

Chapter 8

Thought Process of a New Graduate Which Leads to Behavioral Intention to Apply for a Job Vacancy: A Conceptual Model

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ABSTRACT

Due to inadequacy, there is a call for more research on the thought process of job seekers. This chapter argues that employers have to communicate their company's job-seeker value proposition to new graduates to create job-seeker perceived value in their minds. Job-seeker perceived value will lead to behavioral intention. Further, the chapter proposes that a company's job-seeker value proposition has a direct positive relationship with behavioral intention and the relationship is moderated positively by voluntariness and gender. The technology acceptance model and the unified theory of acceptance and use of technology (UTAUT) were used to develop arguments related to each relationship proposed in the conceptual framework. Marketing management literature was used to label both constructs: company's job-seeker value proposition and job-seeker perceived value; and the same is employed to complement the arguments borrowed from management information system. Theoretical contribution, practical contribution, limitations, and opportunities for future research are also discussed in the chapter.

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INTRODUCTION

In strategic management, recruitment is one of the main functional areas of consideration in the process of developing the functional strategy of any organisation (Wheelen & Hunger, 2011). For any organisation which plans to adopt growth or stability strategies, recruitment is an area of strategic importance (Wheelen & Hunger, 2011). “Recruitment” will emerge as a topic of high importance in organizations involved in the industry of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in Sri Lanka since the National ICT Workforce Survey 2013 (Information and Communication Technology Agency of Sri Lanka, 2013) highlights the short supply of ICT professionals in the country. The survey further reveals that even though there had been a demand of 6,246 ICT professionals in 2013, the supply had been restricted to 5,778 ICT professionals, hence, creating a shortage of 468 ICT professionals in the field. Additionally, according to the ‘SLASSCOM Strategy Document 2016’ published by the Sri Lanka Association of Software and Service Companies (SLASSCOM), Sri Lanka’s ICT industry anticipates in creating 200,000 direct jobs by 2022 compared to 75,107 in 2013. Consequently, it is evident that the existing situation prevalent in the ICT job market (low unemployment rate) nurtures “recruitment” to be one of its most significant current and future Human Resource Management (HRM) challenges for HRM practitioners of the ICT industry in Sri Lanka: since in times of low unemployment, it is possible to expect intensifying competition for talent between competing organisations (Aguinis, Gottfredson & Joo, 2012; Guthridge, Komm & Lawson, 2008). Further, Taylor and Collins (2000) discuss the manner in which recruitment becomes a larger focus of academic interest in times of low unemployment. This study therefore has gathered its motivation from this challenging situation present in the job market of the ICT industry in Sri Lanka.

Extant literature defines recruitment as a process of attracting and obtaining as many applications as possible from eligible job-seekers (Armstrong & Taylor, 2014; Aswathappa, 2005). Rynes (1989, p.1) mentions that “an organisation’s success in recruiting defines the applicant population with which it will work; selection is more pleasant, if not easier, when restriction or skew of distribution is attributable to an overabundance of well-qualified applicants.” Thus, for a recruitment campaign to be successful, the behavioural intention of eligible job-seekers to apply for job openings is an important requirement, since it is an important psychological phenomenon which determines the number of job applications received.

Gillhouse (2001) notes that during a period wherein the rate of unemployment remains high, the chances that a recruitment campaign would become successful in terms of the number of applications received, is high; he further goes on to saying that it would not however be the case during a period of low unemployment rates. Thus, existing and new knowledge on the behavioural intention of job-seekers

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