

The Influence of the Firm's Career-Website on Job-Seekers' Intentions to the Firm

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Abstract

Currently organizations rely on its websites to engage and inform job-seekers, and as the primary method for job-seekers to submit applications for screening (Thompson, Braddy & Wuensch, 2008). Therefore a website must be able to influence job-seekers to react positively to perform behaviors such as submitting an application, returning to the site, recommending the company or site to others, and to engage the organization by transitioning to the organization's social-media sites. Whether or not a job-seeker performs these behaviors is largely a function of the experience with the website. Understanding the website-related factors affecting a job-seeker's intentions and subsequent behavior is, therefore, critical to the firm. The sample consisted of 199 usable responses and the results show website aesthetics, content and ease of use influence respondents' intentions, indirectly, through perceived usefulness of the site. Social norms toward the firm have a significant, positive influence on respondents' intentions.

Keywords: Recruiting, User Experience, Website, Usability

1. Introduction

In recent years organizations have relied heavily on their websites to engage and inform job-seekers at early stages of recruitment, and to serve as the primary method through which job-seekers submit applications for screening (Dineen & Allen, 2013; Maurer & Cook, 2011; Thompson, Braddy & Wuensch, 2008). Given this central role, a website must be able to influence job-seekers to react positively by facilitating such behaviors as: submitting an application, returning to the site in the future, recommending the company or site to other job-seekers, choosing to interview, engaging with the organization by transitioning to the organization's social-media sites, and accepting an offer if extended. Whether or not a job-seeker performs these behaviors is in part a function of the experience he or she has with the site. Understanding the website-related factors that affect a job-seeker's intentions and subsequent behaviors is, therefore, critical to obtaining ideal job candidates.

The paper is organized into five additional sections. The first section summarizes the theory on job-seekers' attitudes and intentions and the factors that are thought to affect them, including website usability, perceived usefulness and site aesthetics. In the second section the theoretical model and hypotheses are presented. We summarize the methods used in the third section. In the fourth and fifth sections we describe the empirical results and discuss these results.

2. Literature Review

Organizations attempt to influence the number and quality of job seekers who choose to apply for open positions. In addition, the candidate quality affects the willingness of applicants to interview and finalists to accept an offer (Breaugh, 1992; Barber & Roehling, 1993). Thus, the "organizational pre-entry period" (Klotz, Veiga, Buckley & Gavin, 2013, p. 104) is a critical time when job seekers gather a significant amount of information that they use to form attitudes and intentions towards a potential employer. Specifically, Rynes, Heneman III and Schwab (1980) and others (e.g., Cable, Aiman-Smith, Mulvey & Edwards, 2000; Irving & Meyer, 1994; Turban & Cable, 2003; Uggerslev, Fassina & Kraichy, 2012; Yu, 2014) have found that job seekers' reactions toward a company's recruitment efforts are affected by information about the company (e.g., reputation for treating employees fairly, positive social environment), the jobs (e.g., fair compensation, interesting, opportunity to grow), the recruiters' behaviors (e.g., display warmth, communicate knowledge of jobs and company), and the selection process (e.g., perceived fairness, timeliness, consistency). The company website is often a source for some of this information, and plays a critical role early in the job-search process when job seekers make a decision about whether or not to apply with little or no personal contact with the company. If a job seeker chooses not to apply for a position after evaluating the organization's website, and therefore ends the recruitment process at that point, the organization has no opportunity to use more personalized and interactive recruitment and selection activities that typically occur later in the process (e.g., face-to-face interviews, site visits) to influence job seekers' attitudes and intentions (Allen, Mahto & Otondo, 2007; Carlson, Connerley & Mecham, 2002; Van Hoye & Lievens, 2009). The result of such withdrawal behaviors can be a decrease in the size and quality of the applicant

pool and potentially adverse impact (Tam, Murphy, & Lyall, 2004; Griepentrog, Harold, Klimiski & Marsh, 2012). Thus, a positive user-experience with the recruitment website is essential.

