

THE ROLE OF INFORMATION SOURCES ON PERCEPTIONS OF CORPORATE
REPUTATION AND INTENTION TO PURSUE EMPLOYMENT

by

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To my parents, for all your unconditional love.

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ABSTRACT

The present study explores how companies disseminate messages regarding their reputation for corporate social responsibility from three different sources (newspaper articles, official company website, and social media) to achieve early recruitment goals. Examining potential employees' intentions to pursue employment and attraction toward a company reveals that the two different types of corporate social responsibility messages, environmental and charitable, are perceived to be equally effective in influencing the potential applicants' intention to pursue employment or their attraction toward the organization. Prospective applicants who learn of the corporate social responsibility message from social media tend to be more attracted to the organization and possess a higher intention to pursue employment than if they obtain the information from a company's official website. However, when trustworthiness is considered, prospective applicants who trust information from the company's official website are more likely to apply for a job vacancy.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

With the constantly growing attention to globalization, attracting great talent is one of the priorities for organizations to sharpen or maintain their competitiveness. Michaels, Handfield-Jones, and Axelrod (2001) coined the phrase “war for talent” in their book to describe the progressively global phenomenon of recruiting top-quality and highly skilled applicants in order to deal with competitive rivals. As Breaugh (2013) states, “Attracting the attention of potential job applicants is the first step in the recruitment process” (p. 394). In short, companies cannot hire the best candidates for open positions if potential applicants never have the intention to apply in the first place. Therefore, in order to inform the target pool of prospective job seekers about much more than the company’s financial achievements, selecting the optimal recruitment method to publicize a job opening is critical.

As part of a strategic recruitment plan, companies can work to disseminate details about their environmental activism and charitable donations that are beyond business practices. Companies can increase their efforts to reduce their environmental impact, and integrate policies that enhance social awareness and education; however, they also must confirm the public receives information regarding these practices in order to ensure they attract the right candidates for jobs. Pro-environmental messages play an important role in influencing the applicant’s attraction toward an organization (Aiman-Smith, Bauer, & Cable, 2001; Bauer & Aiman-Smith, 1996) and intention to pursue a job (Behrend, Baker, and Thompson, 2009). Therefore, qualified job seekers may have positive

perceptions of companies that strive to act as a catalyst for promotion of sustainable practices within the community.

In this frenetic world, information technology can help to make the processes of communicating faster and easier. Regardless of the type of organization, awareness of evolving communication methods is necessary. According to the results of a recent survey published in April 2013 by Alonso and Esen from the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), the number of organizations that have used social networking websites such as LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter to recruit potential job candidates has increased from 34% in 2008 to 77% in 2013. Organizations can now take advantage of various advanced technology platforms to promote their pro-environmental efforts and charitable achievements to every stakeholder (i.e., customers, employees, and shareholders) and additional audiences in the community. Consequently, it has remarkably transformed the process of recruitment for businesses.

Traditionally, applicants could only rely on mass media, such as newspapers and television, to obtain information about an organization. But as Internet and social media aggressively gain popularity, prospective applicants have opportunities to effortlessly obtain specific information about an organization from its website or individuals closely associated with the organization itself. Prospective applicants no longer need to passively depend on only the direct information from organizations; they can actively seek out the information that they believe is most related or important to them from a wide variety of independent sources. In a BusinessWeek article published in October 2009, Liz Ryan presents some practical ways to systematically investigate potential

employers via different sources of information. For example, job seekers may review websites that contain inside information posted by current and former employees or may network virtually through professional online profiles to seek truthful information about a specific company. Applicants can then engage in interactive communication with other individuals within their social media networks, such as Facebook or Twitter, to confirm what they have learned or even to gain further perspective about working for a specific company. Based on the collected information, applicants may form an initial perception of a company that is completely independent of that company's own public relations efforts. As a result, information sources that were unavailable even a few years ago can now potentially alter applicants' perceptions and thereby their intentions to apply for a given position.

Corporate Reputation (CR)

General Mills, Kraft Foods, Inc., and Johnson & Johnson were recently rated by consumers, respectively, as America's top three most reputable companies among 150 largest companies in the U.S. (Forbes, 2012). In today's world of highly competitive environment and advanced technology, what constitutes the definition of corporate reputation? Throughout the literature reviewed, a diverse array of definitions is offered with different perceptions (e.g., Barnett, Jermier, & Lafferty, 2006; Burke, Martin, & Cooper, 2011; Dalton & Croft, 2003; Mahon, 2002). Accounting signals of profitability and risk, for example, and institutional signals of social responsibility are a few factors that may influence individuals' perception of an organization's reputation (Fombrun &

Shanley, 1990). However, practitioners and scholars are concerned about the lack of consensus over the definition of corporate reputation.

In 1988, Weigelt and Camerer defined corporate reputation as “a set of attributes ascribed to a firm, inferred from the firm’s past actions” (p. 443). According to this definition, organizations must be attentive to the relationship between their historical performance and their reputation. In simple terms, corporate reputation may be described as a generalized perception or belief based on the past that one holds toward a company; however, this generalization hides the complexity of corporate reputation. Alternatively, reputation can be seen as a formula of adding performance, behavior, and communication together (Doorley & Garcia, 2006). This implies that a corporation’s ability to communicate and perform effectively is highly related to its reputation.

The research on corporate reputation began to flourish across various academic journals in the 1990s. Fombrun and Rindova (1996) formulated a general concept of corporate reputation by compiling different perspectives from distinct disciplinary literatures, including, for example, economists’ standpoints and sociologists’ views, to provide a common definition for scholars and practitioners. By integrating numerous views, they propose a common definition of corporate reputation as “a collective representation of a firm’s past actions and results that describes the firm’s ability to deliver valued outcomes to multiple stakeholders. It gauges a firm’s relative standing both internally with employees and externally with its stakeholders, in both its competitive and institutional environments” (p. 10). Notice that the external judgments

of organizations' stakeholders are vital in terms of the evaluation of a company's reputation.

In addition to the various definitions of corporate reputation, there are several other concepts that are closely related to corporate reputation. These concepts have overlapping ideas that are created by scholars across different areas. Walker (2010) summarizes the differences and similarities among three of these terms: organizational identity, organizational image, and corporate reputation. He states that corporate reputation captures not only the actual perceptions of stakeholders internally but also externally; in contrast, organizational identity simply represents internal stakeholders' actual perception, whereas organizational image mainly relates to external stakeholders' desired perception of the organization. Additionally, Walker (2010) discusses the endurance and timeframe of corporate reputation. First, the endurance of corporate reputation is rather unlikely to change because of its existence for an extended period of time when compared with organizational image. Second, the length for establishing corporate reputation is relatively longer than organizational image. Organizational image can be an instant snapshot of the attained perceptions, which is more fluid or unstable than corporate reputation.

