pursuit intentions should be stronger for cultures high in uncertainty avoidance than cultures low in uncertainty avoidance.

#### Application length

If a job seeker finds information in the job posting desirable, a decision may be made to apply to the organization. In addition to characteristics of the job posting, one of the most basic

factors that effects both organizational attraction and whether a job seeker will apply to a job is the application itself. Although there is very limited research investigating the impact of application characteristics on application success, there is some literature that suggests that a long or confusing application will result in lower application success (Cober et al., 2000). Here, too much information and time required can overwhelm the job seeker. Additionally, the longer the delay between viewing the job posting information and having an opportunity to apply, the less likely the job seeker will be to apply to the job. As a result, if an application is extremely lengthy, an applicant may get discouraged and decide not to apply for the job.

Due to the fact that the above reasoning deals with the length of time it takes to complete an application, it is likely that that whether or not a long application is completed will depend on time orientation. Individuals in STO cultures are more likely to view long processes or periods of time as a “waste” of time, while individuals in LTO cultures are more likely to persist and view time as continuously flowing segments (Hofstede et al., 2010). Following this reasoning, individuals in LTO cultures should view the application as something that could benefit them in the future, without regard to how long the process takes, while individuals in STO cultures will see it as a “waste”. As a result, the negative relationship between application length and recruitment outcomes should be moderated by culture, such that individuals in STO cultures will be less likely to recommend a company and have lower job pursuit intentions when the application is long, as compared with LTO cultures. Additionally, individuals in STO cultures should be more likely than individuals of LTO cultures to fail to complete an application altogether when it is judged as too long, as it is seen as taking up valuable time that could be spent elsewhere. In the current study, LTO individuals are predicted to cite that the application is too long as a reason for not completing it, as compared with STO individuals.

## Maintaining Applicants and Culture

Although persuading applicants to apply to a position is a critical component in recruitment, keeping applicants in the applicant pool is just as important. Maintaining applicant status is the second phase in recruitment and involves the organization making an effort to sustain a positive image until an offer of employment is made (or not made) (Barber, 1998). During this phase, the applicant typically waits to find out the results of the application. When the result is communicated, the applicant either continues with the recruitment process and interviews with the company or ends the process by releasing the organization from consideration. The current study will follow applicants up to the point of hearing back from the organization after submitting an application.

While job postings are the main tool driving the generation of applicants, recruiters and other representatives of the organization who communicate with applicants play the main role in maintaining them. Research mainly suggests that recruiter knowledge, behavior (e.g., friendliness), and speed of communication can have an impact on continued organizational attraction and intentions to pursue employment (Breaugh, 2008; Chapman et al., 2005; Chapman & Webster, 2006; Rynes et al., 1991; Saks & Uggerslev, 2010). This is due, in part, to signaling theory, which suggests that most applicants are missing critical information about the organization they are applying to (e.g., what it is like to work there) and use recruitment experiences to fill these knowledge gaps (Rynes et al., 1991). Consistent with this theory, signals regarding the friendliness or timeliness of recruiters are used to judge the actual organizational environment, ultimately impacting perceptions of the organization. Although there is some debate in the literature as to the extent that recruiters actually impact recruitment outcomes, such as job choice, experiences tend to hold the most weight when they are negative (e.g., poor

recruiter behavior, disorganization, delays in the process) (Rynes & Cable, 2003). The following paragraphs take a look at how culture can impact an organization's ability to maintain applicants by reviewing perceptions of recruiter characteristics and timeliness of responding.

#### Perceptions of recruiter characteristics

Recent meta-analytic evidence finds that recruiter personableness was a strong predictor of job pursuit intentions, while overall recruiter perceptions was one of the strongest predictors of intentions to accept an offer (Chapman et al., 2005). Thus, recruiter effects have the potential to span all phases of recruitment for the job seeker, starting with the decision to apply and ending with decisions to accept an offer. Research in support of this finding indicates that perceptions of recruiter friendliness lead to organizational attraction at the beginning of the process and job choice later in the process (Chapman & Webster, 2006). This may be due to job seekers interpreting friendliness as meaning that they will receive a job offer, resulting in more positive feelings toward the organization. Additionally, recruiters that are more knowledgeable about the job are able to offer more relevant information and increase credibility for the organization by providing a more helpful experience (Breugh, 2008).

As suggested by the above findings, ratings of organizational representatives as knowledgeable, enthusiastic, and professional should be directly related to recommending the company to a friend and having more positive perceptions of the organization. Because individuals in collectivist societies tend to emphasize relationships with others and have a higher need for affiliation as compared with individuals in individualist societies, this could have an effect on how much emphasis and value is placed on communication with representatives (Hofstede, 1980; Taras et al., 2010). Individuals in collectivist cultures may put greater weight on the quality of conversation with an organizational representative and be more apt to use

experiences as signals of an organization's benefits or deficiencies. Thus, the positive relationship between recruiter perceptions and recruitment outcomes should be moderated by culture, such that perceptions of recruiter knowledge, enthusiasm, and professionalism should be more strongly related to job pursuit intentions and changes in organizational attraction in collectivist cultures as compared with individualist cultures.

#### Recruitment delays

Beyond influencing overall perceptions, recruiters and organizational representatives can also affect recruitment outcomes depending on how often they communicate with the applicant and how long delays between communications are. Gaps and delays in communication commonly occur after the applicant has applied or interviewed with the employer and are waiting to hear back about the status of their application or job offer (Barber, 1998). When the organization takes too long to respond to the applicant, this has a negative effect on the organization to the extent that the job seeker may now think that there is something undesirable about the employer (e.g., they are disorganized; have bad processes), which may discourage them from accepting an offer if one is made (Rynes et al., 1991; Saks & Uggerslev, 2010). Consistent with signaling theory, delays in the recruitment process cause applicants to question both the effectiveness and consideration of the employer (Taylor & Bergman, 1987). Additionally, if the organization takes too long to respond to the applicant, he or she may choose to take another job offer. This makes the organization at risk of losing its most high potential applicants, as these individuals are the most likely to have competing offers from other organizations (Rynes et al., 1991).

The above findings suggest that longer periods of time between submitting an application and hearing back from a company contact should lead to more negative perceptions of the

organization and lower likelihood of recommending the company to a friend. This relationship should be moderated by culture, as perceptions of time vary based on cultural background. Specifically in terms of STO vs. LTO, individuals in STO countries are more likely to view waiting periods as wasted or lost and less likely to focus on the end benefits (Brislin & Kim, 2003; Saunders et al., 2004). Additionally, individuals in STO cultures who find longer gaps in communication undesirable may attribute this to what the overall organization is like, resulting in decreased attraction to the organization and lower job pursuit intentions. For this reason, the negative relationship between delays in communication and organizational attraction and pursuit intentions should be stronger for individuals in STO cultures than individuals in LTO cultures, who are less concerned with process length. Consistent with this reasoning, it is also predicted that organizations in STO cultures will have shorter delays in contacting applicants, while organizations in LTO cultures will allow longer delays.

Additionally, uncertainty avoidance may impact the effects of recruitment delays, since individuals in high uncertainty avoidance cultures are likely to experience anxiety and stress in situations where information is unknown or unclear (Hofstede, 1980). Here, culture should moderate the relationship between recruitment delays and outcomes, such that not having knowledge regarding application status may lead to more negative changes in perceptions and lower likelihood of recommending a friend for those in high uncertainty avoidance cultures. These relationships should be weaker for those in low uncertainty avoidance cultures, who are more tolerant of situations involving unknowns.

### Environmental Controls

Because organizations do not exist in a vacuum, free from other influences, it is important to consider additional factors that could impact differences in recruitment processes

between countries. Previous research has cited the importance of recognizing factors that are both internal and external to an organization that can play a role in the impact that cultural differences have on organizational processes (Aycan et al., 2000; Hofstede et al., 2010; Schaffer & Riordan, 2003). Accounting for these factors allows for a clearer picture of the relationship between culture and organizational processes to emerge.

External to the organization, factors including economics, politics, education, and industrialization can contribute to the organizational practices that are used in certain countries, which are sometimes entangled with cultural values (Aycan et al., 2000). Internal factors that have been controlled for in previous studies on culture include company size, industry, technology, and type of work. Additionally, some individual-level factors, such as age, gender and work experience are sometimes necessary to control for (Schaffer & Riordan, 2003). Given that the current study is centered on the recruitment process, those factors that may have an impact on how the process is carried out (e.g., available resources, how many individuals are being recruited) are included as controls. Externally, this includes wealth of the country. The organizational factor of company size is also be included as a control for this reason. Due to the fact that organizational practices may differ based on the location and culture of the company's headquarters, the extent to which the organizations within each country are local (headquartered in that country) is controlled for. Internally and at an individual level, work experience is controlled for to account for differences in recruiting individuals at different job levels.

### Rationale

The above review has demonstrated how culture may be related to various outcomes at two stages of recruitment (generating applicants and maintaining applicant status). The overall goal of the proposed research is to shed light on whether different strategies need to be taken by

organizations in order to recruit individuals of a certain culture. For example, it is proposed that attraction will decrease for individuals in STO cultures when an organization takes longer to get back to an applicant after submitting an application. If this finding is supported, organizations trying to attract applicants in STO cultures may need to be more cognizant of getting back to applicants in a timely manner in order for them to accept an offer. Thus, findings may have an effect on the types of decisions that are made by organizations in the recruitment process when trying to attract individuals of different cultures.

Given the above research, it is easy to see how recruitment would be impacted by culture. Because cultural values contribute to how individuals relate to others, prioritize different aspects of their life, and view the passing of time, it seems logical that different techniques for messaging job opportunities and interacting with candidates would be required to successfully attract and maintain applicants across cultures. Online job postings are now a major way that individuals gain information about an organization as use it to formulate opinions of the organization and the desirability of their job opportunities (Allen et al., 2007). Specifically, potential applicants use information gathered about job and organizational characteristics to form perceptions of whether or not they would fit with an organization (Chapman et al., 2005; Harold & Ployhart, 2008; Schneider et al., 1995). Individuals who perceive an organization to offer policies and practices that are congruent with their own personal values are more attracted and more likely to apply to opportunities at that organization. Thus, it seems likely that cultural values will result in decisions of whether or not to apply for a position based on the extent to which they perceive the organization to be congruent with these values.

In order to recruit individuals of different cultural backgrounds, organizations can incorporate messaging and recruitment structures that are targeted towards a certain culture's

needs. This is part of an organization's effort to increase organizational attraction and generate applicants, which is the first phase of the recruitment process (Barber, 1998). In studying this phase of the process, the current study looks at reasons for why applicants applied to a job, as well as how the amount of information in the posting and application length influence job pursuit intentions. Results will provide organizations guidance on how to structure recruitment materials in terms of content and length.

The current study proposes that individuals in different cultures will vary in terms of the reasons they apply for jobs. For instance, individuals of individualist cultures that emphasize getting ahead may be more likely to apply for jobs that support this goal through offering advancement opportunities. Additionally, because individuals in these cultures naturally put less emphasis on family life, they may be more likely to need workplace practices that support taking time out for family and apply to jobs for this reason. In terms of power distance, individuals in high power distance cultures are more attracted to organizations with good reputations, while developmental opportunities are not often an option. As a result, reputation should be a common reason for applying, while training should be much less common. Time orientation should also impact reasons for applying with individuals in LTO cultures, who value persistence and savings (future oriented), being more likely to apply to a job due to training, which allows investment in one's career. Similarly, individuals in collectivist cultures, who also value training, should be more likely to apply for this reason. Contrary to this, individuals in STO cultures who are more focused on immediate gratification and spending may be more likely to apply due to salary. Lastly, individuals in highly masculine cultures that value high earnings and advancement should be more likely to apply to organizations for the reasons of salary and advancement opportunities.

Once organizations are aware of top reasons for why individuals from certain cultures apply to jobs, they can incorporate this information in messaging to target their desired cultural group.

In addition to the type of information that is presented in the job posting, the amount of information may also need to be altered, based upon the type of culture that is targeted. Overall, lengthier job postings have been shown to result in greater attraction, with information specific to the job (vs. the organization) being more critical for impacting application intentions (Allen et al., 2007; Barber & Roehling, 1993; Yuce & Highhouse, 1998). Here, the amount of information that individuals perceive in the job posting should be positively related to job pursuit intentions, with the relationship being stronger for job information. Furthermore, because individuals in high uncertainty avoidance cultures prefer predictability and dislike ambiguous situations, it is likely that they will have a stronger preference to know more about a job opportunity than other cultures. As such, the relationship between posting length and job pursuit intentions should be stronger for cultures high in uncertainty avoidance. If significant, organizations targeting individuals from high uncertainty avoidance cultures will want to ensure there is sufficient job information in order to attract these applicants.