In situations, such as applying for an open position, where the behavior is volitional, extant literature supports the conclusion that individuals form specific intentions about whether to perform the behavior and that these intentions are a strong predictor of subsequent behavioral outcomes (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1973; Armitage & Conner, 2001). Because behavioral intentions (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1973) result from cognitive judgments about one's expectancies and the valences with respect to performing the potential behavior, the intentions construct is a useful mechanism for understanding why job seekers' react as they do to recruitment efforts (e.g., organization's website or external sources of information like social norms). Support for this perspective can be found in the research by Chapman, Uggerslev, Carroll, Piasentin & Jones (2005), who concluded that job-seekers' attitudes toward an organization are influenced by an effective response to the organization's website. These attitudes influence the job-seeker's intent to apply, which subsequently influences their behavior (i.e., apply).

Signaling theory (Spence, 1973) offers one explanation for the role that the website plays (Gregory, Meade & Thompson, 2013; Kashi & Zheng, 2013) in forming job seekers' intentions. The theory suggests that, in the absence of complete information about an object of interest, an individual will seek signals or cues upon which to draw inferences about the object. The cue conveys information about unobservable qualities of the object (Wells, Valacich & Hess, 2011). For example, when a job seeker lacks complete information about a potential employer, he or she can draw inferences from the behaviors of a recruiter (Rynes & Miller, 1983), visible corporate social performance efforts (Jones, Willness & Madey, 2014), information from a job announcement (Roberson, Collins & Oreg, 2005), and an organization's recruitment website (Breugh, 2008; Gregory, Meade, & Thompson, 2013) to help judge the extent to which he or she fits with the organization's culture or a specific position.

Because job seekers' intentions to apply (and applicants' intentions to interview) are positively correlated with the amount and depth of information they gather about a job and the company (Mason & Belt, 1986; Barber & Roehling, 1993; Gregory, Meade & Thompson, 2013), factors that either capture the job seekers' attention (e.g., website aesthetics) or engage the job seeker with the site (e.g., website perceived usefulness, ease of use), and therefore lead them to explore the site extensively, should lead to strong intentions to apply. Website aesthetics, for example, signal the website's level of credibility (Alsudani & Casey, 2009); and the more a website is perceived to be credible, the more the user will use the site (Fogg, Soohoo, Danielson, Marable, Stanford & Tauber, 2003). The more the user explores the site, the greater is the amount and depth of information they discover and thus, the stronger are intentions to apply.

Website perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use also affect the amount and depth of information that a job seeker discovers about a company through the effect they have on the job seeker's motivation to use the site. Davis (1989) argued that perceived ease of use affects

or creates an intrinsic motivation to use the technology (e.g., a company's website), and that perceived usefulness creates an instrumental motivation to use the technology because of the user's belief of a link between using the technology (e.g., the company's website) and a desirable outcome (e.g., finding a position). With respect to recruitment websites in particular, Lin (2010) confirmed that perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use are positively correlated with job seekers' intentions to use job-search websites.

While there is significant evidence to support the hypothesis that website characteristics affect job seekers' attitudes and intentions, it is safe to say that job seekers do not form intentions-to-apply in "social isolation" (Van Hove, 2014, p. 3). Job seekers also use sources such as word-of-mouth and belief of other's expectations that are independent of the company-controlled recruitment activities (Van Hove&Lievens, 2009). These social influences serve both an informational role and a normative role in forming intentions, and are captured well in The Theory of Reasoned Action construct, "social norms". Social norm refers to the job seeker's perceptions of what others think he or she should do (e.g., apply or not for the open position). If the job seeker believes that others approve of submitting an application then he or she is likely to intend to submit the application (Van Hooft, Born, Taxis& Van der Flier, 2006).

3. Model and Hypotheses

The perceived usefulness of a recruitment website is influenced by the content available to the potential employee as well as the aesthetic nature of the website design. These concepts are the basis for hypotheses one and two which are proposed below.

Hypothesis One (H1): Website aesthetics positively influence website perceived usefulness.

Hypothesis Two (H2): Website content positively influences website perceived usefulness.

A number of variables influence a user's perception of a website's ease of use. In this research context, the users are potential applicants and the website a recruitment site and the variables examined are related to potential applicants' attitudes toward these technologies. The examined, proposed relationships are displayed in hypotheses three and four.

Hypothesis Three (H3): A job-seeker's website self-efficacy positively influences their perceptions of website ease of use.

Hypothesis Four (H4): A job-seeker's attitude toward website technology positively influences their perceptions of website ease of use.