Because of the importance of having prominent companies' reputations in the potential applicants' minds, companies desire to maintain or distinguish specific types of corporate reputation. Lange, Lee, and Dai (2011) organize concepts of organizational reputation into three dimensions: being known, being known for something, and generalized favorability. First, "being known" defines applicants' or customers' general

shared perception of the organization without any judgments or assessment. Second, “being known for something” explains that an organization’s perceived quality is specifically related to applicant or customer judgments of particular goods and services that the organization produces. Third, “generalized favorability” states that applicants and customers generate judgment regarding the overall reputation of the organization by evaluating a varied set of resources. Applicants and customers may compare and contrast the general attributes of the organization with other related organizations to make a sound judgment about its reputation.

Once the preferred type of corporate reputation is determined, companies can focus on establishing their reputation. Recently, Walker (2010) conducted a systematic literature review about corporate reputation. By summarizing different prominent theories, he constructs a sequence companies can follow to build, maintain, and defend their reputation. Throughout of the sequence, organizations focus on continually building and keeping their reputations at an optimal level with strategic signals (Walker, 2010). Stakeholders perceive signals and form judgments based on their impressions.

Fombrun (1996) believes “corporate reputation is valuable because it informs us about what products to buy, what companies to work for, or what stocks to invest in” (p. 5). Critically, corporate reputation may be used as a reference for employment-related decisions. As a result, a positive corporate reputation can link to successful recruitment. Turban and Cable (2003) investigates the association between corporate reputation and the size as well as quality of the applicant pool. They confirmed that organizations with well-established reputations tend to attract a higher number of applicants; therefore, the

higher-quality applicants may be selected by these organizations throughout the recruitment process. About the same time, Cable and Turban (2003), in a separate study, find some statistical data to support how reputation influences recruitment outcomes. They concluded that “a given job is more attractive to job seekers when the job is offered by an organization with a positive reputation” (p. 2244). Job applicants are inclined to use corporate reputation as a signal pertaining to job attributes (Cable & Turban, 2003). In short, corporate reputation influences how prospective applicants make employment decisions.

Beyond the connection of recruitment, Roberts and Dowling (2002) connect the relationship between organizational reputation and financial performance. They found empirical evidence that corporate companies with excellent performances tend to maintain higher quality performances as long as they sustain relatively high reputations. Further empirical analysis conducted by Sabate and Putente (2003) reiterate not only the relationship between organizational reputation and financial performance but also the direction of its causality. The evidence suggests a reciprocal relationship between corporate reputation and financial performance and vice versa (Sabate & Putente, 2003). However, a company gains not only profitable income with its reputation but also expectations from stakeholders. Raised expectations are held by outside observers for companies to maintain and fulfill beyond their philanthropy and legal obligations.

Corporate Social Performance (CSP)

Carroll's (1979) conceptual model of corporate performance provides a solid foundation for the later development of corporate social responsibility (CSR) and

performance. According to Carroll (1979), there are three components for CSP: (1) identification of the range of obligations within the social responsibility categories; (2) recognition of the addressed social issues; and (3) description of social responsiveness philosophies. Within the three components, Carroll (1979) defined corporate social responsibility with four main categories: economic, legal, ethical, and discretionary (or philanthropic). In 1985, Wartick and Cochran built upon Carroll's four categories of social responsibility and presented their corporate social performance model. The model was composed of three areas: principles of CSR, processes of corporate social responsiveness, and policies of social issues management (Wartick & Cochran, 1985).

Wood's (1991) definition of corporate social performance further explained the foundations laid by Carroll (1979) and Wartick and Cochran (1985). According to Wood (1991), CSP is "a business organization's configuration of principles of social responsibility, process of social responsiveness, and policies, programs, and observable outcomes as they relate to the firm's societal relationships" (p. 693). Therefore, this framework provides a descriptive approach to evaluate companies' activities with a set of fundamental categories and outlines the environmental effects and human impact in society. Companies may gain a positive reputation by addressing stakeholders' social and environmental concerns to advance their competitive advantages. Brammer and Pavelin (2006) explore idea of linking CSP and corporate reputation. The results of their study support the conclusion that CSP tends to have the capacity to effect corporate reputation; however, the particular type of CSR should be congruent with the stakeholders' concerns in the community. In other words, companies may enhance their

reputation when their CSP is aligned with their stakeholders' interests. Quevedo-Puente, Fuente-Sabaté, and Delgado-García (2007) discussed the intertwined relationship between corporate reputation (CR) and corporate social performance (CSP). Quevedo-Puente et al.'s (2007) study concluded the following:

CR and CSP include firm's relations with every stakeholder in their definition. CSP, however, is an objective variable whereas CR is a perceptual variable. That is, CSP is a comprehensive assessment of firm's fulfillment of stakeholders expectations, whereas CR is the firm's perceived capacity to meet stakeholders expectations. In essence, CSP describes how the firm delivers value at a moment of time among stakeholders and CR is the perception of how the firm is going to deliver value in the future. (p. 68)

A study conducted by Fombrun and Shanley (1990) found empirical support for stakeholders' tendency to assess companies with higher reputations when the companies contribute higher social responsibility. This is consistent with Turban and Greening's (1996) research. They stated that organizations with a positive reputation of social performance tend to be rated as more attractive than organizations with lower CSP. Based on findings of both studies, stakeholders may generate positive reputations when companies ambitiously address their nonfinancial concerns regarding social or environmental involvements in the community. This perception of being positively social responsible may influence potential applicants' decisions about considering and pursuing employment.

Recruitment

In order to compose a cohesive workforce and, ultimately, establish a prosperous organization, successful recruitment is crucial. Lewis (1985) stated that recruitment is “the activity that generates a pool of applicants, who have the desire to be employed by the organization, from which those suitable can be selected” (p. 29). The objective is to attract and generate qualified candidates for the selection process to fulfill the job vacancy based on their capabilities and credentials. Therefore, organizations may try to establish a prominent reputation or display their best possible image to attract potential job seekers in the early stage of the recruitment process. In the century of globalization, potential employees can come from many different sources of recruitment, such as employee referrals, job agencies, company recruiters and recruitment websites. Depending on the job seekers’ recruitment situation; they may only have access to public information or partial private information about the organization and the job vacancy. With this imbalance of information, one party may possess more or better information than others, and that can substantially affect potential applicants’ intentions to pursue employment.

