



Coming to America: Work Visas, International Diversity, and Organizational Attractiveness among Highly Skilled Asian Immigrants

Journal:	<i>The International Journal of Human Resource Management</i>
Manuscript ID	RIJH-2014-0762.R3
Manuscript Type:	Original paper
Keywords:	organizational attractiveness, diversity, recruitment, immigrant workers, work visas, H-1B

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**Coming to America: Work Visas, International Diversity, and Organizational
Attractiveness among Highly Skilled Asian Immigrants**

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Coming to America: Work Visas, International Diversity, and Organizational Attractiveness among Highly Skilled Asian Immigrants

ABSTRACT

U.S. firms are increasingly seeking foreign workers to help satisfy growing demands for technical and highly-skilled labor, and many immigrants continue to seek jobs in America. Despite this, few studies in the management discipline examine immigration issues as they relate to organizational attraction and recruitment. In an experimental study, we investigated the relationship between stated recruitment policies, perceived work-related expectancy and organizational attractiveness among graduate students from Asia as potential job seekers to companies in the United States. We found a relationship between perceived work-related expectancy and either emphasizing international diversity or work visa sponsorship. However, emphasizing work visa sponsorship weakened the effect of international diversity on perceived work-related expectancy. Perceived work-related expectancy was also found to positively affect organizational attractiveness, resulting in a conditional indirect effect of international diversity statements on organizational attractiveness. Implications for organizations and directions for future research are discussed.

Key Words: Organizational Attractiveness, International Diversity, Work Visas, Immigrants

Introduction

The United States has long been perceived as a welcoming destination for immigrants, who are defined as “people who move to a country other than their country of birth and live in the new country long-term,” regardless of whether they have or are seeking citizenship in the new country (Dietz, 2010, p. 104). Within this context, the terms foreign-born and immigrant have been used interchangeably in research (e.g., Chiswick, 1978; Stevens, 1999) even though the former is a broader term. In 1960, immigrants accounted for 1 in every 17 workers in the United States (Loh & Richardson, 2004). By 2012, they comprised approximately 1 in every 6 workers (U.S. Department of Labor, 2013), nearly a three-fold increase, and as of 2015 represent nearly 17% of the U.S. labor force (U.S. Department of Labor, 2016). The U.S. immigrant population is growing significantly faster than the native-born population (Kandel, 2011), partly as a result of more firms searching abroad for job seekers who are proficient in math and science (Bound, Demirci, Khanna, & Turner, 2014) and who wish to work in America. Immigrants’ share of information technology workers nearly doubled between 1993 and 2010, reaching 32% (Bound et al., 2014), with particularly significant increases among younger workers (Bound et al., 2014). Immigration of “highly skilled workers,” those with a university degree or extensive experience, has been argued to be “integral to the U.S. maintaining its economic and political position in the global context” (Iredale, 2001, p. 8).

One of the key determinants of whether foreign-born workers can gain employment legally in the United States is if they are provided a work visa from a U.S. employer. Work visas, a key variable in our study, authorize individuals to permanently or temporarily live and work in the United States. Work visas involve both the employer and employee, and the visa

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fundamentally affects the relationship between the two parties. Visas can be broadly categorized into four different types—those that allow permanent employment, those that allow temporary employment, those that allow restricted business activities, and those reserved for international students (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, 2013; U.S. Department of State, 2014). The H-1B visa program, a temporary work visa program for foreign-born workers in special occupations (Fulmer, 2009; Luthra, 2009), was created to help U.S.-based organizations access workers globally for fast-growth industries. Specifically, the H-1B visa “is a vehicle through which a qualified alien may seek admission to the United States on a temporary basis to work in his or her field of expertise” (Peacock, 2012, p. 2).

Baum and Kabst (2013) proposed that in the international war for talent, employers can proactively attempt to position themselves for competitiveness in attracting workers. Employers’ pursuit of highly skilled foreign-born workers is evident by the number of H-1B visa applications going from 172,500 in 2014 to 236,000 in 2016, nearly a 37% increase (O’Brien, 2016). However, research has highlighted that some employers desire foreign-born workers because they have restricted job mobility and may thus feel obligated to work longer hours for less pay than similarly qualified native-born employees (Dorning & Fanning, 2012; Hira, 2010). This article makes a significant contribution to the literature in three distinct ways. First, given the growing rates of foreign-born workers in the U.S. and the popularity of U.S. employers offering H-1B visas for recruitment, we fill a void in the organizational attractiveness literature by investigating whether emphasizing the possibility of H-1B visa sponsorship in a job advertisement would be viewed as desirable among foreign-born job applicants. Second, we contribute to the larger management diversity literature by being among the few researchers to