The relationship between a technology's ease of use and users' perceived usefulness has been well established in the literature. This relationship is included here and expressed as website's ease of use influencing its perceived usefulness. The specific relationship is formally expressed as hypothesis five.

Hypothesis Five (H5): A job-seeker's perceived ease of website use positively influences their perceptions of website usefulness.

The final three hypothesized relationships capture the variables influencing applicants' behavioral intent to join the firm or organization. These variables are website perceived usefulness, the website's ease of use, and the applicant's social norms toward the firm. These relationships are expressed in hypotheses six, seven, and eight below.

Hypothesis Six (H6): Website perceived usefulness positively influences the applicant's behavioral intentions toward the firm.

Hypothesis Seven (H7): Website ease of use positively influences the applicant's behavioral intentions toward the firm.

Hypothesis Eight (H8): The job-seeker's social norms toward the firm positively influences their behavioral intentions toward the firm.

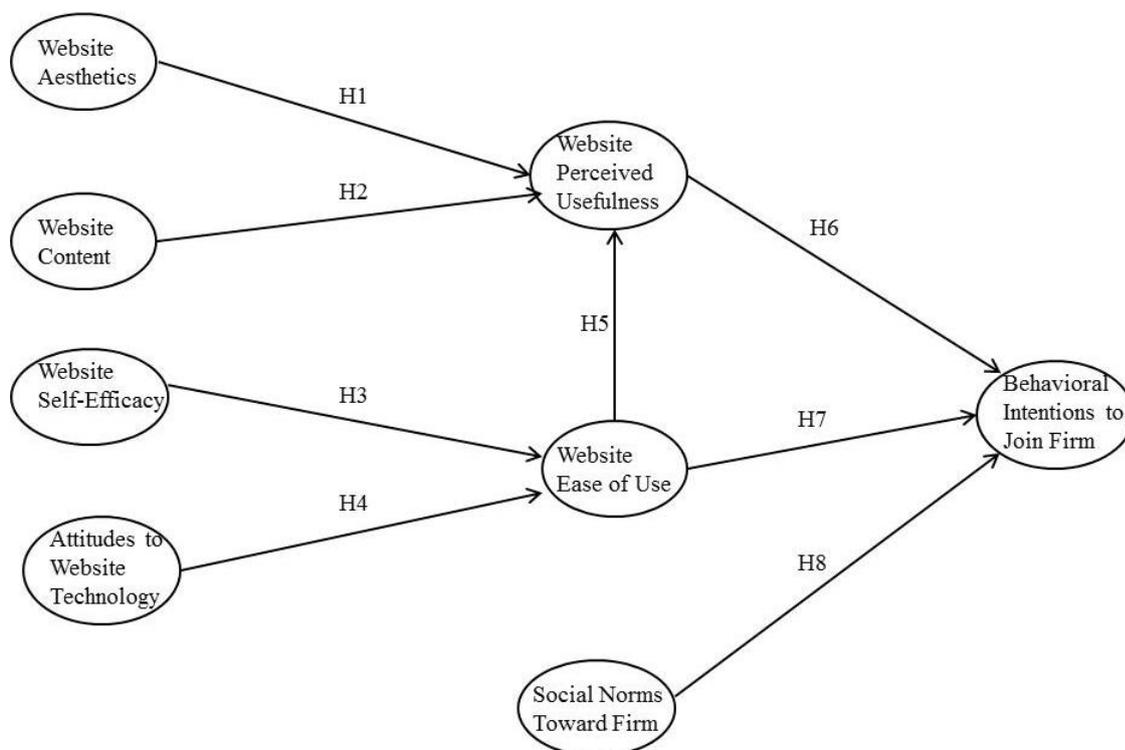


Figure 1. The Theoretical Model

4. Method

The data were collected by distributing a questionnaire to potential respondents. Two distribution methods were used. The first was to students enrolled in required business courses at a medium-sized university in the western United States. The second was to contract with Mechanical Turk on Amazon.com to have 100 of their contract workers complete the questionnaire and associated activities. The resulting total sample size was 199 respondents composed of 99 completed questionnaires from students and 100 completed by contract individuals through Mechanical Turk. This breakdown of the sample is shown in

Table 1.