In 1973, Spence explained the model of job market signaling theory in his economics research. He believed that organizations might have uncertainty about prospective job applicants’ productivity prior to employment. Therefore, organizations may seek signals that are sent from the applicants (e.g., high credential in the job market) in order to protect their investments. Employers can only predict a limited amount of the attributes of potential job applicants because observation cannot be done directly and

attentively prior to hiring (Spence, 1973). As a result, it is beneficial to both parties, the employers and the potential employees, to secure their returns and costs by conveying and receiving desirable signals about themselves to the other party. Recently, Connelly, Certo, Ireland, and Reutzel (2011) reviewed the key concepts of signaling theory. They concluded that, in the area of human resource management, signaling has a significant role in terms of the recruitment processes. They explained, “Signaling theory focuses primarily on the deliberate communication of positive information in an effort to convey positive organizational attributes” (p. 44). Therefore, signals are sent from signalers or insiders who have the private information to communicate with receivers or outsiders who may find them useful for observation and interpretation (Connelly et al., 2011).

Rynes, Bretz, and Gerhart (1991) revealed that applicants tend to evaluate an organization based on their overall experiences and reactions during recruitment. In line with signaling theory (Spence, 1973), they also suggested that prospective applicants tend to perceive stronger signals on the recruitment experience particularly when limited information is available about the organization. They explained that the social effects throughout the applicants’ recruitment experience could have significant implications for the organization. The potential applicants are likely to create preliminary preference and value information obtained from their friends or acquaintances that are already employed by the organization (Rynes et al., 1991).

In a recent study, Van Hove and Lievens (2009) explored how word-of-mouth as a source of recruitment affects applicants. They stated, “Positive word-of-mouth was not only determined by the characteristics of its recipient and its source but also by their

mutual relationship” (p. 348). Based on their findings, in the early recruitment processes, potential applicants tend to have a positive perception of a company’s attractiveness and decision of application when they perceive positive word-of-mouth information (Van Hoya & Lievens, 2009). In sum, potential applicants may seek information from people who are closely tied to them or are perceived as experts before making their application decision. With the availability and proliferation of information on the Internet, platforms like social media or the organization’s website can have a critical role in this employment process. In the early recruiting stage, companies can project positive information, or observable characteristics, through various sources of media to attract potential applicants and influence their application decision.

Public Relations

As noted above, communication is one of the crucial elements that can influence corporate reputation. Today, companies often employ the use of new media, for example, the Internet and websites, to inform and communicate with the community about their corporate social responsibility. Jose and Lee (2007) explored the information released on international corporation websites and stated, “Almost 60% of the Fortune 200 companies have a corporate environmental policy” (p. 312). Subsequently, Lee, Fairhurst, and Wesley (2009) analyzed the context of corporate social responsibility by reviewing the top hundred United States retailers’ websites. They revealed that statements about CSR principles were found in more than half of the retailers’ websites. This suggests that corporate websites have been accepted by a majority of companies as a way to promote their CSR initiatives. However, companies can exploit the power of

media to establish a reputation for corporate social performance beyond their own websites.

Einwiller, Carroll, and Korn (2010) stated “The news media are one of the primary ways that the public learns about organizations, their activities and their connections to matters of public interests” (p. 299). Media are often a critical link between companies and the public. At the same time, Rieh and Danielson (2007) state “As people gain access to a wider variety of information resources, they face greater uncertainty regarding who and what can be believed and, indeed, who or what is responsible for the information they encounter” (p. 1). With the reliance on using a variety of platforms to be more informed, perhaps unsurprisingly, prospective applicants may have doubts about the trustworthiness of the information sources. Cameron (1994) investigated the differences between publicity and advertising concerning third-party endorsement. He explained that advertising is proven to have lower trustworthiness than publicity because advertising presumes to have a gain in return, has a persuasive intention, and is considered to be a biased source. In sum, the impact of third-party endorsement creates “some fairly durable advantage for publicity over advertising” (p. 205); thus, readers tend to have better memory about editorial content than advertising content (Cameron, 1994). This stimulates the consideration of trustworthiness of the information sources.

With similar findings, Collins and Stevens (2002) conducted a research study on early recruitment activities with the combination of customer-based brand equity theory and research from marketing literature. Collins and Stevens (2002) stated customer-

based brand equity refers “Beliefs held by individual consumers about a product’s or a service’s brand (i.e., perceptions of the name or logo) that affect their preferences and purchasing decisions relative to other unbranded products or services with similar attributes” (p. 5). They concluded that an organization with positive publicity tends to have better outcomes in terms of early recruitment activities (Collins & Stevens, 2002). In general, the trustworthiness of the information sources seems to be valuable and plays a significant role. Therefore, unbiased information, or information without manipulations, about companies may influence potential applicants’ perceptions of the company and decisions to pursue employment. In the same study, Collins and Stevens (2002) also provided empirical support that potential applicants who encounter higher amounts of positive word-of-mouth endorsements are likely to have better attitudes and perceptions about the organization as well as the available positions. These results focus on credibility because the organizations cannot or should not have any direct influences over the information. Companies may gain credibility with information from independent third parties and stakeholders.

In recent years, social media have become a common avenue for communicating instantly. Social media can be interpreted as a web-based platform for interactive information sharing and discussing (e.g., Facebook and Twitter). Despite the growing popularity of social media, a recent content analysis conducted by Taylor and Kent (2010) raised questions about the value of social media in the area of public relations. They stated, “Claims of social media power far outweigh evidence of social media effectiveness as a communication tool” (p. 207). This contends that the potential effect

of social media may be overrated. The answer may perhaps be the sources of the information communicating through different mass media. Wright and Hinson (2008) stated “Traditional news media receive higher scores than blogs and social media in terms of accuracy, credibility, telling the truth and being ethical” (p. 16). In this sense, social media and traditional media may contain the same information about the targeted organizations; however, the perception of trustworthiness may vary. It elicits the question of which media are perceived as trustworthy by the potential applicants.