Application length is another factor that has an effect on recruitment outcomes and could differ between cultures. Because a long application delays the time between gaining information about the job (through the job posting) and submitting an application, the initiative of a job seeker to submit an application can be lost and results in lower overall application success for the organization (Cober et al., 2000). Given this, perceptions that an application is shorter should result in a greater number of applicants than when an application is perceived as longer. Because perceptions of time are central to the cultural value of time orientation, it seems likely that this relationship will be stronger for individuals of cultures who view lengthy processes as a “waste

of time” (i.e. STO cultures), as opposed to individuals of cultures who view time as fluid, continuous and exert greater persistence (e.g., LTO cultures). Findings here uncover the importance of using clear and simple job applications, which may be more critical when attracting individuals of STO cultures.

Once job seekers apply to a job, it is still important for an organization to communicate with applicants in a way that will encourage them to continue with the recruitment process and view the organization in a positive light. During this phase of maintaining applicants, the main goal is to persuade applicants to stay in the pool until a job offer is given (Barber, 1998). Positive perceptions of recruiters have been shown to be one of the most important determinants of whether individuals accept a job offer (Chapman et al., 2005). Thus, when recruiters are perceived to be more knowledgeable, enthusiastic, and professional job pursuit intentions and increases in organizational attraction should be higher. Culture should impact this to the extent that recruiter perceptions and outcomes may be stronger for collectivist cultures where individuals put more emphasis on relationships with others and have a higher need for affiliation. Although there is much research in this area, this study is the first to give employers insight into whether recruiter effects are more critical to manage in collectivist cultures.

Similar to recruiter perceptions, gaps in communication after submitting an application should have a negative impact on recruitment outcomes. This is based on findings indicating that applicants may attribute a lack of communication to disorganization or lack of consideration of the employer (Rynes et al., 1991; Saks & Uggerslev, 2010). This should be more critical for maintaining individuals in STO cultures who generally perceive waiting periods more negatively. Lack of knowledge of application status may also cause the relationship between communication and changes in attraction to be stronger for cultures high in uncertainty

avoidance, since these individuals are more likely to experience anxiety and stress in situations that are unclear. If significant, these results should signal to organizations that communication gaps are detrimental to effectively maintaining applicants of certain cultures.

As a whole, the above reasoning indicates that businesses may need to make recruitment decisions more strategically when recruiting individuals from different cultures. As globalization of business continues to increase, this ability to recruit individuals from different cultures becomes more and more critical. Over the past decade, organizations have been experiencing increased complexity in their business dealings in order to compete with organizations from different backgrounds. Multinational corporations (MNCs), who operate in multiple countries, face the challenge of attracting, managing, and retaining individuals from various cultures (Schuler & Rogocsky, 1998).

Management and human resources literature suggest that basing organizational decisions on the local environment, rather than headquarters, can lead to increased performance. This is because management practices that are congruent with the local culture are more likely to facilitate desired behavior from employees (Early, 1994; Newman & Nollen, 1996). In support of this, individuals in high uncertainty avoidance countries are more motivated by skill based and seniority pay, as it allows more control over outcomes, while individuals in individualist countries are motivated by individual, rather than team, incentives (Schuler & Rogocsky, 1998). In addition to compensation, research has indicated that culture may similarly impact various employment factors, such as selection procedures, teamwork, and communication, just to name a few (Aycaan et al., 2000; Ryan et al., 1999). Based on these findings, it also seems reasonable that culture may have an effect on what recruitment practices are most effective.

Despite the fact that there is evidence supporting the use of certain management and HR practices based on the culture in question, there is a lack of specific research extending this knowledge to the recruitment process, or events that take place prior to the individual becoming part of the organization. Researchers in the field of culture encourage investigating this area in order to close the gap and better guide practitioners in attracting and maintaining applicants in a global economy (Aycan, 2000; Budhwar & Sparrow, 2002; Ployhart, 2006; Ma & Allen, 2009; Stone et al., 2007). Having this knowledge will help managers in MNCs decide how to carry out recruitment procedures in the various countries in which they operate. Recruitment literature suggests that being able to effectively attract potential applicants early in the process leads to a greater number of job applicants and ability to choose more high quality applicants for the job (Bretz & Judge, 1998; Cable and Turban, 2003; Chapman et al., 2005; Rynes et al., 1991). Thus, culturally focused recruitment practices could have an impact on an organization's ability to build an employee pool of top performing talent in the industry, giving the organization a better chance at improving productivity and performance.

In order to investigate the effects of culture on recruitment, this dissertation utilizes existing survey data collected from job applicants on their experiences in applying for a job. This data includes insights into whether they successfully submitted an application, top reasons for applying to a specific job, perceptions of application length, whether they would recommend the job to a friend, and their perceptions of the organization based on interactions with personnel. Organizational attraction is assessed through determining why individuals applied and what attracted them to a position, as well as through ratings of how perceptions of the organization changed due to the recruiting process. Job pursuit intentions is the main variable determining the extent to which individuals are interested in the job based on the extent that they would

recommend the job to a friend. This item has been linked to the level of behavioral investment individuals have in a job opportunity and is also significantly related to organizational attraction and actual pursuit behavior (Highhouse et al., 2003). Previous recruitment literature from the past 20 years incorporates the measurement of both organizational attraction and job pursuit intentions, highlighting their importance in recruitment research (Chapman et al., 2005).

The above insights were collected as part of two separate surveys of independent samples of job board users. While the first survey assessed factors contributing to generating applicants (i.e., reasons for applying, effects of job posting information and application length), the second survey assessed factors relating to maintaining applicants (i.e., recruiter perceptions and effects of time delays). Both surveys were carried out in 10 countries overall, including the US, Canada, India, and 7 European countries. Hofstede's existing cultural value scores are applied to survey data so that each country is coded with a country score for each cultural dimension.

#### Statement of Hypotheses

Hypothesis I. Reasons for applying to a job should differ by culture, such that:

Hypothesis Ia. Individuals from collectivist cultures will be more likely to choose training as a reason for applying than individuals from individualist cultures.

Hypothesis Ib. Individuals from individualist cultures will be more likely to choose advancement opportunities as a reason for applying than individuals from collectivist cultures.

Hypothesis Ic. Individuals from individualist cultures will be more likely to choose work-life balance as a reason for applying than individuals from collectivist cultures.

Hypothesis Id. Individuals from high power distance cultures will be more likely to choose reputation as a reason for applying than individuals in low power distance cultures.

Hypothesis Ie. Individuals from high power distance cultures will be less likely to choose training as a reason for applying than individuals in low power distance cultures.

Hypothesis If. Individuals from STO cultures will be more likely to choose salary as a reason for applying than individuals from LTO cultures.

Hypothesis Ig. Individuals from LTO cultures will be more likely to choose training as a reason for applying than individuals from STO cultures.

Hypothesis Ih. Individuals in masculine cultures will be more likely than individuals in feminine cultures to choose salary as a reason for applying to a job.

Hypothesis Ii. Individuals in masculine cultures will be more likely than individuals in feminine cultures to choose advancement opportunities as a reason for applying to a job.

Hypothesis II. Amount of information in a job posting will be related to job pursuit intentions such that:

Hypothesis IIa. A lack of job-related information will lead to lower job pursuit intentions.

Hypothesis IIb. A lack of job-related information will lead to lower job pursuit intentions than a lack of company-related information.

Hypothesis IIc. The relationship between job posting information and job pursuit intentions will be moderated by uncertainty avoidance, such that there will be a strong, negative relationship when uncertainty avoidance is high and a weak negative relationship when uncertainty avoidance is low.

Hypothesis III. Application length will impact recruitment outcomes such that:

Hypothesis IIIa. Individuals in STO cultures will be more likely to fail to submit an application because it took too long to complete than individuals in LTO cultures.

Hypothesis IIIb. Application length will be negatively related to job pursuit intention.

Hypothesis IIIc. The relationship between job pursuit intentions and application length will be moderated by time orientation, such that there will be a strong negative relationship when time orientation is low and weak negative relationship when time orientation is high.

Hypothesis IV. Perceptions of organizational representative's knowledge, enthusiasm, and professionalism will be related to job pursuit intentions and changes in organizational attraction such that:

Hypothesis IVa. Perceptions of representative's knowledge, enthusiasm and professionalism will be positively related to job pursuit intentions.

Hypothesis IVb. The relationship between representative perceptions and job pursuit intentions will be moderated by individualism, such that there will be a strong, positive relationship when individualism is low and a weak positive relationship when individualism is high.

Hypothesis IVc. Perceptions of representative's knowledge, enthusiasm and professionalism will be positively related to changes in organizational attraction.

Hypothesis IVd. The relationship between representative perceptions and changes in organizational attraction will be moderated by individualism, such that there will be a strong, positive relationship when individualism is low and a weak positive relationship when individualism is high.

Hypothesis V. Length of time between submitting an application and being invited to interview will vary by time orientation, such that time delays will be longer for individuals in LTO cultures than for individuals in STO cultures.

Hypothesis VI. Time delays will be related to job pursuit intentions and changes in organizational attraction such that:

Hypothesis VIa. Time delays will be negatively related to job pursuit intentions.

Hypothesis VIb. The relationship between time delay and pursuit intentions will be moderated by culture, such that there will be a strong, negative relationship when time orientation is low and a weak, negative relationship when time orientation is high.

Hypothesis VIc. Time delays will be negatively related to changes in organizational attraction.

Hypothesis VIId. The relationship between time delay and changes in organizational attraction will be moderated by culture, such that there will be a strong, negative relationship when time orientation is high and a weak, negative relationship when time orientation is low.

## CHAPTER II

### METHOD

#### Research Participants

The current study utilized two independent sets of archival data based on two separate surveys of users of a major online job board. Each user has attempted to apply to a job posting in one of the following countries: U.S., Canada, U.K., India, Germany, Sweden, France, Spain, Italy, or Greece. All individuals have visited the job board website in their respective country and have either searched for a job posting or registered with the job board by providing their employment history. Following this, they viewed a particular job posting, clicked an “Apply Now” link and were prompted to enter an email address in order to continue onto the application. These emails were used by the job board to send the Applicant Experience Survey 1 (AES 1), which is sent within 24 hours of clicking “Apply Now”, and Survey 2 (AES 2), which is sent 28 days after clicking “Apply Now”. Thus, only users who provided their email after being prompted had the opportunity to receive a survey and be included in the current study. As only a small percentage (less than 1%) of participants completed both AES 1 and AES 2, these individuals were removed from the analyses to maintain sample independence.

Data collection for AES 1 and AES 2 began in March of 2009 for the U.S. and was deployed internationally in the U.K. (July 2009), Sweden (October 2009), France, and Greece (December 2009). Following this, India, Spain, and Italy were launched in February of 2010 and Germany in March of 2010. Between the launch dates up to June, 2011, AES 1 and 2 were sent to 29 million and 22 million job seekers, respectively. While AES 1 has 2.3 million respondents, for a response rate of 8.1%, AES 2 has 1 million respondents for a response rate of 4.5%. The number of total respondents for AES 1 and 2, respectfully, are as follows: U.S. (2.1 million and 1

million), Italy (86,000 and 19,000), Spain (66,400 and 11,000), Sweden (23,500 and 8,800), France (15,500 and 4,330), U.K. (11,000 and 2,613), Greece (9,800 and 3,662), India (6,100 and 1,261), Canada (31,776 and 14,829), and Germany (5,400 and 472).

Due to the large amount of data available and substantial differences in sample size between countries, not all survey respondents were included in the study. Decreasing the sample size reduced the chance of rejecting the null hypothesis in error and making incorrect interpretations of the findings (e.g., Type II error; Cohen, 1992). Respondents for AES 1 were reduced by selecting only individuals who took the surveys between January 2011 and August 2011 and had completed all or most survey questions. This resulted in roughly 1,000 participants in each country for AES 1, which varied somewhat by country: Canada (1,079), France (1,009), Germany (988), Greece (1,144), India (835), Italy (1,204), Spain (964), Sweden (1,107), UK (1,500), US (1,127). Because the AES 2 questions included in the study require respondents to have passed through the generating applicants phase (i.e., were invited to interview), this substantially reduced the initial AES 2 sample size for many countries. Thus, completion date was not included as criteria and all responses collected between March 2009 and August 2011 were included. The number of AES 2 respondents who completed all or most questions also varied by country: Canada (522), France (381), Germany (33), Greece (253), India (87), Italy (307), Spain (521), Sweden (263), UK (144), US (499). Only Germany fell below the recommended sample size of 60 respondents for multi-level analysis (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007).