Table 1: The Sample Demographics

Observation Source	Frequency	Percentage in Sample
Mechanical Turk	100	50.25%
Students	99	49.75%
Total	199	100.00%

Company ^a	Frequency	Percentage in Sample
1	80	40.20%
2	50	25.13%
3	39	19.60%
4	30	15.08%
Total	199	100.01% ^b

a. Company names redacted.

b. Details do not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Majors of the student respondents in the sample.

Major	Frequency	Percentage in Sample
Accounting	25	12.56%
Business Economics	9	4.52%
Finance	28	14.07%
Information Systems	7	3.52%

Management & Human Resources	24	12.06%
Marketing	22	11.06%
Operations Management	17	8.54%
PGA Golf Management	3	1.51%
Other	9	4.52%
Non-Students & Missing Responses	55	27.64%
Total	199	100.00%

The questionnaire administration process had several steps. Respondents were first asked to complete a subset of the questionnaire items. Next, they were given the name of one of four medium-sized companies and the name of an open position at the company. Respondents were then asked to go to the company website, find the designated position listing and initiate the job application process. They were then directed to search and identify another potential position of interest at this company for the future. After completing these activities on the assigned website, respondents finished the remaining items on the questionnaire. While the names of the companies websites' used in the sample are not revealed for privacy reasons, the companies were derived from the Fortune 500 list. The percentage of responses from each company are shown in Table 1. The breakdown of the representation of these companies in the sample is roughly 40%, 25%, 20%, and 15%.

The final demographic on the sample was the declared major of the students in the sample. These percentages of majors ranged from 1.51% to 14.07%. The most interesting value was that the largest response category was non-students and missing responses at 27.64%. From this result it appears that a number of the contract workers at Mechanical Turk are business students who reported their majors on the questionnaire.

5. Measures

The measures of the model's constructions were produced by collecting responses to appropriate questionnaire items. Each respondent was presented with a statement and given a five point scale on which to respond. The scale and weights used were: 1-strongly disagree; 2-disagree; 3-neutral; 4-agree; and 5-strongly agree. The psychometric properties of the measures were evaluated based on a confirmatory factor analysis using a structural equation modeling approach and procedure Calis in PC SAS version 9.2. In this factor analysis, all construct measures were exogenous in the model and scaled by setting its standard deviation equal to one. All these measures were also allowed to pair wise correlate. The fit of the model

to the data was acceptable, as illustrated by several fit statistics. The goodness of fit index and the adjusted goodness of fit index were 0.89 and 0.85. The root mean square residual and the standardized root mean square residual were both 0.04. The parsimonious goodness of fit index was 0.71. The chi-square statistic was 278.86 and was statistically significant at a 1% level with 202 degrees of freedom. The normed chi-square statistic was 1.38. The root mean square error of approximation was estimated to be 0.045 with 90% confidence intervals of 0.031 to 0.058. Bentler's comparative fit index was 0.97 as was Bentler and Bonett's non-normed index. Bentler and Bonett's normed index was 0.92 while Bollen's normed and non-normed indexes were 0.89 and 0.98, respectively.

Using the standardized path coefficients from the confirmatory factor analysis, the psychometric properties of the measures were calculated. Behavioral intentions to join firm was measured using three questionnaire items, with estimated standardized path coefficients of 0.92, 0.87, and 0.95. The calculated composite reliability coefficient was 0.94 and its percentage of shared variance extracted was 84%. Website perceived usefulness was also measured by three questionnaire items with path coefficients ranging from 0.73 to 0.84 which produced a composite reliability coefficient of 0.85 and shared variance extracted of 65%. The social norms toward the firm had three questionnaire items with standardized coefficients of 0.85, 0.95, and 0.91. Its composite reliability coefficient was 0.93 with shared variance extracted of 82%. The measure of website self-efficacy used two questionnaire items with path coefficients of 0.80 and 0.89. The calculated reliability coefficient was 0.83 with a percentage of shared variance extracted of 72%. The website ease of use measure was composed of four questionnaire items with path coefficients ranging from 0.81 to 0.88. The resulting composite reliability coefficient was 0.91 and its shared variance extracted was 73%. Two questionnaire items formed the attitude to website technology with standardized path coefficients of 0.73 and 0.86. The composite reliability coefficient was 0.78 with shared variance extracted of 64%. Website aesthetics was measured by three items with estimated standardized path coefficients of 0.76, 0.91, and 0.86. Its reliability coefficient was calculated as 0.88 and a shared variance extracted of 72%. The final measure was for website content measured by three questionnaire items which ranged from 0.77 to 0.89. Its composite reliability was measured as 0.86 and shared variance extracted as 68%. All these questionnaire items and values are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: The Indicants, Measures and Psychometric Properties Using Standardized Path Coefficients