Practitioners have increasingly noticed the prevalence of the use of social media as a platform for individuals to exchange information from a spectrum outside of conventional media and advertising and to then weigh the usefulness of all information. However, empirical research has not yet provided any insights concerning how prospective applicants may be using information from social media to decide upon the pursuit - or even the acceptance of - a given job. The following research questions are raised:

- 1) In the early recruitment stage, how does a company’s positive corporate social responsibility reputation about environment and charity influence applicant’s intention to pursue employment?
- 2) Does the source of information (newspaper article, company official website, and social media) impact applicant’s intention to pursue employment?
- 3) In the early recruitment stage, how does a company’s positive corporate social responsibility reputation about environment and charity influence applicant’s attraction to organization?

- 4) Does source of information (newspaper article, company official website, and social media) impact applicant's attraction to organization?
- 5) Which source(s) of information is perceived as trustworthy?
 - 5.1. Newspaper article
 - 5.2. Company official website
 - 5.3. Social media
- 6) Does the applicant's perception of the trustworthiness of the information source influence their intentions to pursue employment?

CHAPTER TWO: METHODS

Participants

In order to qualify for participation, students must be at least 18 years of age or older. All of the participants were recruited through an online research sign-up system (SONA). Upon successful completion of the study, participants might receive credit to fulfill one of their classwork requirements. Participants were ensured that their confidential information would not be revealed.

Initially, a total of 339 undergraduate psychology students from a large southern public university took part in the study. In an effort to protect the quality of responses collected, some of the participants' responses were not included in the data set. Responses from 3 of the participants were deemed as incomplete due to the omission of answers to more than three quarters of the total items. Responses from 58 of the participants were not included based on incorrect answers to the manipulation check questions. Hence, 278 participants remained. This study was a combined effort with another research study, and 85 participants were not related to the current study so were not included. The final sample size was 193 participants.

The demographic information of the 193 participants is as follows: Sixty-three percent of the participants were women, 37% were men, and 1% was identified as other. The majority (56%) of the participants were freshman, followed by sophomores (29%), juniors (10%), and seniors (5%). The primary reported ethnicity was Caucasian or White (59%), followed by African American or Black (23%), other ethnicities or mixed (10%), Asian (4%), Hispanic or Latino (4%), and American Indian or Alaska Native (1%). Most

(77%) participants were between 18 and 20 years of age, with the range spanning from 18 to 36 years.

Design

In this study, a fictitious consumer electronics company was described and participants were told that it was expecting to recruit new talent. A 2 x 3 between-subjects factorial design was used. The independent variable was corporate social responsibility and there were two types of corporate social responsibility: Environmental and charitable. Within each of the independent variables, there were three different sources of information to disseminate the reputation of corporate social responsibility: a newspaper article, a company's official website, or social media site. Participants' intention to pursue employment, attractiveness toward a single fictitious company, and perceptions of trustworthiness of three different media sources were collected. All of the participants were randomly assigned to one of six groups: (a) newspaper article with positive pro-environmental message; (b) social media site with positive pro-environmental message; (c) company's official website with positive pro-environmental message; (d) newspaper article with positive charitable message; (e) social media site with positive charitable message; or (f) company's official website with positive charitable message. In addition, the perceptions of trustworthiness of three different media sources were measured.

Procedure

Participants in the study provided informed consent before taking part in the study. Contact information was provided to answer participants' questions about the

research study. Then, a hyperlink was provided to access an online survey at Qualtrics, online survey software. The system would routinely save and store the data upon the progression of completing the questionnaires.

Participants were encouraged to imagine themselves as prospective applicants who graduated from college and had been working on their first career job for a couple of years. Upon further review, participants would discover an image that disseminated a pro-environmental or charitable message based on one of three types of media (see the images in Appendix A). Participants completed the questionnaire to assess their perceptions regarding the attractiveness of and their intention to work for the fictitious company. Manipulation checks were employed to ensure participants truly understood the scenarios and paid attention throughout the assessment. At the end of the questionnaire, items were designed to evaluate the participants' perceptions of trustworthiness toward the various media sources. Demographic information was gathered at the end of the questionnaire.

Measures

There were two main measures in this study. The first measure was based on the items created by Highhouse, Lievens, and Sinar (2003) to measure the participants' general attraction toward an organization. Within the organizational attraction items, there were three dimensions: Organizational attractiveness, intentions toward the company, and the company prestige. Each dimension consisted of 5 items for a total of 15 items.

Organizational attractiveness measure.

According to Highhouse et al. (2003), the coefficients of internal consistency, Cronbach's alpha, for each dimension, organizational attractiveness, intentions toward the company, and the company prestige, were .88, .82, and .83, respectively. Participants used a 5-point response scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) to respond to the items. As stated in the original Highhouse et al. (2003) questionnaire, "For me, this company would be a good place to work" and "I would not be interested in this company except as a last resort," for example, were some items to measure organizational attractiveness; "I would accept a job offer from this company" and "I would recommend this company to a friend looking for a job," for instance, were some items to measure intentions to pursue; and "Employees are probably proud to say they work at this company" and "This is a reputable company to work for," for example, were some items to measure prestige.

Additional questions were incorporated beyond the original questionnaire of Highhouse et al. (2003) for the current study. Overall, 10 questions were integrated to increase the total number of items from 15 to 25. In terms of the dimension of organizational attractiveness, 5 questions were added, such as "I could not picture myself working for this company" and "This company would be my top choice." Similarly, there are 4 questions added to the questionnaire to measure the dimension of intentions to pursue like "A job offer from this company would not interest me"; and there is 1 question added to the questionnaire to measure the dimension of prestige like "This company does not have a good reputation." Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients for

the dimension of organizational attractiveness, intentions toward the company, and the company prestige, increased to .91, .86, and .83, respectively.

Information source perceptions measure.

The second measure also had a 5-point response scale to evaluate the participants' perception of the sources of information. Since the study presented a newspaper article, a simulated company's official website, and a social media site as sources of information about the organization, a measure regarding perceptions of these sources was developed. The items were inspired by and partially adopted from the study by Rusman, Van Bruggen and Valcke (2009). There were six different dimensions: Trustworthiness, knowledge, sources, openness or sharing, reliability, and decision. Each dimension contains questions that were specifically based on the three different media sources. For the first 5 dimensions, participants selected one of the responses with the scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) to answer the items. Example items were "I trust the information provided by most people that I know on social media" to measure trustworthiness; "In general, newspaper articles provide trustworthy information" to measure knowledge; "People I know provide me with trustworthy information" to measure sources; "Companies keep information from the public" to measure openness or sharing; and "Information from newspaper articles is not reliable" to measure reliability.