For the AES 1 sample, there was a greater percentage of male respondents (60%) than female (40%). Because race was not included as a demographic question for all countries, and was an optional question, race is only available for half (48%) of the sample. Of the countries

that included the race question (all but France, Greece, and Sweden) respondents were primarily White/Caucasian (65%), followed by Asian (13%), Hispanic (9%), Other (7%) and Black/African American (6%). A variety of industries are represented, with the greatest proportion of respondents coming from the Administration and Support (24%) and Professional, Scientific and Technical (16%) industries, with all other industries representing less than 5% of respondents. The mean age of respondents was 36 and the majority of respondents were new to the workforce with over half (53%) having less than 10 years of experience and 38% having less than 5 years. A quarter of respondents (25%) had over 20 years of experience, while 21% had between 10-20 years of experience. The majority of respondents were highly educated, with 21% having a college degree and 32% having a graduate level degree. The remainder had some college (12%) high school degrees (21%) did not finish college (5%), or cited a different education level (6%). Nearly half of AES 1 respondents (45%) are currently employed full time, while 39% are unemployed, 8% are part time and 5% are contractors.

Respondents of AES 2 were similarly distributed between males (60%) and females (40%). Of those who indicated a race, the majority were White/Caucasian (61%), followed by Asian (15%), Hispanic (11%), Black/African American (9%) and Other (4%). There was less variability in industry for AES 2, with over half of respondents (52%) coming from the Administrative and support industry and all other industries accounting for less than 10% of respondents. While the mean age of respondents was 30 years, 27% had over 20 years of experience and 30% had less than 10 years. Similar to the AES 1 sample, 25% have a college degree and 27% have a graduate level degree. The remainder had some college (13%) a high school degree (27%) did not finish college (10%), or cited a different education level (5%). As

compared with AES 1, fewer AES 2 respondents were employed full time (26%) and a higher number were unemployed (37%), while 7% were part time and 4% were contractors.

The respondents in the study fit with both the study purpose and recommendations for cross-cultural research. Overall, the realistic nature of the study increases the chances that the results will generalize to the overall populations of interest. Because respondents of the current study are actual job seekers who are trying to apply to jobs, they are in the best position to be answering questions about the application process. This demonstrates ecological validity, which increases the chances that the results will be externally valid, due to decreases in factors such as demand characteristics (Singleton & Straits, 2005). The result is a higher probability that participant responses will represent real reactions to the recruitment process more so than if the study was carried out with a less realistic sample.

### Archival Variables

In order to incorporate the variables of culture and country wealth, country scores from an external database were applied to each country. Specifically for culture, Hofstede's most recent value dimension scores (from Hofstede et al., 2010) were applied to the respective country (see Table 1). Hofstede's determination of the country level of each dimension (high, low, medium) was utilized to categorize individuals as either high or low on a certain dimension where necessary. Because only countries that are high or low on a dimension were included in Hypotheses I, IIIa, and V, Table 1 indicates which countries were included in those hypotheses.

As mentioned in the literature review, there are limitations that need to be addressed regarding the use of Hofstede's model. Specifically, many criticize the practice of applying Hofstede's country scores to individuals from a separate study and using them as a proxy for measuring culture.

TABLE 1

Inclusion of countries in hypotheses and Hofstede's cultural dimension scores

Country	HI	HIIIa, HV	Individualism	Power Distance	Uncertainty Avoidance	Masculinity	Long Term
UK	Y	Y	89 H	35 L	35 L	66 H	51 H
Germany	Y	Y	67 H	35 L	65 M	66 H	83 H
Sweden	Y	Y	71 H	31 L	29 L	5 L	52 M
Italy	Y	N	76 H	50 M	75 H	70 H	61 M
Greece	Y	N	35 L	60 M	112 H	57 M	45 M
Spain	N	N	51 M	57 M	86 H	42 M	48 M
Canada	Y	Y	80 H	39 L	48 M	52 M	36 L
US	Y	Y	91 H	40 L	46 L	62 H	26 L
France	Y	Y	71 H	68 H	86 H	43 M	63 M
India	Y	Y	48 M	77 H	40 L	56 M	51 M

Note. Hypotheses not listed in this table include all countries listed, with the exception of Hypothesis IIa, which does not include country data. Abbreviations L, H, and M denote whether dimension scores are Low, Medium or High, respectively, based on Hofstede's research of the above countries. Y = Yes; N = No.

This is the case in the present study where culture is not directly measured, but is assumed based on the scores of Hofstede's (1980) database. While the reasons for this were explained in more detail earlier, the main concern is that Hofstede's original sample from which the model was based may be inconsistent with current national trends and norms, as well as from the current population being studied (Schaffer & Riordan, 2003). Additionally, many argue that examining differences between nations or countries is not equivalent to assessing cultural differences.

Despite these limitations, Hofstede's model is the most comprehensive set of value measures available and the country scores have been used as a proxy for culture in 79% of the cross-cultural studies included in Schaffer and Riordan's (2003) review. Additionally, these scores are said to reflect common long-held values that are broadly descriptive of a nation as a whole, rather than values that may be more heterogeneous within a certain society (Sivakumar & Nakata, 2001). In support of the theory that country can validly represent culture, Smith and Schwartz (1997) studied 13 countries and found that nation as a factor accounted for three times more cultural variance than any within country variable such as age, gender, and education. Hofstede (2001) argues that it is nearly impossible to test cultural differences in a way that does not involve comparisons between nations, as societal norms are highly ingrained within specific countries.

While taking both sides of the argument into consideration and to ensure the interpretability of cultural differences in the present study, several methods were used that are recommended in the literature when Hofstede's scores are applied to a different sample. Sivakumar and Nakata (2001) suggest that many of pitfalls of this method can be avoided by sampling based on maximum differences. This involves using multiple countries that differ on extremes in terms of cultural dimensions. The current study upholds this recommendation by including 10 different countries that vary on each of Hofstede's cultural dimensions such that at least one country is coded as high on a dimension, while at least one other country is coded low on the same dimension. In testing differences between cultures, only those countries scoring high and those scoring low were compared (leaving out any medium scoring nations), thus maximizing the opportunity for true differences to emerge. Effect sizes of between country

differences were observed in order to ensure that there is enough variation between countries to make any attributions based on culture (Spector et al., 2007).

Aside from the above, other strategies were implemented to increase the likelihood of isolating cultural differences. This included controlling for country factors other than culture (e.g., wealth) in order to eliminate alternative explanations for why differences may emerge (Sivakumar & Nakata, 2001). Involving multiple cultural dimensions, rather than focusing on just one type of dimension (e.g., individualism vs. collectivism) is also recommended in order to ensure that differences are attributed to the correct dimension. The current study followed both of these suggestions by incorporating control variables and studying the cross-cultural literature in order to best hypothesize when each cultural dimension would be most relevant to a recruitment situation, rather than applying one dimension to all situations. Given these precautions, the present research has followed the best possible method for applying Hofstede's cultural scores, while also recognizing the reasons for why this method is not optimal. In addition to these steps, results are interpreted while considering the known model constraints.

### Measured Variables

The majority of variables were measured through AES 1 (Appendix A) and AES 2 (Appendix B) surveys that were administered to two independent samples online. The surveys were created to assess clients' current application processes and opportunities for improvements. While AES 1 data was used in analyzing hypotheses relating to generating applicants (I through III), AES 2 data corresponded to hypotheses for maintaining applicants (IV-V). With the exception of one question, all questions included as a variable in the current study were asked of individuals who successfully completed the application process.

## AES 1

*Reasons for Applying.* What attracted respondents to an organization was assessed using the following question: “What were the top 3 reasons you applied for the position”.

Respondents selected three reasons out of a list of 16 employment factors that were identified as factors that job seekers look for in employment opportunities. Only responses to five of the factors (salary, advancement opportunities, work-life balance, training, and reputation) were considered in this study.

*Amount of Information.* Whether there was enough information about the job and company was assessed with the question: “Did you think the amount of information on the job posting was sufficient in illustrating the job and company?” Respondents selected one out of the five following options: “Yes, the job posting was very thorough”, “It was pretty good but I would have liked to have seen more information about the job”, “It was pretty good but I would have liked to have seen more information about the company”, “No, I would like to have seen a lot more information”, and “No, the amount of information was overwhelming”. Although this variable was included as a categorical variable, only certain options above were relevant to the hypotheses and were utilized during analysis. Differences between amount of job and company information were assessed by looking at the second and third options (Hypothesis IIa), while impact of not having enough information in general was assessed through the fourth option (Hypothesis IIb).

*Application Length.* The following question was used to measure perceptions of application length for successful applicants: “In comparison to other jobs for which you applied, rate the length of the application”. Response options included: “It was about the same as others”, “On average, it was longer than others”, and “On average, it was shorter than others”. For

unsuccessful applicants, the question “What deterred you from applying to a position” was utilized to determine the extent that application length effects failing to submit an application after clicking “Apply Now”. Only the response “Application was too long” was included in the hypothesis. This is the only question in the study that assessed responses from individuals who did not successfully submit an application.

*Job Pursuit Intentions.* Job pursuit intentions were assessed with the item “Based on your experience with {insert company name}, how likely are you to recommend this company to a colleague or friend”. Respondents rated the likelihood of recommending a colleague or friend on an eleven-point scale ranging from 0 (*not at all likely*) to 11 (*extremely likely*). Utilizing this item as a measure of job pursuit intentions is supported by findings from Highhouse et al. (2003), as recommending the company to someone demonstrates the extent to which a job seeker will take action on the information they obtained about a job.

#### AES 2

*Time Delay.* The following question was used in determining the gap in communication between submitting the application online and being asked to interview for the position: “How much time passed between submitting your application and receiving the invitation to begin the interview process?” Response options included: “1-3 days”, “4-7 days”, “between 1-2 weeks”, “between 2-3 weeks”, “between 3-4 weeks”, and not sure. This variable was treated as a continuous variable in the present analyses ranging from a scale of 1 (*1-3 days*) and 5 (*between 3-4 weeks*).

*Representative Perceptions.* Perceptions of company representatives was analyzed with the item asking respondents the extent that they agree that “The representative was knowledgeable regarding the company and the position”, “The representative was enthusiastic

about the company as an employer of choice”, and “The representative was professional in his/her communication”. Each item was rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*Strongly disagree*) to 5 (*Strongly agree*). The reliability of these items was tested to determine whether they could be combined into one scale. Based on a coefficient alpha of .86, the reliability supports combining the three items into one Recruiter Perceptions Index, which was used when testing the hypotheses for recruiter perceptions.

*Change in Organizational Attraction.* Change in organizational attraction was assessed based on the question: “As a result of the communication from {insert company name}, has your perception of the company changed?” Respondents selected one of the following options: “I have a better opinion of {insert company name}”, “I have a worse opinion of {insert company name}”, and “My opinion is unchanged”. This question was asked only of those individuals who have communicated with a representative of the organization. The item was recoded into a dummy variable for the purpose of testing the hypothesis, such that “I have a better opinion” was compared to the two other options.

*Job Pursuit Intentions.* Job pursuit intentions was assessed using the same eleven-point rating scale that was described for AES 1.

### Control variables

The demographic variable of work experience was self-reported by the survey respondents (see Appendices A and B). Company size was obtained through the job board’s proprietary information for each client organization. Each organization was categorized as small (1 to 1,999 employees), medium (2,000 to 9,999 employees), or large (10,000 or more employees), based on the number of employees. Gross national income was determined for each country using an external database (e.g., <http://data.worldbank.org>). The extent that the

companies were headquartered in the country of interest was determined using the job board's proprietary data as well as Hoovers.com by calculating the percentage of companies within each country that were headquartered locally.