Indicant	Standardized Path Coefficient	Composite Reliability	Percentage of Shared Variance Extracted
Behavioral Intentions to Join Firm		0.94	84%
In the future how likely would you be to consider. . . .			
1. Joining this organization?	0.92		
2. Joining this organization as an intern or after graduation?	0.87		
3. Joining this organization sometime in your life?	0.95		
Website Perceived Usefulness		0.85	0.65%
Regarding the company's website			
4. Overall, I find this company's website useful.	0.84		
5. The content on this company's website is helpful to me.	0.84		
6. This company's website is functional.	0.73		
Social Norms Toward the Firm		0.93	82%
7. Most people whose opinion I value would approve of me applying for a position with this organization in the next two years.	0.85		
8. Most people who are important to me would support me applying for a position with this organization in the next two years.	0.95		
9. Most people I care about would support me applying for a position with this organization in the	0.91		

next two years.			
Website Self-Efficacy		0.83	72%
10. I had never used the website before.	0.80		
11. I had only the website information for reference.	0.89		
Website Ease of Use		0.91	73%
When I think about this company's website			
12. My interaction with this company's website was clear and understandable.	0.86		
13. I find this company's website easy to use.	0.88		
14. I find it easy to locate the information that I need in this company's website.	0.86		
15. It is easy for me to use this company's website.	0.81		
Attitude to Website Technology		0.78	64%
16. Working with the Web is fun.	0.86		
17. I like working on the web.	0.73		
Website Aesthetics		0.88	72%
The website			
18. Has an attractive design.	0.76		
19. Design is innovative.	0.91		
20. Is creative.	0.86		
Website Content		0.86	68%
The website includes			

21. Good job information.	0.80		
22. A variety of information.	0.89		
23. Information about each job that was helpful.	0.77		

Based on the magnitudes of the standardized path coefficients that ranged from 0.73 to 0.95, it can be argued that item reliability was satisfied (Rainer & Harrison 1993). In terms of composite reliability, all the measures demonstrated acceptable values based on the calculated reliability coefficients of 0.78 to 0.94 (Rainer & Harrison 1993). All these reliability measures exceeded the generally accepted cutoff level of 0.70 (Nunnally 1978). Additionally, all the shared variance extracted percentages were above 50%. The combination of these results indicates that the measures satisfy convergent validity (Rainer & Harrison 1993, Igbaria&Greenhaus 1992).

Discriminant validity was also examined by comparing, for each pair of measures, their squared correlation to the individual percentages of shared variance extracted. If discriminant validity is satisfied, the items within a measure share greater common variation among themselves than between the two measures. This is demonstrated when for each measure pair, the individual measures' percentage of extracted shared variances are greater than the squared correlation between the two measures (Fornell&Larcker 1981). All the squared correlations were calculated using the confirmatory factor analysis results and are reported in Table 3. The percentages of shared variance extracted are shown in Table 2. From these values, it is seen that discriminant validity was satisfied for all the measures except website perceived usefulness and website ease of use. The estimated squared correlation between these measures was 0.66 which was slightly larger than the 65% of shared variance extracted for website perceived usefulness. As a result, for all the measures except website perceived usefulness, it can be concluded that construct validity is satisfied (Hair, Anderson, Tatham & Black, 1992).