In contrast, the last dimension of decisions, each item was rated using a 5-point response scale ranging from 1 (to no extent) to 5 (to a very great extent). An example item was "To what extent do you make your decision about places to work based on information from social media?" to measure the participants' decision. In sum, the

dimensions of openness or sharing and reliability consisted of 9 items each; the dimensions of trustworthiness and decision consisted of 6 items each; and the dimensions of knowledge and sources consisted of 3 items each to accumulate a total of 36 items.

The 36 items were divided into 3 different groups based on media type:

Trustworthiness of company social media site, trustworthiness of newspaper article, and trustworthiness of company official website. Therefore, each group had a total of 12 items from the six different dimensions. The internal consistency of the items for each media group was calculated. The results revealed that the Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients significantly improved by removing all of the items in the dimension of source and 6 out of 9 items from the dimension of openness or sharing. Items from the dimension of source such as, "Someone directly involved in a situation provides trustworthy information" and "A third party not involved in a situation can provide trustworthy information" and items from the dimension of openness or sharing, for example, "Company official websites present themselves in positive ways" and "Companies keep information from the public" were eliminated. At the end, the trustworthiness scale was reduced from 36 to 27. Each media group had a total of 9 items from the five different dimensions. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients for the dimension of trustworthiness of company social media site, trustworthiness of newspaper article, and trustworthiness of company official website, were .81, .82, and .85, respectively.

To be sure those participants are motivated and influenced by the conditions, manipulation check questions were generated. Example items like "Au Industries is a

consumer electronics company” and “Au Industries is currently recruiting to fill new positions” are applicable to all participants that are assigned in every condition. In contrast, “Au Industries has programs that support the environment,” for example, is an item that is only relevant to participants who were assigned in the pro-environmental message groups. At the end of the study, participants’ demographic information was collected (i.e., age, gender, and the year of college) as descriptive statistics for the purpose of describing the basic features of the data in the study.

CHAPTER THREE: RESULTS

A 2 x 3 between-subjects analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to examine the differences in intention of pursuing employment and general attractiveness toward the organization between the two messages of corporate social responsibilities (environmental and charitable) and the three media as the information source (newspaper article, company official website, and company social media site). An alpha level of .05 was used for all of the statistical analyses. In Table 1, the sample sizes, means, and standard deviations of intentions to pursue and general attractiveness are presented by the media source and its corporate social responsibility message.

Table 1

Media Source, Corporate Social Responsibility, Intentions to Pursue, and General Attractiveness

Corporate Social Responsibility	Media Source	Intentions to pursue			General attractiveness	
		<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Charity	Newspaper article	28	3.43	.58	3.37	.50
	Company official website	40	3.38	.62	3.33	.54
	Company social media site	29	3.74	.65	3.68	.58
	Total	97	3.50	.63	3.45	.56
Environmental	Newspaper article	28	3.55	.43	3.44	.40
	Company official website	37	3.36	.74	3.29	.68
	Company social media site	31	3.53	.61	3.46	.55
	Total	96	3.47	.62	3.39	.57

First, the research questions concerning applicant's intentions to pursue employment influence by a company's positive reputation of corporate social responsibility about environment and charity (research question 1) and applicant's intentions to pursue employment impact by source of information (research question 2) were investigated. In terms of applicant's intentions to pursue employment and the message of corporate social responsibility with different sources of media, the main effect of corporate social responsibility was non-significant, $F(1, 187) = .15, p > .05$ and the interaction effect of media source and corporate social responsibility was not found to be statistically significant, $F(2, 187) = .97, p > .05$. However, the main effect of media source was significant, $F(1, 187) = 3.18, p = .04$. Thus, a post-hoc pairwise comparison was conducted among all of the media. The results indicated that there was a significant difference between the conditions of the company social media site and the company official website. Regardless of the type of corporate social responsibility message, potential job applicants who learned of the company from a social media site ($M = 3.64$) had significantly higher intentions to pursue employment than others who read the message from the company official website ($M = 3.37$).

Second, the research questions regarding whether an applicant's attraction to an organization was influenced by a company's positive reputation of corporate social responsibility about environment and charity (research question 3) and whether an applicant's attraction to an organization was impacted by the source of information (research question 4) were examined. In terms of general attractiveness and the message of corporate social responsibility with different sources of media, the main effect of

corporate social responsibility was non-significant, $F(1, 187) = .65, p > .05$ and the interaction effect of media source and corporate social responsibility was not found to be statistically significant, $F(2, 187) = 1.06, p > .05$. Correspondingly, there was a significant main effect of media source, $F(1, 187) = 3.70, p = .03$. Thus, a post-hoc pairwise comparison was conducted among all of the media. The results indicated that there was a significant difference between the conditions of the company social media site and the company official website. Again, potential job applicants, who read positive information on social media ($M = 3.57$), had significantly greater attraction toward the organization than others who saw the same information on the company official website ($M = 3.31$).

The third analysis examined the relationship between the applicants' perception of trustworthiness and their intentions of pursuing employment (research question 6). A correlation analysis was performed based on the created scales for measuring the participants' perceptions of trustworthiness of each media group (company social media site, newspaper article, and company official website). Table 2 illustrates the correlation coefficients of intentions to pursue and the perceived trustworthiness of all three media. There was a significant positive correlation between participants' intention of pursuing employment and trustworthiness of the company official website, $r(190) = .16, p = .02$. In summary, the results indicated that potential job applicants who perceive the information from the company official website as trustworthy tend to have higher intentions to apply for a job opening.

Table 2

Correlations of Intentions to Pursue and Perceived Trustworthiness of All Media Type

Perceived trustworthiness of media type	Intentions to pursue
Company social media site	.037
Newspaper article	.065
Company official website	.164*

* Note: Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed)

Upon completion of all analyses, research question 5 of which source of information is perceived as trustworthy was explored. Based on the results stated above, an additional 2 x 3 between-subjects analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to examine further the effect of perceived trustworthiness of social media on the two corporate social responsibilities (environmental and charitable messages) in all three media as the information sources (newspaper article, official company website, and social media site). As expected, the main effect of the media source was significant, $F(1, 187) = 4.04, p = .02$. Regardless of the type of corporate social responsibility message, participants in the social media condition perceived a company social media site as a more trustworthy source ($M = 2.50$) than a newspaper article ($M = 2.38$) or a company official website ($M = 2.21$).