### Procedure

The data utilized in the study is proprietary information from one of the largest job boards in the world, having more than 23 million unique visitors to the website each month. Individuals use the site to search for job opportunities by visiting the website and entering information relevant to their job search (e.g., keyword, title, location). Users have an option of registering with the site by providing information about their educational background and employment history and have the choice uploading a resume. Roughly 25 percent of the US workforce has used the job board to search for a job opportunity. Although the organization is based in the U.S., it has host sites in Canada, UK, India, Sweden, France, Belgium, Netherlands, Spain, Italy, Greece, China, Mexico and Singapore.

### Survey development

AES 1 and AES 2 were created to assist organizations in identifying opportunities to strengthen their recruitment strategy and better attract quality talent. Thus, items were designed in a way that would promote consultative recommendations. In creating the surveys, the recruitment process was studied and several key themes were identified which represent portions of the process that employers would want to measure. These themes include employment brand (i.e., perceptions of the organization as an employer), applicant demographics, job advertisement, recruitment team, and technology. Following theme creation, items were written which assess organizational effectiveness of the employer on each theme. Prior to launching the

surveys, they were piloted to job seekers and items were adjusted based on preliminary results. After finalizing the items, the surveys were launched as a product in the U.S.

After several months of data collection in the U.S., the product was launched globally. In doing this, eight countries with strong job board partnerships were identified and surveys were translated into the corresponding languages. Using the back-translation methods suggested by Brislin (1980) items were translated by experts fluent in both English and the respective language. These translations were then translated back into English by a separate expert and disparities in meaning were corrected where necessary using collaborative methods. In some cases, questions or response options in the U.S. did not make sense to include in certain versions. In dealing with these issues, questions were either removed or modified to be appropriate in the native country. For example, educational categories vary slightly by nation, resulting in different options for each country.

The primary question format for both versions of AES is multiple choice, which allow respondents to quickly and effectively report on their experience when applying to a job. In most cases, only one item is used to measure the effectiveness of an organization on a recruitment situation. Although not the ideal for research purposes, this type of strategy allows clients to assess where they stand in a variety of different recruitment areas, while allowing respondents to report on various recruitment situations in a short amount of time. A large drawback to having single items measures is the inability to assess reliability of most measures, which is a pre-requisite to criterion validity, or being confident that survey responses predict the intended outcome (Cronbach, 1961). Because of this, previous research has greatly questioned the use of single-item measures in scientific research.

Despite this, findings relating to measurement of job satisfaction, as well as branding effectiveness have demonstrated that single-item measures have both acceptable reliability and validity when used appropriately (Bergkvist & Rossiter, 2007; Wanous, Reichers, & Hudy, 1997). Additionally, there are specific situations where multiple items may not be needed, such as when the construct being measured is both narrow and unambiguous (Sackett & Larson, 1990). This readily relates to the current study, as respondents answered questions about a specific job and company that was applied to within 24 hours. Furthermore, Rossiter (2002) states that single-item measures are appropriate under two conditions: (1) the object of the construct is singular and is easily and uniformly imagined, and (2) the attribute of the construct is easily and uniformly imagined. Again, the present research seems to have met both of these qualifications. For example, in the case where respondents rated their change in opinion of an organization, the object (the organization) is both singular and easily imaged, while the attribute (worse, better, or same opinion) is also easy to imagine. Other questions on the survey also met these requirements, due to the fact that respondents were reacting to a direct experience with a recent event.

Situations where multiple items are needed involve more complex and ambiguous psychological constructs, such as ratings of personality (Wanous et al., 1997). As none of the present survey questions relate to complex psychological constructs, the use of single items measures was appropriate. However, a noted limitation was the inability to estimate reliability due to the format of the survey questions. In cases where the attribute of the survey construct (e.g., change in opinion) is fairly concrete, research argues that alpha reliability is not relevant, as multiple items are not needed. However this may not equally be the case for each question.

Thus, this limitation was considered when interpreting the relationships between the study variables.

#### Data collection

Job seekers were invited to take the AES surveys based on whether the job posting they visited was purchased in conjunction with the AES product. In support of this method, an automated tool was used to “tag” job postings that were associated with the purchase of AES. This tool automatically caused a pop-up window to appear when the “Apply Now” link on the “tagged” posting was clicked by a job seeker, prompting users to enter their personal email address. Users were not linked to the organization’s application until an email address was entered. After entering their email, individuals were brought to the online application (hosted by the client organization), where they had a choice of completing and submitting the application.

Emails collected from the automated pop-up window were stored in the job board’s database. A separate automated tool was used to send emails with a link to AES 1 to those email addresses within 24 hours of entering it on the site and AES 2 to those who entered their email address 28 days prior. Once the survey invitation was sent, the email address was tagged in the database as having received AES 1 or AES 2, in order to prevent the same survey from being sent to users for another two weeks. Thus, users should have been sent AES 1 and AES 2 for the first job they attempted to apply for that was associated with the purchase of the product. Those who chose not to complete AES 1 were still sent AES 2 nearly a month later, making the samples independent of one another.

Survey invites included the link to either AES1 or AES2 (see Appendix B). The invite described the survey as pertaining to a recent application and ensures that the study is voluntary, confidential, and part of an effort that the job board is taking to help improve the job search

experience. No incentives were offered for participation. Clicking on the survey link took respondents to the online survey tool hosted by a third party where they could opt to complete the survey questions. Following completion of the survey, participants were brought to a landing page where they were thanked for their time. Survey data was first stored within the third party site was later transferred to the job board data warehouse.

### Measurement equivalence

A critical step in cross-cultural research involves establishing measurement equivalence, or the extent to which measurement outcomes are comparable and free from bias. When requirements for measurement equivalence are met, it is safe to assume that study outcomes have the same meaning within and across cultures (Vandenberg & Lance, 2000). Demonstrating measurement equivalence can involve many approaches. One of the most accepted approaches is outlined by Vandenberg and Lance (2000), which involves a 6-step framework for testing equivalence. However, their framework is limited to multi-item measures and testing equivalence for latent constructs. Because the current study involved only single measured items that pertain to a direct experience, rather than latent variables, this framework does not apply. Similar to understanding the reliability of a measure, measurement equivalence becomes more critical when assessing complex psychological constructs, rather than more concrete ones (Matsumoto & Van de Vijver, 2011). For example, it is more likely that cultures will differ on how a personality dimension is interpreted, rather than stating reasons for why they applied to a specific job posting. For this reason, not being able to conduct such an analysis should not be a large threat to the interpretation for the present study. However, it is important that differences in perceived meaning between cultures is not overlooked. Thus, other strategies were used in meeting the requirements of equivalence that are more appropriate for the study variables.

Reducing construct inequivalence in cross-cultural research, or lack of shared meaning of study constructs, should involve back-translation techniques (Brislin, 1980; Vandenberg & Lance, 2000). These techniques were carried out in constructing both AES 1 and AES2, as explained earlier. Here, individuals with expertise in the culture and language of the countries involved were consulted on the meaning of the study items. In cases where meaning differed between the U.S. and the outside country, question wording was altered to attain equivalence. Additionally, as recommended by cross-cultural researchers, surveys were piloted in each country and results were reviewed by expert translators to ensure that outcomes were comparable across cultures (Matsumoto & Van de Vijver, 2011).

Structural equivalence is another important aspect, which involves testing whether latent variables have the same factor structure across groups. Again, because the current study used single-item measured variables, this test was not feasible or appropriate. However, response styles are one factor that may contribute to bias but can be controlled in the current study. This is especially the case when measurement scales (e.g., Likert type items), are used, since acquiescence has been shown to occur more in certain cultures than others. Although this was of some concern in the present study, findings have demonstrated that difference in response styles between cultures are reduced when 10-point scales are used, rather than 5-point scales (Matsumoto & Van de Vijver, 2011). Since the main dependent variable of job pursuit intentions was rated on an 11-point scale, this format should have reduced extreme differences in acquiescence and potential bias.

## CHAPTER III

### RESULTS

#### Variable Descriptions

Prior to testing the study hypotheses, data were examined to ensure that the necessary assumptions were met for carrying out the proposed analyses. In all cases, data from AES 1 and AES 2 met requirements for linearity and heteroscedasticity. Additionally, there is no evidence of multicollinearity between variables and there were no outliers. In instances where variables did not meet the assumption for normality, transformations were performed resulting in normal distribution of all variables as evidenced by the Shapiro-Wilk statistic ( $p < .01$ ). For the AES 1 data set, variable transformations were carried out for the positively skewed variables of power distance, wealth and time orientation and the negatively skewed variables of masculinity and pursuit intention. For AES 2, positively skewed variables of country wealth, company size, and recruiter perceptions and negatively skewed variables of individualism, masculinity, and pursuit intentions were transformed. Once transformed, these variables were used in all subsequent analyses.

Dummy coding was utilized for several variables to isolate response options that were of special interest in the current study. For AES 1, amount of information in the job posting was dummy coded for Hypotheses IIa and IIc, where “not enough job information” was entered as “1” and all other responses were entered as “0”. The two variables assessing application length were coded into dummy variables such that for individuals who did not apply to a job, responses for “the application was too long” was entered as “1” and all other responses were entered as “0”, while for individuals who did apply, responses for “the application was longer than others” was entered as “1” and all other responses were entered as “0”. In AES 2 data, the outcome

variable of change in organizational attraction was dummy coded such that “I have a better opinion of {company}” was coded as “1” and all other responses were coded as “0”. Descriptive statistics and correlations of the study variables included in the regression analyses can be seen in Tables 2 and 3. Overall, effect sizes for AES 2 were much larger than AES 1, suggesting that recruitment experiences in the maintaining applicants phase has a bigger impact on recruitment outcomes than experiences during generating applicants.

### Analytical Approach

Parts of Hypotheses II, III, IV, and VI predicted that the relationship between perceptions of the recruitment process and recruitment outcomes would be moderated by culture. In order to test these predictions, an unconditional means model was entered using HLM 7 software to determine whether country differences on the outcome variables exist and that HLM is an appropriate test of the study hypotheses. For the AES 1 model, pursuit intentions was entered as the dependent variable without entering predictor variables ( $Pursuit_{ij} = \gamma_{00} + u_{0j} + r_{ij}$ ) and was statistically significant ( $u_0$  variance = .01),  $\chi^2(9) = 349.01, p < .01$ . Between group variance explained by the model, known as the intraclass correlation (ICC), was calculated  $\tau_{00}/(\tau_{00} + \sigma^2) = .01/ (.01 + .39) = .032$ , suggesting that only 3% of variance in pursuit intentions is due to between country differences.

TABLE 2

Means, standard deviations and intercorrelations of AES 1 variables

Measures	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5
1. Pursuit Intentions	1.87	.65	-				
2. Work Experience	3.43	1.86	-.02				
3. Company Size	.36	.46	.08**	-.15**			
4. Posting Information	.24	.42	-.12**	-.04**	.05**		
5. Application Length	1.16	.37	-.03**	-.04**	.07**	.06**	-

 $N = 10,777$ \*  $p < .05$  \*\*  $p < .01$

TABLE 3

Means, standard deviations and intercorrelations of AES 2 variables

Measure	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Pursuit Intentions	1.94	.71	-								
2. Organizational Attraction	.37	.48	.48**								
3. Experience	4.15	1.68	.02	-.09**							
4. Company Size	.74	.30	.03	.01	-.01						
5. Knowledge	.70	.30	.39**	.28**	-.03	-.05*					
6. Enthusiasm	.66	.31	.40**	.30**	.05*	-.08**	.67**				
7. Professionalism	.74	.30	.46**	.32**	.03	-.00	.65**	.64**			
8. Recruiter Perceptions	2.10	.80	.48**	.34**	.02	-.05*	.88**	.88**	.87**		
9. Time Delay	2.59	1.27	-.02	-.04*	.01	-.03	-.08**	-.08**	-.08**	-.09**	-

 $N = 2,446$ \*  $p < .05$  \*\*  $p < .01$

The same process was carried out for AES 2 ( $Pursuit_{ij} = \gamma_{00} + u_{0j} + r_{ij}$ ) where the unconditional means model was specified and between group variance was significant ( $u_0$  variance = .01),  $\chi^2(9) = 45.63, p < .01$ . The ICC was calculated  $\tau_{00}/(\tau_{00} + \sigma^2) = .01/ (.01 + .49) = .016$ , indicating an even smaller group effect for pursuit intentions. Because change in organizational attraction is a dichotomous outcome variable, an unconditional means model was tested using the Bernolli method for predicting binary outcomes in HLM ( $Change_{ij} = \gamma_{00} + u_{0j}$ ), which was significant ( $u_0$  variance = .12),  $\chi^2(9) = 56.49, p < .01$ . Because the ICC could not be carried out for this model, an unconditional means model was also specified using HLM for normally distributed (continuous) variables in order to gauge variance explained between countries. Although these results are likely skewed due to using normal methods, this resulted in an ICC of 1.46% ( $\tau_{00}/(\tau_{00} + \sigma^2) = .00/ (.00 + .12) = .0146$ ).