Table 3: The Correlations and Squared Correlations Among the Measures

Measure Pairs	Correlation	Squared Correlation
Behavioral Intentions to Join Firm-Website Perceived Usefulness	0.51	0.26
Behavioral Intentions to Join Firm- Social Norms Toward Firm	0.60	0.36
Website Perceived Usefulness- Social Norms Toward Firm	0.45	0.20
Behavioral Intentions to Join Firm- Website Self-Efficacy	-0.03	0.00

Website Perceived Usefulness- Website Self-Efficacy	0.08	0.01
Social Norms Toward Firm- Website Self-Efficacy	0.14	0.02
Behavioral Intentions to Join Firm-Website Ease of Use	0.44	0.19
Website Perceived Usefulness- Website Ease of Use	0.81	0.66
Social Norms Toward Firm- Website Ease of Use	0.39	0.15
Website Self-Efficacy- Website Ease of Use	0.08	0.01
Behavioral Intentions to Join Firm-Attitudes to Website Technology	0.39	0.15
Website Perceived Usefulness- Attitudes to Website Technology	0.42	0.18
Social Norms Toward Firm- Attitudes to Website Technology	0.53	0.28
Website Self-Efficacy- Attitudes to Website Technology	0.15	0.02
Behavioral Intentions to Join Firm-Website Aesthetics	0.22	0.05
Website Perceived Usefulness- Website Aesthetics	0.47	0.22
Social Norms Toward Firm- Website Aesthetics	0.07	0.00
Website Self-Efficacy- Website Aesthetics	0.05	0.00
Website Ease of Use- Website Aesthetics	0.31	0.10
Attitudes to Website Technology- Website Aesthetics	0.30	0.09
Behavioral Intentions to Join Firm-Website Contents	0.34	0.12
Website Perceived Usefulness- Website Contents	0.59	0.35
Social Norms Toward Firm- Website Contents	0.42	0.18
Website Self-Efficacy- Website Contents	0.34	0.12
Website Ease of Use- Website Contents	0.50	0.25

Attitudes to Website Technology- Website Contents	0.47	0.22
Website Aesthetics- Website Contents	0.17	0.03
Website Ease of Use- Attitudes to Website Technology	0.40	0.16

6. Estimation and Results

The model was estimated using the measures already described and procedure Calis in PC SAS version 9.2. The estimation method was maximum likelihood. The quality of the fit between the model and the data was acceptable, as indicated by several statistics. The goodness of fit index was 0.87 and the adjusted goodness of fit was 0.84. The parsimonious goodness of fit index was 0.73. The chi-square statistic was 322.62 with 212 degrees of freedom. It was statistically significant at a 1% level. The corresponding normed chi-square statistic was 1.52. The root mean square residual and the standardized root mean square residual were both 0.075. The root mean square error of approximation was 0.053 with 90% confidence interval limits of 0.041 to 0.064. Bentler's comparative fit index was 0.96 with incremental fit indexes (i.e., Bentler&Bonett's as well as Bollen's normed and non-normed indexes) ranging from 0.88 to 0.96. These summary statistics indicate an acceptable fit between the model and the data (Hair et al. 1992; Hooper, Coughlan & Mullin, 2008; Rainer & Harrison, 1993). All these values are displayed in Table 4.