CHAPTER FOUR: DISCUSSION

In the present study, the focus explored how companies disseminate their corporate social responsibility message to attract and recruit potential applicants in the early employment phase. The effects of corporate social responsibility reputation and three different information sources were investigated. Results from this study suggested that the type of corporate social responsibility was irrelevant. Both the environmental and charitable messages were perceived to be equally effective in influencing the potential applicants' intentions to pursue employment and their attraction toward the organization. The perceived importance of a corporate social responsibility message concerning environmental and charity could be relatively the same. This translates to those potential applicants who might simply perceive corporate social responsibility as a whole instead of a specific type. In sum, the overall positive perception of being socially responsible toward to the community or society might be sufficient for companies to influence potential applicants' perception and intention.

However, the type of media seemed to have a significant role. Prospective applicants tended to have higher intention to pursue employment and attraction toward the organization when they learned of the corporate social responsibility message from social media as opposed to the company official website. This result is compatible with the conclusion of Van Hoya and Lievens' (2009) study about recruitment resource. They stated "Receiving positive employment information through word-of-mouth early in the recruitment process was positively associated with perceptual (organizational attractiveness) and behavioral outcomes (actual application decision)" (p. 341). The

prospective applicants perceived corporate social responsibility message as positive employment information through social media to react positively about their intention to pursue employment and attraction toward the organization. Particularly, the action of posting personal messages on social media could easily be seen as an alternative form of word-of-mouth or electronic word-of-mouth. The power of social influence in terms of recruitment is exceptional.

Remarkably, the result of further analysis revealed that information from social media was perceived as more trustworthy than from other media types when prospective applicants assigned to the social media condition. This leads to the question of what makes the message from social media more trustworthy. The underlying explanation of this result may be the implicit personal relationships that are associated with social media rather than the social media site as an information source. Within the social media condition, potential applicants may underscore the personal messages that are posted on the social media site. “Your friend” and “your aunt”, for example, were the identifications displayed in the social media condition. These personal relationships may potentially enhance the trustworthiness of social media.

The relationship between the perceived trustworthiness of a social media site and intention to pursue employment, however, was not statically significant. Instead, perceived trustworthiness of a company official website was positively related to the applicants’ intention to pursue employment. In other words, prospective applicants who trust the information from the company official website are more likely to apply for a job. The practical implication of this result may be an indication for companies to reexamine

the trustworthiness of their disclosed information on official websites as a recruitment tool. In terms of recruiting and attracting top talent, companies should focus on cultivating a trustworthy official website to maintaining a positive perception.

Future Research

Future research may build on the results of the present research stream by investigating the complexity of personal messages on social media during early recruitment actions. As social media have progressively become a pervasive aspect of ordinary recruitment activities, organizations can use multiple social media sites to simply search, track, and attract potential applicants. The direction can now shift to how personal messages through social media can influence the interest of potential job applicants. This can provide practical implications for practitioners to monitor and manage the contents on their social media sites.

Neither environmental nor charitable messages as the type of corporate social responsibility were found to be related to potential applicants' intentions to pursue employment and their perception about the organization's attractiveness. It would be a fruitful endeavor for researchers to continue exploring messages of corporate social responsibility. The comparison of presenting and restricting corporate social responsibility messages during early recruitment activities could extend the understandings of how these messages affect prospective applicants' behaviors.

Throughout the literature review, the effects of positive corporate social responsibility have been well explored and documented. However, the opposite side of corporate social responsibility, or "corporate social irresponsibility," receives relatively

less attention. Potential future research could provide empirical evidence about the effects of the potential applicants' perception of corporate social irresponsibility and different media sources during the early recruitment activities. This could shed light on the negative recruitment impacts on disclosing information about corporate social irresponsibility.

Limitation

As with all research studies, the present study anticipates a few limitations. First, the major limitation of this research study is drawing undergraduate psychology students as participants from the Psychology Department Research Pool. The vast majority of the participants are freshman or sophomore college students who are enrolled in General Psychology classes. In fact, the age range of the participants is expected to be within the traditional college student's age; therefore, the participants are a select group instead of a representative sample of the population. Second, the lack of generalizability in this research study is partially the limitation of the study. Students in their freshman or sophomore year of college may not be seriously considering or mentally ready to determine their career advancement in the near future; therefore, the results may not be able to generalize to the majority workforce in the population. Yet, it is these students who are perhaps most high-tech and social media savvy that will become the main workforce of society in the near future.

Despite these limitations, this study will provide empirical support to shed some light on how prospective applicants may perceive corporate social responsibility information from traditional media to social media to company's webpage to decide upon

the pursuit – or even the acceptance of – a given vacancy and their attitudes toward the trustworthiness of that information in the pre-recruitment stage.

Conclusion

In the digital era, the subject of going beyond traditional media sources to recruit and attract potential applicants has gained its popularity tremendously. Today, potential applicants have the ability to access a wide array of information beyond the companies' financial performance, such as environmental and charitable information that they believe is important to them. This information from different sources can possibly result in attraction to the organization and can modify their intention to pursue employment with the organization. For the purpose of recruitment it is worth the effort for companies to disseminate messages about their corporate social responsibly through their social media site and company official website. A positive perception of being socially responsible is beneficial to increase prospective applicants' attraction and intention to apply the company. However, companies must decide what media source is appropriate for them to communicate the messages about corporate social responsibly. The perception of trustworthiness of the corporate social responsibly messages on their company official website may significantly impact prospective applicants' intention to apply for a job vacancy.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: CONDITION IMAGES

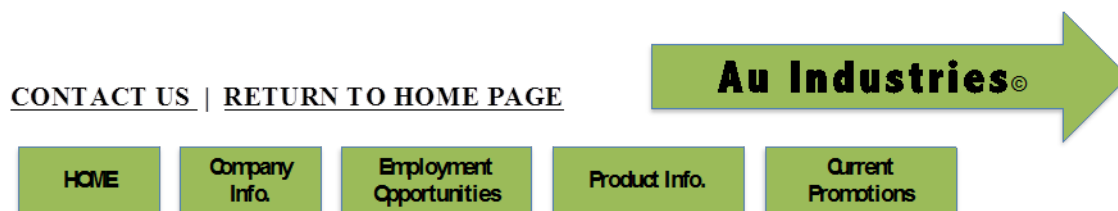
Newspaper article – Environmental condition



Newspaper article – Charity condition



Company official website – Environmental condition



Au Industries has programs that support the Environment!