Despite statistically significant group variance components for the unconditional means models, ICCs lower than 10% suggest that there was not adequate variance between groups to constitute the use of a nested analytical model (Kahn, 2011). Low ICCs in the current study (between 1 and 3 percent) suggested that there were not substantial between country differences in the way individuals evaluate organizations during the application process in terms of pursuit intentions and change in organizational attraction. Because of this, level 2 predictors were not included in the models predicting pursuit intentions and change in organizational attraction and other analytical strategies were employed. Further, hypotheses predicting pursuit intentions and change in organizational attraction that included the level 2 predictors of culture could not be tested. In support of this approach, HLM was conducted as originally planned and there were no significant effects of level 2 variables. As a result, ordinary least squares (OLS) regression was used to test hypotheses predicting pursuit intentions. Binary logistic regression was used to test

the hypotheses predicting change in organizational attraction. Binary logistic regression was appropriate due to the fact that dichotomous dependent variables (i.e., change in organizational attraction) violates the normality and equal variances assumptions in OLS regression (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007).

### Test of Hypotheses

#### Hypothesis I

The first hypothesis predicted that individuals in different cultures would vary in the reasons that they apply to organizations. Because this involved testing the difference in proportion of a certain variable between two populations, Z-tests were carried out to test Hypotheses Ia through Id. Results of the Z-tests can be seen in Table 4. Individuals in collectivist and individualist cultures were hypothesized to differ in that individuals from collectivist countries would be more likely to apply for reasons of training (Hypothesis Ia), while individuals from individualist cultures would be more likely to apply for reasons of advancement opportunities (Hypothesis Ib) and work-life balance (Hypothesis Ic). Based on Hofstede's cultural dimension scores, individuals from UK, Germany, Sweden, Italy, Canada, US, and France were grouped as the individualist independent variable (IV), while Greece was included as the collectivist IV. A Z-test was used to test the difference of the proportion of individuals selecting the dependent variables (DVs) of training, advancement opportunities, and work-life balance between the individualist and collectivist groups. Results indicated support for Hypothesis Ic, as individuals from individualist countries (12.4%) were significantly more likely to choose work-life balance as a reason for applying than individuals in collectivist countries (7.6%).

TABLE 4

Percentage differences between high and low culture groups in reasons for applying to a job

Reason	Percent Chosen	Individualism	Power Distance	Uncertainty Avoidance	Time Orientation	Masculinity
Training	2.3	1.7	-0.7	-3.3*	0.0	0.7
Advancement	24.6	-22.6*	4.9*	16.8*	-6.3*	8.5*
Work-life balance	11.8	4.8*	0.2	1.1	-9.2*	3.6
Reputation	20.0	-21.2*	-4.8*	7.0*	-2.2	10.2*
Salary	17.2	12.0*	14.3*	-5.3*	2.8	4.3*
Interesting Assignments	26.3	-16.5*	0.4	14.3*	8.9*	-20.7*

Note:  $N=3,623$ . Values were calculated by subtracting the percentage of low culture group individuals from the percentage of high culture group individuals; negative values indicate that low culture groups had a higher percentage of individuals selecting a reason than high culture groups.

\*  $p < .05$

However, Hypotheses Ia and Ib were not supported, as there was no significant difference between cultures in selecting training and, contrary to the hypothesis, individuals in collectivist cultures (44.6%) were more likely than individuals in individualist cultures (18.4%) to select advancement opportunities.

In order to increase the interpretability of testing the difference between a single country and multiple culturally similar countries, an additional Z-test was carried out with the US as the individualist country (as it is the highest scoring individualist country) and Greece as the collectivist country. Although it is not optimal, this strategy of comparing maximum differences can be used when testing cultural differences (Sivakumar & Nakata, 2001). Findings using this method resulted in the same outcomes for hypotheses Ib and Ic, as individuals from Greece were more likely to choose advancement opportunities than individuals from the US, while the opposite was found for selecting work-life balance. However, when comparing the two countries on training, individuals in the US were more likely to choose training than individuals in Greece, which is contrary to what was hypothesized. Thus, Hypothesis Ic was consistently supported, while Hypotheses Ia and Ib was not.

In terms of power distance, it was proposed that individuals from high power distance countries would be more likely to choose reputation (Hypothesis Id), and less likely to choose training (Hypothesis Ie) as reasons for applying to a job. In testing this, individuals from France and India were grouped as the high power distance IV, while individuals from the UK, Germany, Sweden, Canada, and US were grouped as the low power distance IV. The Z-test indicated that neither hypothesis was supported, as individuals from low power distance countries (22.0%) were more likely to choose reputation than individuals from high power distance countries (17.2%) and there was no difference between individuals in choosing training.

Hypotheses regarding time orientation predicted that individuals from STO cultures would be more likely to choose salary as a reason for applying than individuals from LTO cultures (Hypothesis If), while individuals from LTO cultures would be more likely to choose training as a reason for applying than individuals from STO cultures (Hypothesis Ig). In testing this, individuals from India were grouped as the LTO IV and individuals from UK, Germany, Sweden, Canada, US, and France were grouped as the STO IV. Z-tests indicated that Hypotheses If and Ig were not supported, due to the fact that there was no significant difference between the groups for either salary or training. Similar to Hypotheses Ia through Ic, additional Z-tests were carried out with the US as the STO country and Germany as the LTO country. Similar to the above findings, individuals from the US and Germany did not differ in terms of selecting either salary or training.

The remaining hypotheses for Hypothesis I predicted that individuals in masculine cultures would be more likely than individuals in feminine cultures to choose salary (Hypothesis Ih) and advancement opportunities (Hypothesis Ii) as reasons for applying to a job. In testing this, individuals from UK, Germany, Italy, and US were included in the masculine IV, while individuals from Sweden were grouped as the feminine IV. Tests of Z-scores indicated support for both Hypotheses Ih and Ii, as individuals in masculine cultures were more likely to choose salary and advancement (15.4%, 20.1%) as reasons for applying than individuals in feminine cultures (11.1%, 11.6%). To increase the interpretability of the findings, additional Z-test were carried out with Germany as the high masculinity country and Sweden as the feminine country. These analyses fully replicated the above findings in that individuals from Germany were more likely to choose Salary and Advancement over individuals in Sweden.

## Hypothesis II

The relationship between posting content and pursuit intentions was investigated in Hypothesis II by first determining whether a lack of job information resulted in lower pursuit intentions (Hypothesis IIa). This hypothesis was supported, based on the significant correlation suggesting that individuals responding that there was not enough job information have lower pursuit intentions ( $r = -.12, p < .01$ ). Hypothesis IIb predicted that a lack of job information would lead to lower pursuit intentions as compared with a lack of company information. To test this hypothesis, a one-way ANOVA was conducted with pursuit intentions entered as the dependent variable and perceptions of job posting content entered as the independent variable. Although results of the ANOVA were significant ( $F [4, 10,298] = 101.84, p < .01$ ), the relationship was in the opposite direction than proposed. Although mean differences were slight, those who felt there was a lack of job information ( $M = 2.00, SD = .59$ ) rated the company higher on pursuit intentions than those who felt there was a lack of company information ( $M = 2.05, SD = .57$ ).

Hypothesis IIc predicted that the relationship between lack of job information and pursuit intentions would be moderated by culture, such that there would be a strong, negative relationship when uncertainty avoidance is high and a weak negative relationship when uncertainty avoidance is low. Although the moderation hypothesis was not tested, a multiple regression was conducted to assess the influence of lack of job information on pursuit intentions, while accounting for the control variables and application length (Table 5). Pursuit intentions was regressed onto the control variables of experience and company size, as well as lack of job information and application length.

TABLE 5

Results of the multiple regression analysis for variables predicting pursuit intentions

Variable	B	SE(B)	$\beta$	$R^2$
AES 1				.03*
Intercept	1.79	.03		
Company Size	.11**	.02	.08	
Experience	.01	.00	.02	
Lack of Job Info	-.19**	.02	-.14	
Application Length	-.03	.02	-.02	
AES 2				.23**
Intercept	2.89	.08		
Company Size	.13**	.05	.06	
Experience	.01	.01	.01	
Recruiter Perceptions	.42**	.02	.48	
Time Delay	-.01	.01	-.02	

$N = 10,777$  (AES 1),  $N = 2,446$  (AES 2)

\* $p < .05$  \*\* $p < .01$

Despite low variance explained, ( $R^2 = .03$ ), results of the regression were significant ( $F$  [410,298] = 44.16,  $p < .01$ ) and both company size ( $\beta = .08$ ,  $p < .01$ ) and lack of job information ( $\beta = -.14$ ,  $p < .01$ ) were significantly related to pursuit intentions. Again, this supports Hypothesis IIa in that a lack of job information leads to lower ratings of pursuit intentions. It also indicates that smaller companies are related to lower pursuit intentions.

### Hypothesis III

Hypothesis III proposed that the effects of application length would vary between cultures. Specifically, Hypothesis IIIa predicted that individuals in STO cultures will be more likely to fail to submit an application because it took too long to complete than individuals in LTO cultures. In testing this prediction, a Z-test was used to compare responses of individuals from STO and LTO cultures who did not submit an application. Individuals from the country of India were grouped as the LTO IV and individuals from UK, Germany, Sweden, Canada, US, and France were grouped as the STO IV.

Results of the Z-test show that individuals in LTO cultures (17.6%) were more likely than individual in STO cultures (13.5%) to cite that the application was too long as a reason for not submitting an application ( $p < .05$ ), which opposite to the prediction. Additionally, individuals from Germany (the highest country on LTO) were more likely to cite that the application was too long than individual from the US (the lowest country on LTO) ( $p < .05$ ). Thus, Hypothesis IIIa is not supported.

For individuals who submitted an application, it was predicted that judging the application as longer than other companies would result in lower pursuit intentions (Hypothesis IIIb). Additionally, this relationship would be moderated by time orientation such that the relationship between application length and pursuit intentions would be stronger at low levels of time orientation and weaker at high levels of time orientation (Hypothesis IIIc). Although the moderation hypothesis was not tested, a multiple regression was conducted to assess the influence of application length on pursuit intentions, while accounting for the control variables and lack of job information (Table 5). Pursuit intentions was regressed onto the control variables of experience and company size, as well as lack of job information and application length.

Despite low variance explained ( $R^2 = .03$ ), results of the regression were significant ( $F [4, 10,298] = 44.16, p < .01$ ). While company size ( $\beta = .08, p < .01$ ) and lack of job information ( $\beta = -.14, p < .01$ ) were significantly related to pursuit intentions, application length was not ( $\beta = -.02, p = .22$ ), lending no support for Hypothesis IIIb. Thus, lack of job information seems to be the primary driver of pursuit intentions during the generation of applications, since longer applications do not seem to result in lower company ratings.

#### Hypothesis IV

Hypothesis IV predicted that perceptions of representative knowledge, enthusiasm, and professionalism would be positively related to recruitment outcomes and that this relationship would be moderated by individualism, such that there would be a strong, positive relationship when individualism is low and a weak positive relationship when individualism is high. Although the moderation hypothesis was not tested, a multiple regression was conducted to assess the influence of recruiter perceptions on pursuit intentions, while accounting for the control variables and time delay (Table 5). Pursuit intentions was regressed onto the control variables of experience and company size, as well as recruiter perceptions and time delay. Results of step 1 were significant ( $F [4, 1,542] = 112.84, p < .01$ ) and explained 22.5% of the variance in pursuit intentions. Both company size ( $\beta = .06, p < .05$ ) and recruiter perceptions ( $\beta = .48, p < .01$ ) were significantly related to pursuit intentions. This supports Hypothesis IVa that higher ratings of recruiter knowledge, professionalism, and enthusiasm leads to higher pursuit intentions.