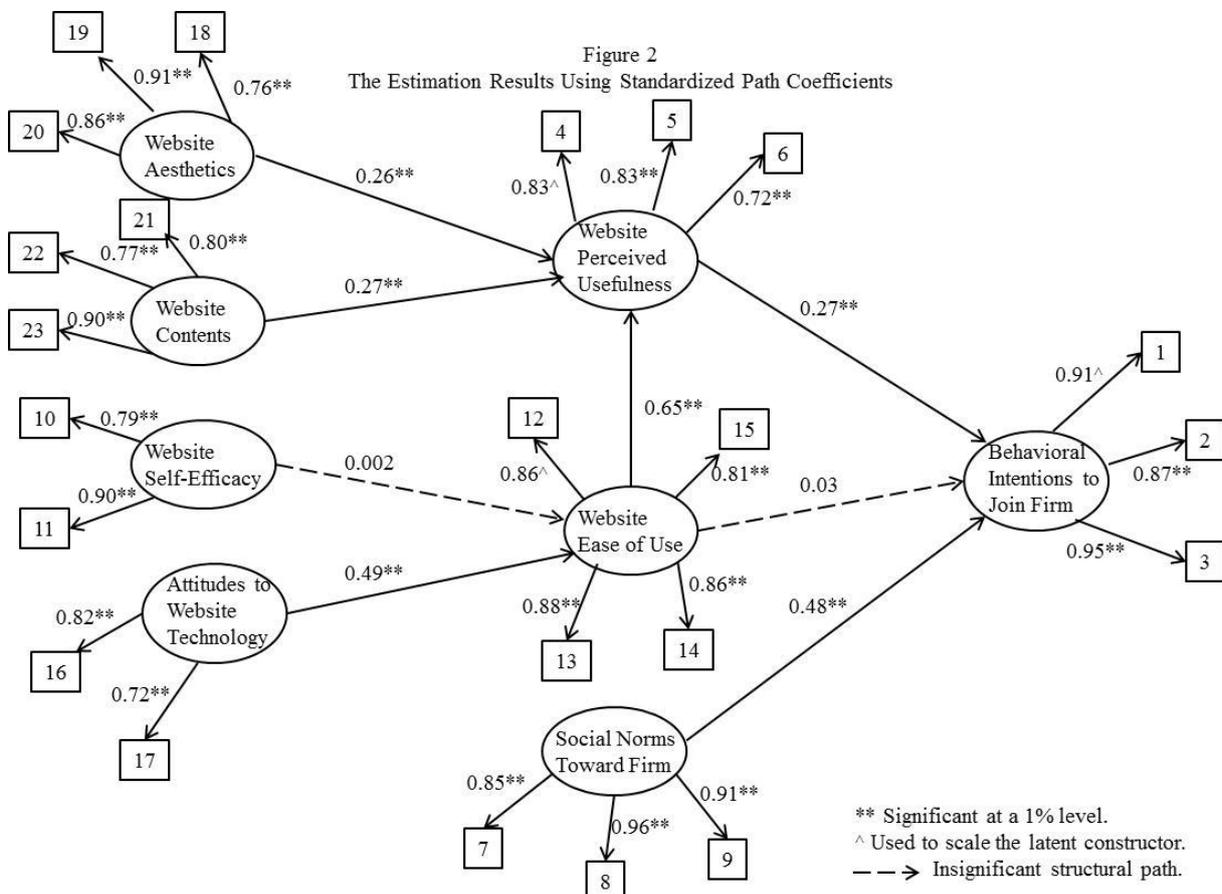
Table 4: The Statistics Summarizing the Fit of the Model to the Data.

Statistic	Value
Goodness of Fit Index	0.87
Adjusted Goodness of Fit	0.84
Parsimonious GFI	0.73
Chi-square Statistic	322.62**
Degrees of Freedom	212
Normed Chi-square Statistic	1.52
Root Mean Square Residual (RMSR)	0.075
Standardized RMSR	0.075
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)	0.053

RMSEA Lower & Upper 90% Confidence Interval	0.041 to 0.064
Bentler’s Comparative Fit Index	0.96
Bentler&Bonett’s Normed Index	0.90
Bentler&Bonett’s Non-normed Index	0.96
Bollen Normed Index	0.88
Bollen Non-normed Index	0.96

** Significant at a 1% level.

The details of the measurement and structural models’ estimation are shown in Figure 2 using standardized path coefficients. In the measurement model, all the paths which were free to vary were also statistically significant at a 1% level. All the structural paths between the measures are statistically significant at a 1% level, except two. These paths were between website self-efficacy and website ease of use and website ease of use and behavioral intentions to join the firm. All the other structural paths were statistically significant with the hypothesized signs.



7. Discussion

Qualified job seekers are critical for an organization's continued development, and ultimately, survival. The behavioral intentions of job seekers toward a specific firm or organization, if positive, help provide a viable supply of applicants, and subsequently, employees who can serve as a source of sustainable competitive advantage for the organization, and minimize the negative effects of job seekers' withdrawal from the recruitment process. Therefore, a job seeker's intentions toward the company are an important variable of which senior management and human resources staff should be concerned and continually monitor. Furthermore, identifying and understanding the variables influencing job seekers' intentions is an important topic for investigation. In particular, it is essential to understand the variables that influence intentions early in the recruitment process when job seekers are gathering information and forming attitudes with little or no personal contact with the company. Because job seekers' attitudes toward an organization early in the recruitment process are strong predictors of their attitudes toward the organization later in the process (Turban, Forret & Hendrickson, 1998), there is little opportunity to change attitudes and intentions that are formed by factors that play a role in forming early attitudes toward the potential employer (e.g., social norms, website perceived usefulness, website ease of use).