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elucidate how immigration issues affect organizations. Despite the strong influence that immigration has on organizational policies and demographic diversity among workers in the United States, and a growing body of management research on immigrants and migration (e.g., Almeida, Fernando, & Sheridan, 2012; Bahn, 2015; Dietz, 2010; Zikic, 2015; Zikic, Bonache, & Cerdin, 2010) only recently have diversity studies in management begun to include immigration issues (e.g., Bell, Kwesiga, & Berry, 2010; Dietz, 2010). Finally, we significantly contribute to the organizational attractiveness literature by answering the call to uncover the underlying mechanisms that might explain *why* and *how* diversity-focused recruitment ads may or may not be effective in attracting diverse job seekers (Breugh, 2008; Celani & Singh, 2010; Jones, Willness, & Madey, 2014). To help unveil an underlying mechanism of the organizational attraction process, we propose that using images of other foreign-born individuals in job advertisements coupled with overtly indicating the employer's desire to sponsor a work visa will send signals to foreign job seekers about the positive treatment they can expect in the work environment. We propose this perceived work-related expectancy is a critical mechanism fundamentally affecting organizational attraction.

We begin by reviewing relevant literature about organizational attractiveness, diversity climates, work visas and work-related expectancies. Following, we present our hypotheses, the research method, discussion, and implications for researchers and practitioners. As shown in Figure 1, we hypothesize that an organization's highlighting of international diversity and emphasizing the provision of work visas are both directly related to work-related expectancies of job seekers. Further, we propose that work-related expectancies are related to organizational attractiveness. Also depicted by our model, we contend that recruitment materials containing a

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work visa emphasis strengthen the positive effect that highlighting international diversity has on work-related expectancies. Lastly, the interaction effect between international diversity and visa sponsorship emphasis on work-related expectancies is indirectly related to organizational attractiveness resulting in a moderated mediation model. The present study extends the current diversity literature suggesting that foreign-born job seekers are sensitive to diversity-related issues related to their work environment. This study also introduces a conceptual framework and findings suggesting that recruitment materials containing a work visa sponsorship emphasis have a positive effect on attracting foreign-born job seekers via perceived work-related expectancies. We use the terms immigrant, foreign, and foreign-born job seekers or workers interchangeably throughout the paper, as they each require a work visa in the context of our investigation.

Insert Figure 1 about here

The Effect of Diversity Recruitment Material on Organizational Attractiveness

Organizational attractiveness is the degree to which a person would seek employment with an organization or recommend it to others (Newbury, Gardberg, & Belkin, 2006). It is considered one of the earliest stages of the recruitment process, where there is little to no contact between the employer and the job seeker (Powell & Goulet, 1996). A positive first impression is crucial for successfully pooling labor for an organization. Strategies used to influence the organizational attractiveness of firms include the use of recruiters and promotional items such as brochures, web advertisements, and job boards, including information about the organization's policies (e.g., equal employment opportunities, diversity, or competitive pay). Prior research

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demonstrates that promotional materials that detail a climate for diversity (Avery, 2003; Brown, Keeping, Cober, & Levy, 2006; Lambert, 2015; Perkins, Thomas, & Taylor, 2000), compensation (Lievens & Highhouse, 2003; Rynes, 1987), level of job security (Amar, 1995; Schwoerer & Rosen, 1989), and commitment to social responsibility (Turban & Greening, 1997) relate to the organizational attractiveness of organizations.

Signaling theory indicates that the tangible and visible artifacts individuals encounter from an organization facilitate perceptions about less observable aspects of the organization (Spence, 1973). Classic theory on similarity and attraction (Byrne, 1971) and relational demography describes how signaling theory functions regarding the reactions of diverse job seekers when diversity-focused job advertisements are encountered. Individuals tend to be more attracted to others like themselves (Tsui, Egan, & O'Reilly, 1992) and are more open and accepting to receiving information from individuals with similar visible characteristics and attitudes to them (O'Reilly, 1983). Consequently, when job seekers view recruitment materials that depict similar others, it sends signals to them that the organization advertised is open and accepting to people like themselves, and they in turn are then more open to such materials and form more positive impressions of the organization (Avery, 2003; McKay & Avery, 2006). The organizational attractiveness literature demonstrates this recruitment method positively impacts women and minorities in the United States (Goldberg & Allen, 2008; Thomas & Wise, 1999; Williamson, Slay, Shapiro, & Shivers-Blackwell, 2008). Women and minorities tend to be more attracted to firms that promote a climate for diversity; hence, firms are more effective in recruiting women and minority job seekers when they employ recruiters who share characteristics that are demographically similar (Kravitz & Platania, 1993; Thomas & Wise,

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1999). Stimuli that have been found to elicit attraction responses are typically based on the congruity between an individual's personal characteristics and the characteristics of a target (Byrne & Griffitt, 1973). Although much of the early laboratory research on similarity attraction was based on interpersonal analysis, Schneider (1987) proposed an attraction-selection-attrition model (ASA) that largely applies the similarity-attraction framework to organizational attraction research (Judge & Cable, 1997). The ASA proposes that applicants will be more attracted to organizations that display similar characteristics (beliefs, values, employee attributes) to their own (Schneider, 1987).