Following this analysis, a binary logistic multiple regression was conducted to test the hypothesis that recruiter perceptions are positively related to increases in organizational attraction. Again, the hypothesis that culture would moderate this relationship (Hypothesis IVd)

was not tested and a multiple regression was conducted. Change in organizational attraction was regressed onto experience, company size, recruiter perceptions and time delay (Table 6).

The overall model was significant ( $\chi^2 [4, N = 2,446] = 207.71, p < .01$ ) and accounted for 12.6% of the variance in change in attraction ( $R_L^2 = .13$ ), indicating that the set of predictors distinguished between people who had better perceptions of the company and those who did not. Both years of work experience ( $\chi^2 [1, N = 2,446] = -12.03, p < .01$ ) and recruiter perceptions ( $\chi^2 [1, N = 2,446] = 171.26, p < .01$ ) were significant predictors of changes in organizational attraction, suggesting that individuals with less experience were more likely to have a positive change in attraction. Applicants with positive perceptions of recruiters are more likely to have an increase in organizational attraction. Thus, Hypothesis IVc was supported.

TABLE 6

Results of the logistic multiple regression analysis for variables predicting change in organizational attraction (AES 2)

Variable	B	Wald $X^2$	Odds Ratio
Intercept	-2.40	62.00	.09
Company Size	0.20	1.15	1.22
Experience	-0.12**	12.03	.89
Recruiter Perceptions	1.01**	171.26	2.74
Time Delay	-.03	.32	1.03

$N = 2,446$

\* $p < .05$  \*\* $p < .01$

### Hypothesis V

Hypothesis V predicted that time delays between submitting an application and hearing back about an interview would vary between individuals in LTO and STO cultures such that individuals in LTO cultures would experience longer time delays than individuals in STO cultures. In testing this, an independent samples t-test was carried out with time orientation as the IV and time delay as the DV. Individuals from the country of India were grouped as the LTO IV and individuals from UK, Germany, Sweden, Canada, US, and France were grouped as the STO IV. Results of the analysis indicate no support for the hypothesis in that there is no significant difference between LTO and STO cultures in terms of how long individuals report waiting to hear back about an interview ( $t [724] = .61, p = .56$ ). The same result was found when testing the difference in time delays between the country highest on time orientation (Germany) and the country lowest on time orientation (US) ( $t [496] = 1.02, p = .31$ ).

### Hypothesis VI

Hypothesis VI predicted that delays in communication between submitting an application and being invited to interview would be negatively related to recruitment outcomes and that this relationship would be moderated by time orientation, such that there would be a strong, negative relationship when time orientation is low and a weak, negative relationship when time orientation is high. Although the moderation hypothesis was not tested, a multiple regression was conducted to assess the influence of time delay on pursuit intentions, while accounting for the control variables and recruiter perceptions (Table 5). Pursuit intentions was regressed onto the control variables of experience and company size, as well as recruiter perceptions and time delay. Although the analysis was significant ( $F [4, 1,542] = 112.84, p < .01$ ) and explained 22.5% of the variance in pursuit intentions, time delay was not significantly related to pursuit

intentions ( $\beta = -.02, p = .30$ ), lending no support for Hypothesis VIa. Based on these findings, recruiter perceptions seems to be the primary driver of pursuit intentions while maintaining applicants, given that delays in hearing back from the company do not seem to result in lower company ratings.

Following this analysis, a binary logistic multiple regression was conducted to test the hypothesis that shorter time delays lead to increases in organizational attraction (Hypothesis VIc). The hypothesis that culture would moderate this relationship (Hypothesis IVd) was not tested and a multiple regression was conducted. Change in organizational attraction was regressed onto experience, company size, recruiter perceptions and time delay (Table 6). The overall model was significant ( $\chi^2 [4, N = 2,446] = 207.71, p < .01$ ) and accounted for 12.6% of the variance in change in attraction ( $R_L^2 = .13$ ), indicating that the set of predictors reliably distinguished between people who had better perceptions of the company and those who did not. However, time delay did not significantly predict change in organizational attraction ( $\chi^2 [1, N = 2,446] = -.32, p = .57$ ) giving no support for Hypothesis VIc.

### Supplemental Analyses

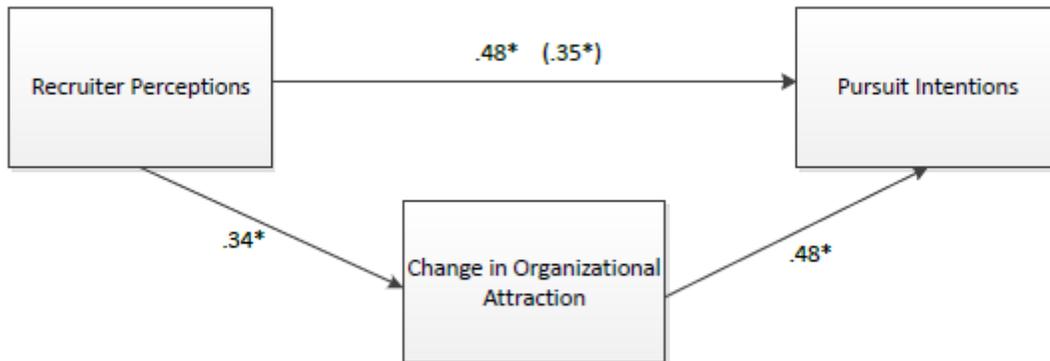
Following the testing of the study hypotheses, additional analyses were carried out to further the understanding of the recruitment process and how culture may impact this at an individual level of analysis. To expand beyond what was predicted in Hypothesis 1, additional Z-tests were carried out to determine what other cultural differences exist in terms of reasons for applying to a company (Table 3). Overall, interesting assignments was chosen 26 percent of the time (highest of all job factors) and was most likely to be selected by individuals in high masculinity cultures (vs. low masculinity cultures) and individuals in collectivist cultures (vs. individualist cultures). Advancement was selected 25 percent of the time and was selected most

by individuals in collectivist cultures (vs. individualist cultures) followed by individuals in high uncertainty avoidance cultures (vs. low uncertainty avoidance cultures). Reputation, which was selected 20 percent of the time, varied most in terms of individualism, with those in individualist cultures choosing it more often than those in collectivist cultures. Salary was the next most commonly selected factor (17%) and was chosen more by individuals in high power distance cultures (vs. low power distance cultures), while work-life balance (chosen 12 percent of the time) was selected most by individuals in low time orientation cultures (vs. those in high time orientation cultures). Lastly, while training was the least likely job factor to be chosen overall (2.3%), it was slightly more likely to be chosen by individuals in low uncertainty avoidance cultures vs. individuals in high uncertainty avoidance cultures.

Further analysis was carried out to investigate the relationship between recruitment variables for AES 2, given the positive correlations between recruiter perceptions, change in organizational attraction, and pursuit intentions. Based on the sequential nature of the recruitment process, it would make sense for recruiter perceptions to have an impact on organizational attraction, leading to an increased desire to pursue a job opportunity. Here, organizational attraction would act as a mediator between perceptions of recruiters and pursuit intentions. These relationships were investigated using Baron and Kenny's (1989) approach for testing mediation. Three separate regressions were carried out by regressing pursuit intentions onto recruiter perceptions ( $F [1, 2,396] = 697.84, p < .01$ ), followed by regressing change in organizational attraction onto recruiter perceptions ( $F [1, 2,396] = 312.86, p < .01$ ), and lastly regressing pursuit intentions onto change in organizational attraction ( $F [1, 2,396] = 796.05, p < .01$ ). As all models were significant, a multiple regression was conducted by regressing pursuit intentions onto both recruiter perceptions and change in organizational attraction to test a full

mediation model. Due to the finding that recruiter perceptions is still significant ( $\beta = .35, p < .01$ ) after controlling for change in organizational attraction ( $\beta = .36, p < .01$ ), a partial mediation model is the best explanation of the data. Thus, individuals with positive perceptions of a recruiter are more likely to have higher pursuit intentions, in part because of having a better perception of the organization. The full model can be seen in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Change in organizational attraction as a partial mediator between recruiter perceptions and pursuit intentions



Note:  $N = 2,446$ . Parentheses indicate the effect of recruiter perceptions on pursuit intentions with change in organizational attraction held constant

## CHAPTER IV DISCUSSION

The current study hypothesized that culture would have an impact on the relationship between the early recruitment experience and recruitment outcomes. Although many findings did not support this prediction, the study offers insight for how companies can approach recruitment activities from a global perspective. Additionally, findings shed further light on the online recruitment process in an ever-changing technology driven environment.

### Explanation of Findings

The results revealed both hypothesized and unexpected results. While company size and work experience were not initially predicted to correlate with other study variables, they were moderately correlated with culture. Because the levels of cultural values were tied directly to specific countries, the results of these findings is likely a reflection of the size of companies and experience level of individuals using the job board site in each country. In line with hypotheses, posting content and recruiter perceptions were correlated with recruitment outcomes, although the effect of recruiter perceptions was greater. This offers support for the importance of interactions with recruiters for applicant decisions (Rynes et al., 1991). Surprisingly, application length and time delay did not influence pursuit intentions and changes in organizational attraction. While reasons for this may be in part due to range restriction of the survey sample, other explanations are considered below. Additionally, cultural values were weakly correlated with outcomes, which makes sense based on the finding that level 2 differences in country did not explain much variance in recruitment outcomes. Not surprisingly, the recruitment outcomes of job pursuit intentions and change in organizational attraction were highly correlated, which adds support to previous models of recruitment (Chapman et al., 2005; Chapman & Webster, 2006).

### Reasons for applying

Despite the fact that culture did not strongly impact recruitment outcomes, it does seem to drive why people initially apply for a job. Many differences in reasons for applying between cultures emerged, beyond what was initially hypothesized. Culture aside, individuals were most likely to select interesting assignments as a reason for applying, followed closely by advancement opportunities. Given that interesting assignments reflects the type of work that would be performed on the job, this is consistent with findings showing that type of work has stronger effects during recruitment than other aspects, such as salary (Chapman et al., 2005). This finding supports the importance of clearly outlining the responsibilities of the job in recruitment materials, since this information gives individuals an opportunity to assess their fit with the job, resulting in greater attraction and likelihood of submitting an application (Barber & Roehling, 1993; Harold & Ployhart, 2008).

Specific to culture, individualism seemed to have the biggest impact on reasons for applying. Results supported work-life balance as a reason for applying for individuals in individualist cultures more so than for individuals in collectivist cultures. This is likely due to the fact that company practices promoting work-life balance may be less important in collectivist cultures where there is greater support both within the workplace and at home (Spector et al., 2007). Other major findings for individualism were that individuals from collectivist countries chose both advancement and reputation over individuals from individualist countries. Although the advancement finding is contrary to the hypothesis, recent research indicates that individuals in collectivist societies may value these opportunities more than other cultures (Foley, Jeffay, & Wilson, 2011). This could be because advancement opportunities give better assurance that you

will be able to provide for your family, beyond just viewing it as an individual gain. The finding for reputation is more surprising and is not consistent with research.

Power distance played the largest role in selecting salary, in that compared to individuals in low power distance countries, those in high power distance countries were more likely to select salary as a reason for applying. Although this was not anticipated, a possible reason could be that salary allows individuals in low power distance countries access greater power (or perceptions of power) and control more resources in a culture where very few are considered powerful. However, this hypothesis needs further testing.

Although not hypothesized, individuals in high uncertainty avoidance cultures were more likely to choose advancement and interesting assignments than individuals in low uncertainty avoidance cultures. While there is no previous support for this finding, information regarding advancement opportunities and interesting work both contribute to a greater understanding of the work environment in terms of how likely one is to succeed and enjoy the work that is performed. Given that individuals in low uncertainty avoidance cultures experience greater negativity in unpredictable situations and have a greater desire for structure and clear information (Hofstede, 1980), it seems fitting that interesting assignments and advancement opportunities were desirable.

Compared to other cultural values, time orientation generally plays a smaller role in reasons for applying to a job. This may be because the countries that score highest on time orientation (East Asian countries) were not included in the current study, suggesting a restriction of range. Although it was hypothesized that individuals in STO cultures would be more likely to choose salary than LTO cultures, this finding was not supported. Lacking a strong LTO culture that is more likely to value long-term rewards, as opposed to immediate ones, is a possibly

reason for this finding. Despite this, the biggest difference between LTO and STO cultures was that individuals in STO cultures were more likely to choose work-life balance than LTO cultures. This is most likely due to the fact that individualism and long term orientation are strongly correlated, which makes having additional familial support from the workplace more important in STO (as well as individualist) cultures (Hofstede, 1980).