Social norms toward the firm have significant, positive influences of these behavioral intentions. These social norms focus on the perspectives in relation to the firm of individuals important to the respondent or applicant. This result may give credence to the concept of social responsibility producing positive influences for the firm. Such social responsibility efforts may create a positive image of the firm in the minds of the general public. The positive image among individuals important to potential job applicants can influence these applicants' behavioral intentions in a positive way. In addition, the need to understand the role of social norms in job-search decisions is further heightened by the rise of social networking sites (e.g., LinkedIn, Facebook) and company review sites (e.g., Glassdoor). These forms of electronic word-of-mouth are widely accepted as influencers of consumer purchase decisions (e.g., Duan, Gu & Whinston, 2008; Cheung, Xiao & Liu, 2014; Yoo, Kim & Sanders, 2015) and likely play important roles in affecting job seekers' social norms (as well as Nikolaou, 2014). Further, if a job seeker's experience with the organization's site is unfavorable, the effect on future job seekers' intentions may be exacerbated by any negative word of mouth that might result in harm to the organization's reputation in the labor market (Dupey & Kaur, 2014).

Website perceived usefulness was shown to also positively influence behavioral intentions to join the firm. This means that if the website job applicants use to apply for positions is seen as useful in the completion of the application, this has positive influences on behavioral intentions, likely through their motivation to use the site to gather more and in depth information about the company or position. Website content positively influences website perceived usefulness, which makes sense. Good content on the website makes the website useful. In addition providing aesthetically pleasing content also improves perceived website usefulness. Thus, targeted and creative content on the website facilitating the applicant's efforts to seek information and then to apply for a position positively influences their

behavioral intentions through perceived usefulness of the website.

In the same spirit, a website that is perceived as easy to use also positively influences website perceived usefulness and ultimately behavioral intentions. An easy to use website typically motivates users' desire to continue seeking information from the site, facilitates the completion of job applications and improves the website's usefulness. The results also indicate that website ease of use does not directly influence behavioral intentions to join the firm. Such influences occur only through improving perceptions of the website's usefulness. In turn, website ease of use is positively influenced by the applicant's attitudes to website technology. Since the questionnaire items regarding these attitudes were positive in nature (e.g. I like working on the web), this positive relationship is understandable. The result implies that targeting the technologies employed to match these attitudes encourage perceptions of website ease of use, perceived usefulness and ultimately behavioral intentions. Interestingly, website self-efficacy of the applicants was not found to influence their perceptions of the website's ease of use. A potential explanation for this result could be that applicants' have significant experience and familiarity with website technologies. These experiences and familiarity render self-efficacy insignificant in regard to website ease of use, at least in this context.

8. Conclusions

A steady stream of potential, qualified job applicants is important for an organization's survival and growth. Due to advances in technology, the growing implementation and use of web-based technologies, as well as cost savings from digital methods in recruiting employees, many organizations use websites to collect potential employees' job applications. Understanding the influences of these websites and concomitant factors on the recruiting process is important. The research presented above indicates that applicants' behavioral intentions to join the firm are directly and positively influenced by the applicants' social norms toward the firm and website perceived usefulness. Actions a firm can take influencing these intentions include positive public relations and social responsibility to positively impact social norms toward the firm. Similar influences on these behavioral intentions are found from applicants' attitudes toward website technologies via website ease of use and perceived usefulness. The content on the website and the aesthetics of the website also influence these behavioral intentions through perceived usefulness of the website. Thus, through appropriate management of the application website's content, aesthetics, and technology matched to potential applicants' attitudes, an organization can influence these behavioral intentions and hopefully provide a consistent stream of qualified job applicants.

The results of this study may be particularly salient to organizations with low familiarity and organizations with an unfavorable reputation in the labor market. Cable and Turban (2001) concluded that when a job seeker's familiarity with the company is low the company suffers from a "liability of newness" (p. 128). The lack of familiarity causes the job seeker to question the legitimacy of the potential employer. Thus, even when an unfamiliar organization is able to entice a job seeker to visit the organization's website, the site must overcome an initial disadvantage. If the site is perceived to be aesthetically pleasing, easy to

use and useful then the job seeker is more likely to become engaged with the site and therefore, be motivated to extensively research the unfamiliar company's site prior to forming an intention.

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