[Click here](#) to learn about our environmental initiatives and programs.

Au Industries
Storefront & Management
Careers

Au Industries
Corporate Headquarter
Careers

Au Industries is a consumer electronics company that is seeking to recruit new talent. We have locations in La Vargne and nationwide with a variety of career paths for our employees. Au Industries is committed to providing customers with a consistent and high quality product. Our customers and employees have made Au Industries a leading company in the field.

Company official website – Charity condition



Au Industries Supports local charities!



Click here to learn about our local charity initiatives and programs.

Au Industries
Storefront & Management
Careers

Au Industries
Corporate Headquarter
Careers

Au Industries is a consumer electronics company that is seeking to recruit new talent. We have locations in La Vargne and nationwide with a variety of career paths for our employees. Au Industries is committed to providing customers with a consistent and high quality product. Our customers and employees have made Au Industries a leading company in the field.

Social media site – Environmental condition



Au Industries ©

We are a major consumer electronics company in the community that is expecting to fill new positions. Our operations are nationwide. We are coming to local universities for job fairs.

5 hours ago Like · Comment

👍 Your friend Mary likes this.

 **Your friend John** Au Industries also has various programs that support the environment and locations in La Vergne.
1 hour ago Like

 **Your Aunt Sue** I used to work there!!!
10 minutes ago Like

+ Add a comment...




Romeo is in a relationship with Juliet.

❤️ 2 hours ago Like · Comment

👍 William Shakespeare likes this.

+ Add a comment....

RECENT ACTIVITY

 Mickey Mouse is now friends with Donald Duck. Like · Comment

Social media site – Charity condition



Au Industries ©

We are a major consumer electronics company in the community that is expecting to fill new positions. Our operations are nationwide. We are coming to local universities for job fairs.

5 hours ago Like · Comment

👍 Your friend Mary likes this.

 **Your friend John** Au Industries also has various programs that support local charities and locations in La Vergne.
1 hour ago Like

 **Your Aunt Sue** I used to work there!!!
10 minutes ago Like

+ Add a comment...



Romeo is in a relationship with Juliet.

❤️ 2 hours ago Like · Comment

👍 William Shakespeare likes this.

+ Add a comment....

RECENT ACTIVITY

 Mickey Mouse is now friends with Donald Duck. Like · Comment

APPENDIX B: QUESTIONNAIRE

Informed Consent Form

Purpose: The purpose of the current study is to conduct an empirical study measuring the prospective applicants' intention to pursue employment based on information provided.

Procedures: If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to complete an online survey at any time and location convenient for you. The survey should take approximately 30 minutes to complete. Participation is completely voluntary and your decision to participate or not to participate will not have an impact to your grade in class.

Benefits: Participants may receive credits for their class by participating in this study. The knowledge received from the study may be valuable to the field of industrial and organizational psychology.

Risks or discomforts: There are no known risks or discomforts associated with this research. You may skip any question that you find uncomfortable. You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty.

Confidentiality: All information collected during this study will be used only for this research study and only the researchers will have access to the data. Neither the information of the participants' identification will be used in this study nor described during any of the data reporting.

Contact information: If you should have any questions or concerns about this research study, please feel free to contact the Primary Investigator, Samuel Kwok Au, at

ska2m@mtmail.mtsu.edu or the Faculty Advisor, Dr. Judith Van Hein, at Judith.VanHein@mtsu.edu.

By beginning the survey, you acknowledge that you have read the information provided above and agree to participate in this research, with the knowledge that you are free to withdraw your participation at any time.

Please begin by reading the below paragraph

You graduated from college. Currently, you have been working on your first career job for a couple of years. You recently discover that a major consumer electronics company, Au Industries, has a job opening in the area. After browsing some information, the job at Au Industries fits well with your interests and has the pay and benefits similar to what you have now. You decide to research the job at Au Industries further before making any decisions.

Participants will be forwarded to one of the following scenarios:

1. Upon further searching you find more information about Au Industries on their website. Please carefully review the Au Industries website on the next page to learn more information about the company.
2. Upon further searching you find more information about Au Industries in the local newspaper. Please carefully review the newspaper article on the next page to learn more information about the company.
3. Upon further searching you find more information about Au Industries on a social media website. Please carefully review the information on the next page to learn more information about the company.

A. Organizational Attraction Importance Survey

The questions in the following section have to do with your beliefs and values about working. Please answer each statement indicating the degree of importance that you place on the factor in a job. Keep in mind that every factor may not be of absolute importance.

5= Absolutely critical to job choice, 4= Very important to job choice, 3= Important to job choice, 2= Somewhat important to job choice, 1= Not at all important to job choice

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all important to job choice	Somewhat important to job choice	Important to job choice	Very Important to job choice	Absolutely Critical to job choice

Job characteristics

1. Pay	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Type of Work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Room for advancement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Reasonable working schedule	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Job security	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Having a good supervisor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Organizational characteristics

7. Work environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Location	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Size of company	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Having a positive reputation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Organization fit

11. Fitting in with the job	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Matching with the organization	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

B. Environmental
New Environmental Paradigm Scale Revised Dunlap et al. (2000)

Listed below are statements about the relationship between humans and the environment. For each one, please indicate whether you **STRONGLY AGREE**, **MILDLY AGREE**, are **UNSURE**, **MILDLY DISAGREE** or **STRONGLY DISAGREE** with it.

	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Mildly Agree</i>	<i>Unsure</i>	<i>Mildly Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>
1. We are approaching the limit of the number of people the earth can support.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Humans have the right to modify the natural environment to suit their needs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. When humans interfere with nature it often produces disastrous consequences.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Human ingenuity will insure that we do NOT make the earth unlivable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Humans are severely abusing the environment.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. The earth has plenty of natural resources if we just learn how to develop them.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Plants and animals have as much right as humans to exist.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. The balance of nature is strong enough to cope with the impacts of modern industrial nations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Despite our special abilities humans are still subject to the laws of nature.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. The so-called "ecological crisis" facing humankind has been greatly exaggerated.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. The earth is like a spaceship with very limited room and resources.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Humans were meant to rule over the rest of nature.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Mildly Agree</i>	<i>Unsure</i>	<i>Mildly Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>
13. The balance of nature is very delicate and easily upset.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. Humans will eventually learn enough about how nature works to be able to control it.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. If things continue on their present course, we will soon experience a major ecological catastrophe.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

C. Attraction to Organizations

Measuring Attraction to Organizations Highhouse, Lievens, & Sinar (2003)

For each statement listed below, please indicate whether you STRONGLY DISAGREE, DISAGREE, UNSURE, AGREE, or STRONGLY AGREE.