Lastly, masculinity accounted for several differences in reasons for applying to a job, including salary, advancement, and interesting assignments. Consistent with predictions, individuals in masculine cultures were more likely to choose salary and advancement opportunities over individuals in feminine cultures. This is consistent with masculine cultures attributing higher value to performance and achievement of the individual, while feminine cultures allocate salary and advancement more equally (Hofstede et al., 2010). Additionally, individuals in feminine cultures were much more likely to choose interesting assignments over individuals in masculine cultures. Although not specifically examined in this research, this is likely due to the intrinsic value tied with performing work that is interesting as opposed to the extrinsic aspects of work (salary, advancement), which are not as highly valued in feminine cultures.

#### Influence of culture and country

Prior to testing the hypotheses predicting recruitment outcomes, unconditional means models were tested to determine the effects of culture on pursuit intentions and changes in organizational attraction. Based on low group variance explained for all models, results indicate that country did not impact recruitment outcomes during the phases of generating and maintaining applicants. As a result, there was no reason to treat individuals in the study as being nested within countries by using a multi-level design, and OLS regression was used to test the

hypotheses (Kahn, 2011). Although the relationship between culture and recruitment has not been tested before, this finding was still contrary to predictions that culture would result in differences during these phases (Ma & Allen, 2009; Stone, Stone-Romero, & Lukaszewski, 2007). Based on these pieces of literature, it was believed that cultural values would influence differences in perceptions of recruitment sources, evaluations of recruiter effectiveness and the effects of recruitment delays, which were areas not supported by the current research.

Despite this finding, previous research does lend some insight into why differences did not emerge. Taras et al.'s (2010) recent meta-analysis reviewing Hofstede's cultural value dimensions indicates that values are most strongly related to emotions, followed by attitudes, behaviors, and lastly, performance. Thus, culture does not seem to play as great a role in attitudes and behaviors as it does with emotions. Given that the main dependent variable of pursuit intentions is strongly tied with a specific behavior (recommending a friend), the lower impact of culture on behaviors could play some role in why there were no meaningful differences. However, an alternative conclusion is that individuals from the specific cultures and countries studied actually do not differ in the way they respond to these aspects of recruitment. For example, if an individual from one culture encounters recruiters that are perceived as incompetent or rude, they are just as likely not to pursue an opportunity there as an individual from a seemingly opposite culture. These findings are the first to suggest that reactions to the recruitment process have the same effects on feelings about the organization regardless of what country or culture that an individual is from. However, because the current study was not able to study all cultures and countries, further research will need to be conducted to support this finding across a wider range of countries and cultures.

### Generating applicants

The results of the regressions assessing applicants' experiences when applying to an organization uncovered that while posting content has an impact on intentions to pursue the opportunity, application length does not. Consistent with hypotheses, a lack of job information resulted in lower intentions to pursue an opportunity by recommending it to a friend. This is supported by research indicating that postings with more information are rated as more attractive than postings with less information and that a lack of information may lead to negative assumptions about the employer (Barber & Roehling, 1993; Yuce & Highhouse, 1998). However, contrary to research suggesting that job information is more critical than company information, pursuit intentions were virtually the same when there was a lack of both types of information. Given this, it is important for companies to make sure their job postings are informative about job tasks and the company itself.

Contrary to what was predicted, longer applications did not have a negative effect on pursuit intentions. Although research in this area was limited, literature on online recruitment suggests that long applications create delays between viewing a job posting and applying for a job, resulting in lower applications being submitted (Cober et al, 2000). While this makes sense, the results suggest that posting content becomes more critical when deciding to pursue an opportunity, indicating that an interesting job may make up for a long application process. The lack of relationship between application length and pursuit intentions could also be due to range restriction, since individuals who were discouraged by a long application and decided not to submit it were excluded from this analysis. If applicants had been forced to submit the application and then respond to the survey, there might have been greater effects for application length.

For individuals who did not successfully submit an application, findings indicated that individuals in LTO cultures were more likely to cite a long application as a reason for not applying vs. individuals in STO cultures. This is opposite to what was hypothesized and the idea that individuals in STO cultures have less tolerance for longer processes (Hofstede et al., 2010). However, the finding could be a result of LTO companies creating longer applications overall, which fits with the mentality of LTO cultures in that time is viewed as more continuous. Despite this, individuals in LTO cultures still do not seem to tolerate the longer applications, which is contrary to the above reasoning. Thus, the effect of time orientation application length is still unclear.

#### Maintaining applicants

Compared with the previous stage, the recruitment experience played a larger role in recruitment outcomes after the application was submitted. This is mainly due to recruiter perceptions, which had the strongest effect on pursuit intentions and change in organizational attraction of all study variables. The finding that better perceptions of recruiters leads to more positive perceptions of the company and greater pursuit intentions is heavily supported by previous research (Breugh, 2008; Chapman et al., 2005; Chapman & Webster, 2006; Rynes et al., 1991; Saks & Uggerslev, 2010). The results are consistent with signal theory which suggests that signals regarding the friendliness or competence of recruiters are seen as a reflection of the organization itself, which impacts perceptions and pursuit intentions (Rynes et al., 1991). Additionally, because applicants interact with recruiters later in the process, this experience is likely to have greater effects on recruitment outcomes than earlier experiences with the application and posting (Saks & Uggerslev, 2009). This is consistent with current findings

indicating that recruiter perceptions explain more variance in pursuit intentions than both posting content and application length.

Despite the strong relationship between recruiter perceptions and outcomes, time delays between submitting an application and being invited to interview was not related to pursuit intentions or changes in organizational attraction. This is contrary to previous findings showing that longer gaps result in lower attraction and pursuit intentions because applicants see the organization as less effective and have more opportunity to accept other offers (Rynes et al., 1991; Saks & Uggerslev, 2010). Similar to the finding of application length, this may be a result of range restriction, in that individuals who did not hear back from the company at all were not included in the analysis. These individuals may have had much lower perceptions of the company due to lack of follow up. Despite this, findings suggest that for those who do hear back, delays in communication are not as harmful to pursuing an opportunity as was originally thought. This may be due to the nature of the online recruitment process, which has not been as heavily researched as more traditional practices. Compared with the traditional application processes, individuals applying online can apply to more organizations in a reduced amount of time, without any direct contact with the organization. As a result, individuals may have lower expectations for organizations to respond, causing delays to have less impact. Additional research is needed to investigate this speculation.

Similar to generating applicants, culture had minimal effects on outcomes during the phase of maintaining applicants. Findings did not support the prediction that LTO cultures would have longer time delays than STO cultures, as there was no significant difference between cultures. Again, this may be a result of not having countries scoring high on time orientation as part of the LTO group.

Following the test of hypotheses for maintaining applicants, additional analyses were carried out to further understand the relationships of study variables during this phase. Given that the current study offers a unique and realistic perspective of the online recruitment process (by surveying individuals who were in the actual process of applying to jobs online), variables were tested to see if previously established relationships could be replicated. Regression results indicated a partial mediation model in which recruiter perceptions positively predicted pursuit intentions through changes in organizational attraction. This model suggests that experiences with recruiters leads to either positive or negative changes in perception of the organization, which contributes to decisions to further pursue an opportunity. This is consistent with previous research on traditional recruitment practices, in which organizational attraction partially mediated the relationship between recruitment predictors (including recruiter perceptions) and pursuit intentions (Chapman & Webster, 2006; Chapman et al., 2010). These findings not only extend this model to online recruitment practices, but also emphasize the impact of recruiters on job decisions and the importance for organizations to provide quality experiences with their recruiters.

#### Limitations and Future Research

The above findings and insights should be interpreted in light of the study limitations. In studying the difference between cultures, a main limitation of the present study was using country as a proxy for culture. Because culture was not directly measured, it becomes difficult to determine whether the lack of between group variance attained was truly due to a lack of cultural differences, as opposed to country differences. Additionally, applying Hofstede's model to the data could have played a role in the low impact of culture on the study outcomes, which is supported by past research showing larger effects of culture when it is directly measured (Taras

et al., 2010). Despite this, Hofstede's culture model is the most prevalently used in cultural research and has demonstrated significant effects of culture on various organizational constructs that differ greatly from what was studied in the present research. Thus, it cannot be determined whether small effects were a result of this practice, as this is the first time known to the author that culture has been studied in relation to recruitment. It will be important for future researchers to directly measure the culture of participants or consider using a different cultural model when studying its effects on recruitment.

Possibly more impactful to the study's findings than applying Hofstede's model is the lack of range in the cultural variables of time orientation and individualism. Because no East Asian countries were included in the present research, this study was unable to fully gauge the effects of long-term oriented and collectivist cultures. Cultural effects and differences between cultures high and low on these values may have been stronger if these types of countries had been represented in the analysis. However, given that a fuller range of the cultural dimensions was present for the majority of values (consisting of uncertainty avoidance, power distance, and masculinity) and no cultural variables had a strong impact on outcomes, including additional countries may not have changed results. Further research is needed to test the effects of both individualism and time orientation as it relates to recruitment.

In addition to the above limitation, analyses that directly compared high and low cultural groups did not always have an even number of participants and countries in each group such as when one country was compared to a group of similar countries. Here, results should be interpreted in light of these different groups sizes and the fact that culture may have been defined by one single country. In cases where this occurred, an additional analysis was carried out to compare the country scoring highest on the dimension to the country scoring the lowest, which is

supported by previous research (Sivakumar & Nakata, 2001). Given that this test usually produced the same conclusions, there can be more confidence in these results.

Along the same lines of having a limited number of participants across cultures, it is also important to recognize that the exact culture of the current survey respondents is not fully known. Because individuals were grouped into countries based on the type of job site they were using, it cannot be confirmed whether they were raised in that country and hold the same cultural values. However, proprietary data from the job board show that nearly 90% of the users of a certain job site consider themselves as “from” that particular country. Thus, it is likely that a small portion of individuals in the study may have been falsely classified in terms of culture; however, the majority were likely to align themselves with the country reported.

Aside from the cultural limitations of the study, there were some limitations as they relate to possible range restriction and self-selecting out of the survey. Here, responses from individuals who had more negative experiences with a company may not be represented due to the possibility that they did not follow through with the process or did not want to complete the survey. For example, AES 1 respondents who experienced especially long applications may have failed to submit an application, which means the survey could not fully assess the relationship between application length and pursuit intentions. In AES 2, individuals who submitted their application but never heard back may have chosen not to fill out the survey, resulting in a limited picture of time delays on attraction and pursuit intentions.

Lastly, because the survey questions were developed to quickly assess an individual’s experience when applying to a job, most of the survey items were single item, multiple-choice measures. This made assessing the reliability of many items impossible, as well as limited the number of conclusions that could be made. Although many items served the purpose in

understanding perceptions around concrete aspects of the process (application length, time delays), multiple item measures would have given more insights into constructs such as perceptions of posting content, organizational attraction and pursuit intentions. Additionally, the survey only assessed the recruitment process up to maintaining applicants, which gives no insight into the extent that experiences actually impacted further pursuit of the job and acceptance of an offer. In order to gain a full picture of the effects of culture on the online recruitment process, future researchers will want to more deeply investigate recruitment components and relationships by using multiple item measures and assessing constructs later in the recruitment process. A more longitudinal approach starting with the search for online postings and ending in job choice would be helpful to better understand what has the largest impact on recruitment effectiveness.

### Practical Implications

Despite the limitations of the current study, results shed light on the modern day recruitment process and offer insights to help employers maximize their recruitment efforts. This becomes increasingly important as baby boomers turnover and companies compete with each other to fill these open positions. Additionally, with the rapid globalization of the economy, organizations have a need to conduct recruitment on a global scale and attract individuals from different backgrounds (Schuler & Rogovsky, 1998). With talent as the backbone of organizations, those who are not able to build a diverse workforce or who cannot effectively attract talent in a certain business region risk productivity losses and failure.

In terms of global recruiting, employers can use insights from this research to guide how they brand their employment opportunities to individuals with different cultural backgrounds. Based on the reasons people apply to companies, this research suggests that job postings will be

most effective when they are catered to the culture of the individuals that are being recruited. For example, while work-life balance is likely to attract individuals in the US, this tactic may not be as effective for individuals in India or China. Instead, a manager trying to recruit talent from a collectivist culture may want to emphasize the organization's advancement opportunities. However, managers will need to consider building these messages in alignment with organizational strengths to ensure the right expectations are set with candidates.