General attractiveness

	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Unsure</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
16. For me, this company would be a good place to work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. I could not picture myself working for this company.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. I would not be interested in this company except as a last resort.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. This company would be my top choice.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. This company is attractive to me as a place for employment.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21. I would not consider an employment in this company.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22. I am interested in learning more about this company.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23. Information about this company does not interest me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24. A job at this company is very appealing to me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
25. None of the jobs in this company interests me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Intentions to pursue

	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Unsure</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
26. I would accept a job offer from this company.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
27. A job offer from this company would not interest me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
28. I would consider working for this company as my first choice for new employment.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
29. I have no intention of pursuing employment at this company.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
30. If this company invited me for a job interview, I would go.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
31. I would not consider attending a job interview even if this company invited me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
32. I would exert a great deal of effort to work for this company.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
33. I would not waste my effort to work for this company.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
34. I would recommend this company to a friend looking for a job.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Prestige

	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Unsure</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
35. Employees are probably proud to say they work at this company.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
36. This is a reputable company to work for.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
37. This company does not have a good reputation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
38. This company probably has a reputation for being an excellent employer.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
39. I would find this company a prestigious place to work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
40. There are probably many who would like to work at this company.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

D. Sources of information

The definition of social media is a web-based platform for interactive information sharing and discussing, for example, Facebook and Twitter.

Trustworthiness

	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Unsure</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
41. I trust the information provided by most people that I know on social media.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
42. Information provided by people that I know on social media is biased.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
43. I trust the information provided by the official company websites.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
44. Information provided by the official company websites is biased.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
45. I trust the information provided by newspaper articles.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
46. Information provided by newspaper articles is biased.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Knowledge

	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Unsure</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
47. In general, official company websites provide trustworthy information.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
48. In general, newspaper articles provide trustworthy information.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
49. In general, people on social media provide trustworthy information.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Sources

	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Unsure</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
50. People I know provide me with trustworthy information.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
51. Someone directly involved in a situation provides trustworthy information.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
52. A third party not involved in the situation can provide trustworthy information.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Openness/sharing

	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Unsure</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
53. Company official websites provide honest information.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
54. Company official websites present themselves in positive ways.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
55. Companies keep information from the public.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
56. Newspaper articles provide honest information.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
57. Newspaper articles present companies in positive ways.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
58. Newspaper articles keep information from the public.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
59. People on social media provide honest information.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
60. People on social media present companies in positive ways.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
61. People on social media keep information from the public.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Reliability

	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Unsure</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
62. I can rely on information from an official company website.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
63. I can make decisions based on information from an official company website.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
64. Information from an official company website is not reliable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
65. I can rely on information from social media.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
66. I can make decisions based on information from social media.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
67. Information from social media is not reliable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
68. I can rely on information from newspaper articles.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Unsure</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
69. I can make decisions based on information from newspaper articles.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
70. Information from newspaper articles is not reliable.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Decisions

	<i>To No Extent</i>	<i>To A Small Extent</i>	<i>To A Moderate Extent</i>	<i>To A Great Extent</i>	<i>To A Very Great Extent</i>
71. To what extent do you plan to make (or have you made) your decisions about places to work based on information from social media?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
72. To what extent do you plan to make (or have you made) your decisions about places to work based on information from newspaper articles?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
73. To what extent do you plan to make (or have you made) your decisions about places to work based on information from an official company website?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
74. To what extent do you plan to make (or have you made) your decisions about purchasing products based on information from social media?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
75. To what extent do you plan to make (or have you made) your decisions about purchasing products based on information from newspaper articles?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
76. To what extent do you plan to make (or have you made) your decisions about purchasing products based on information from an official company website?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

E. Pilot Study Questions:

What information would influence you the most in making decision to work for a company?
Please rank the following options from the most influential (1) to the least (3).

- [] Information on social media
[] Information on newspaper articles
[] Information on companies' websites

Please rate the importance of each of the following when considering a job offer on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is not at all important, and 5 is absolutely critical.

	1	2	3	4	5
	Not at all important	Somewhat important	Important	Very Important	Absolutely Critical
Job duties	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Location	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Industry Type	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reputation of protecting environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reputation of promoting charitable giving	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reputation of having career advancement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

F. Demographic:

Age:

Gender: Male, Female, or Other

Class: Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior, Graduate, or Non-degree seeking.

Race: American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, White, or Other.

Do you currently have a job?
How many hours per week do you work?

Would you like to apply for a job at Au Industries?

APPENDIX C: IRB APPROVAL



December 17, 2012

Kwok Au, Dr. Judith Van Hein
Department of Industrial and Organizational Psychology
ska2m@mtmail.mtsu.edu, Judith.VanHein@mtsu.edu

Protocol Title: "The role of information source on perceptions of corporate reputation and intention to pursue employment"

Protocol Number: 13-158

Dear Investigator(s),

The exemption is pursuant to 45 CFR 46.101(b) (2). This is because the research being conducted involves the use of educational tests, survey procedures, interview procedures or public behavior.

You will need to submit an end-of-project report to the Compliance Office upon completion of your research. Complete research means that you have finished collecting data and you are ready to submit your thesis and/or publish your findings. Should you not finish your research within the three (3) year period, you must submit a Progress Report and request a continuation prior to the expiration date. Please allow time for review and requested revisions. Your study expires on **December 17, 2015**.

Any change to the protocol must be submitted to the IRB before implementing this change. According to MTSU Policy, a researcher is defined as anyone who works with data or has contact with participants. Anyone meeting this definition needs to be listed on the protocol and needs to provide a certificate of training to the Office of Compliance. If you add researchers to an approved project, please forward an updated list of researchers and their certificates of training to the Office of Compliance before they begin to work on the project. **Once your research is completed, please send us a copy of the final report questionnaire to the Office of Compliance.** This form can be located at www.mtsu.edu/irb on the forms page.

Also, all research materials must be retained by the PI or faculty advisor (if the PI is a student) for at least three (3) years after study completion. Should you have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Andrew W. Jones

Andrew W. Jones
Graduate Assistant
Compliance Office
615-494-8918
Compliance@mtsu.edu