Aside from building culturally strategic recruitment messages, results suggest that the same rules for generating and maintaining applicants may apply across cultures. This is good news for managers as they consider attracting talent with various backgrounds, as certain practices seem to be effective regardless of the culture. When initially attracting individuals to apply to a job opportunity, results suggest that content of the advertisement, specifically in terms of job tasks and assignments, is key. Detailing the responsibilities of the job (especially the most interesting aspects) and making sure individuals have a clear picture of job tasks will go a long way in getting individuals to apply and stay interested in the company beyond submitting the application. However, companies will also want to make sure they give enough insight into the company and workplace culture. When trying to maintain these applicants, the effectiveness of recruiters becomes especially important, as it directly relates to how they view the company and whether they would want to further pursue the opportunity. Organizations will want to ensure that their recruiters are armed with enough knowledge about the job, and also come across as enthusiastic and professional. It is important for organizations to assess the effectiveness of their recruiters and to implement training to hone these skills when necessary.

While application length and gaps in communication did not have large effects in the current study, organizations should still be mindful of both of these issues. Because the current

study did not assess actual job acceptance, it is possible that time delays did impact whether individuals ruled out companies in favor of competitors who responded faster. Thus, organizations should not assume that long gaps in communication with applicants will have no ramifications. Instead, it is possible that organizations still have a better chance of winning talent over their competitors when they make the process easy for desired candidates to find and submit information and take steps to respond in a timely manner as previous research suggests.

### Contributions to the Literature

In comparison with other recruitment or cultural research studies, this study was unique in its purpose. While there is a fair amount of literature investigating the effects of culture on most aspects of human resource functions in organizations (e.g., selection, training, performance appraisal), recruitment is largely left out of this research. This is surprising considering the dependence on recruitment functions in providing the organization with high performing talent. Thus, in taking recommendations from previous researchers, this study was the first effort in testing whether recruitment processes should differ across cultures. While the effect of culture was small and no major differences between countries were found, there is value in learning that certain practices are consistently effective. Additionally, the findings and limitations of the current research lend many considerations to future researchers when further investigating these relationships.

In addition to the cultural insights, the current research contributes new findings to an area of literature that is largely outdated, due to changes in the way companies recruit talent. While most recruitment research is focused on the traditional experience of candidates involving in person contact with a company early on, this is no longer what individuals experience in the pre-application stage. Instead, candidates submit applications to many employers without having

any direct contact with the company until being asked to interview. In addition to studying the recruitment process as it exists today, this study gathered data on actual job-search situations in real-time and across a wide scope. Because of this, there is higher likelihood that the above findings truly reflect this now common practice of recruiting talent. As a result, findings that differ from previous research (such as effects of application length or time delays) should be considered in the context of this newer process, while findings that replicate (such as the effects of recruiters) should be viewed as important elements that hold great significance spanning across time and situations.

When applied in the context of Barber's (1998) model, findings expand upon best practices for generating applicants by suggesting that culture should be a consideration when presenting the job opportunity. Additionally, findings both reinforce and bring into question the impact of certain recruitment factors when maintaining applicants. Although the impact of recruiters has been debated in the early recruitment literature, strong recruiter effects found in the present research help to substantiate the more recent idea that recruiters play a key role when deciding to pursue an opportunity (Chapman et al., 2005). Additionally, the current study sheds new light on the effects of time delays, which have consistently been found to be detrimental to attracting talent in previous research (Rynes et al., 1991; Saks & Uggerslev, 2010). The present findings indicate that when engaging in an online application process, longer delays do not lead to lower pursuit intentions or adverse effects on organizational attraction, which is contrary to previous findings. Thus, additional research is needed to further substantiate these findings. Hopefully, this research will spark continued interest in studying recruitment in an online context, while also keeping cultural effects in mind.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY

The current study investigated whether different strategies for attracting and maintaining applicants should be used in order to effectively recruit talent from different cultures, which had not been previously researched. It was predicted that culture would have a direct impact on what attracts individuals to apply to an organization, what causes them not to submit an application, and the length of time between submitting an application and being invited to interview. Additionally, it was predicted that culture would interact with perceptions of job posting content, application length, recruiter perceptions, and time delays in predicting job pursuit intentions and changes in organizational attraction. This study utilized two independent sets of archival survey data from nine countries; one included reactions to an application process within 24 hours of submitting an application online, while the other included reactions to the post-application experience one month after submitting an application online. In determining the effects of culture, Hofstede's cultural dimension scores for Individualism, Power Distance, Uncertainty Avoidance, Time Orientation, and Masculinity were applied to survey respondents based on their country of residence.

In studying the direct effects of culture, Z-tests and ANOVAs were used to test differences between means and proportions of cultural groups. Findings here indicated that cultures differed most in terms of why individuals applied to organizations, lending insight into what job aspects to highlight when recruiting individuals from different cultural backgrounds. Although Hierarchical Linear Modeling (HLM) was initially proposed as the strategy for assessing the moderation effects, unconditional means models showed low between country

variance, which prompted the use of Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression to study recruitment effects at the individual level.

Results indicated that including enough information about the job when advertising opportunities plays the biggest role in pursuit intentions during the generating applicants phase, while recruiter perceptions are strongly related to recruitment outcomes when maintaining applicants. Further testing of these variables indicated that change in organizational attraction partially mediated the relationship between recruiter perceptions and pursuit intentions. Practical implications as well as contributions of the research to the recruitment literature are discussed.

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## APPENDIX A

### Applicant Experience Survey 1

In the past week, have you applied for a job at {insert company name}?

1. Yes
2. No

In comparison to other jobs for which you applied, rate the length of the application.

1. It was about the same as others
2. On average, it was longer than others
3. On average, it was shorter than others

Did you think the amount of information on the job posting was sufficient in illustrating the job and company?

1. Yes, the job posting was very thorough
2. It was pretty good but I would have liked to have seen more information about the job
3. It was pretty good but I would have liked to have seen some more information about the company
4. No, I would have liked to see a lot more information
5. No, the amount of information was overwhelming

What were the top 3 reasons you applied for the position?

1. Location
2. Desirable industry
3. Reputation of the company
4. Benefits
5. Advancement opportunities
6. Salary
7. Work-life balance
8. Interesting assignments
9. Company culture
10. Training
11. Amount of travel
12. Diverse employee base
13. Community outreach
14. Company financials
15. Bonus and rewards
16. Environmentally conscious company

How did you hear about the opportunity initially?

1. CareerBuilder.com
2. Search results on online search engine
3. Company website
4. Talking with my friends and family

5. Networking with professionals
6. Other

What was the purpose of your visit to {insert job board}?

1. To apply to a job
2. To conduct research about a job
3. To research salary or pay ranges
4. I'm an employer creating a job posting, description, or analysis
5. I'm an employer researching competitors' jobs
6. Prospecting for sales leads
7. Other

What deterred you from applying to the position? Please check all that apply.

1. Application was too long
2. Application was too confusing
3. Link did not work
4. Ran out of time
5. Computer / Internet connection issue
6. Asked for personal information I did not want to share
7. Other – please specify (open ended)

Based on your experience with {insert company name}, how likely are you to recommend this company to a colleague or a friend?

1. 10 Extremely likely
2. 9
3. 8
4. 7
5. 6
6. 5 Neutral
7. 4
8. 3
9. 2
10. 1
11. 0 Not at all likely

Demographics

Gender

1. Male
2. Female

Race

1. White or Caucasian
2. Black or African American
3. Hispanic or Latino
4. Asian
5. Native American

6. Other

Age {dropdown list: 1-65+}

Years of full-time work experience

1. 0-1
2. 2-5
3. 6-10
4. 11-15
5. 16-20
6. 20+

Level of education

1. Did not finish high school
2. High school diploma or equivalent
3. Some college
4. College diploma
5. Masters degree
6. Ph.D.
7. J.D.
8. M.D.
9. Other

Employment status

1. Employed full time
2. Employed part time
3. Employed as a contractor
4. Unemployed

## APPENDIX B

### Applicant Experience Survey 2

Have you applied for a job at {insert company name} in the past month?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Not sure

How long ago did you submit your application?

1. About a month ago
2. I applied for multiple jobs at {insert company name}, and at least one of the applications was submitted about a month ago
3. Other

How did {insert company name} get in touch with you after you submitted your application?

Please choose the last point of contact.

1. Via email with an application receipt message
2. Via email with a rejection message
3. Someone called or emailed me to invite me to begin the interview process
4. Someone called me to tell me the company is not moving ahead with me
5. I haven't heard back yet
6. Other

Did you also receive an automated receipt message after submitting your application, prior to receiving an invitation to interview?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Not sure

How much time passed between submitting your application and receiving the invitation to begin the interview process?

1. 1-3 days
2. 4-7 days
3. Between 1-2 weeks
4. Between 2-3 weeks
5. Between 3-4 weeks
6. Not sure

We would like to know a little more about your experience with the company representative you were in contact with during the hiring process (e.g., recruiter, hiring manager). Please rate the following statements using a 1-6 scale with 1= Strongly Agree, 5 = Strongly Disagree, 6 = Not Applicable.

1. The representative was knowledgeable regarding the company and the position.
2. The representative was enthusiastic about the company as an employer of choice.
3. The representative was professional in his/her communication.

In comparison to other companies you are currently interviewing with or have interviewed with, evaluate the amount of time that passed between each of the steps in the recruiting process.

1. **{insert client name}** got back to me faster than most other companies
2. It **{insert client name}** about the same amount of time to get back to me as other companies
3. It took **{insert client name}** longer to get back to me than other companies
4. Have not gone through enough steps to fairly evaluate

Please update us on the progress of your application.

1. I am in the process of interviewing
2. I am waiting to hear back about next steps
3. I received an offer
4. I joined the company
5. The company was interested but I eliminated the company
6. I was interested but the company eliminated me
7. Other

Did you also receive an automated receipt message after submitting your application, prior to a representative from **{insert client name}** calling you to let you know they're not moving ahead with you?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Not sure

As a result of the communication from **{insert client name}**, has your perception of the company changed?

1. I have a better opinion of **{insert client name}**
2. I have a worse opinion of **{insert client name}**
3. My opinion is unchanged

As a result of the lack of communication from **{insert client name}** after submitting you application, has your perception of the company changed?

1. I have a better opinion of **{insert client name}**
2. I have a worse opinion of **{insert client name}**
3. My opinion is unchanged

How many other similar positions have you applied for in the past month?

1. None
2. 1-2
3. 3-5
4. 6-10
5. 10+

Based on your experience with **{insert client name}**, how likely are you to recommend this company to a colleague or a friend?

1. 10 Extremely likely
2. 9
3. 8
4. 7
5. 6
6. 5 Neutral
7. 4
8. 3
9. 2
10. 1
11. 0 Not at all likely

Demographics (Responses Optional)

Gender

1. Male
2. Female

Race

1. White or Caucasian
2. Black or African American
3. Hispanic or Latino
4. Asian
5. Native American
6. Other

Age **{Dropdown Box 1-65+}**

Years of full-time work experience

1. 0-1
2. 2-5
3. 6-10
4. 11-15
5. 16-20

6. 20+

Level of education

1. Did not finish high school
2. High school diploma or equivalent
3. Some college
4. College diploma
5. Masters degree
6. Ph.D.
7. J.D.
8. M.D.
9. Other

Employment status

1. Employed full time
2. Employed part time
3. Employed as a contractor
4. Unemployed

## APPENDIX C

### Applicant Experience Survey Invitations

AES 1

**Thank you for using {insert job board} to search for your next employment opportunity.**

You deserve to find the job of your dreams. We are working hard to better connect you to jobs and employers of your choice—but we can't do it alone. Your input is invaluable in this process.

Please take 5 minutes to complete a survey about your recent application. Responses are confidential.

**START NOW ([link](#))**

AES 2

**Thank you for using {insert job board} to search for your next employment opportunity.**

To better connect you with the employers of your choice, we need your feedback about your experience after submitting an application.

A month ago we sent you a survey about your recent application with {insert company name}. We would love your feedback on where you stand in the application process and your satisfaction with the interactions with the organization.

We will share this information with employers to encourage them to enhance their recruitment processes. Your insights are incredibly important to us, so please take this short 5 minute survey and share your opinions with us. Responses are confidential.

**START NOW ([link](#))**