Early in the recruitment process, individuals' perceived expectations are generally formed based on signals from the organization, often coming from recruitment advertisements (Avery & McKay, 2006; Judge & Bretz, 1992; Lievens, Decaestecker, Coetsier, & Geirnaert, 2001). Diversity factors, such as the level of racial heterogeneity of the employee base, are significantly more important to racial minorities and women than to others when forming organizational perceptions (Thomas & Wise, 1999). One of the few studies that looked at Asians' attitudes toward AAPs, which, like diversity programs, are designed to increase equality and reduce discrimination, found that Asian immigrants' attitudes and beliefs about AAPs were similar to those of other minorities (Bell et al., 1997). Asian immigrants believed such programs would create greater awareness of and reduce discrimination and help produce a more diverse workforce. Results from these studies further demonstrate that recruitment materials emphasizing that a firm values diversity signals to job seekers that the targeted groups portrayed can reap benefits once employed. By presenting support for a diverse workforce, organizations

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may communicate that Asian immigrants can expect to be treated fairly and that their contributions will be valued.

Based on the signaling theory framework within the organizational attractiveness literature (Avery, 2003; Celani & Singh, 2010; Jones et al., 2014; Thomas & Wise, 1999) including the attraction-similarity framework (Byrne, 1971), we propose international job seekers will perceive more fair treatment exists at firms that promote diversity in their workplace. Although foreign-born workers have not been fully examined in studies that investigate organizational attractiveness, theory clearly suggests they may be attracted to organizations that promote international diversity in their recruitment literature targeting foreign applicants. Since a fundamental contribution of this paper is to uncover an underlying mechanism in the organizational attraction process for foreign-born job seekers, we now analyze more nuanced theory to explain the mechanism of perceived work-related expectancies.

Effects of Organizations’ Environmental Characteristics on Perceived Work-Related Expectancies

Expectancy theory has been used as a psychological model of job choice (Schwab, Rynes, & Aldag, 1987) including valence and perceived instrumentalities as predictors. Using this model, the likelihood of benefits that can be obtained from employers based on the job attributes offered and their value are both considered (Schwab, Rynes, & Aldag, 1987; Vroom, 1964) by job seekers when choosing where to work. Although used as a theoretical framework to explain how recruitment strategies signal (Spence, 1973) to job seekers implicit information about hiring employers, the empirical investigation of identifying specific signaling mechanisms and understanding how they work is limited in the recruitment literature. Specifically, scant

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attention has been given to the investigation of mechanisms that attract job seekers to organizations (Jones et al., 2014). The impact of organizations' environmental characteristics on work expectancies as a process mechanism was believed to be an understudied phenomenon (Rynes, 1990; Sims, Szilagyi, & McKemey, 1976; Thomas & Wise, 1999). However, current research demonstrates that recruitment ads that include information about employers' environmental characteristics not only attract job applicants, but can serve as antecedents to expectations about the job (Jones et al., 2014; Lin, Tsai, Joe, & Chiu, 2012), which, in turn, impact applicants' attraction to that organization. In a study conducted by Lin and colleagues (2012), results showed that corporate citizenship improved career success expectations and strengthened organizational attractiveness. Another study had similar findings showing that a company's prosocial orientation statements on its web page signaled to employees they would be treated favorably (Jones et al., 2014). In turn, expected treatment mediated the effect of pro-environmental statements on organizational attractiveness. Statements about international diversity and work visa sponsorship addressed in our study also serve as perceived environmental characteristics about organizations. Drawing from signal theory (Spence, 1973) and expectancy theory (Vroom, 1966), recruitment statements emphasizing international diversity and work visa sponsorship provide clues to job seekers influencing how they perceive they will be treated.

The Effect of International Diversity Emphasis on Perceived Work Related Expectancies

There is a vast amount of literature that examines the effect of recruitment materials on organizational attractiveness, but attempts to identify the process mechanisms that cause this

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effect are not well understood, and are rarely measured. Some studies have attempted to measure what causes applicants to be attracted to companies. Kravitz (1995) found that attraction to affirmative action programs are mediated by perceived chances of getting a job, perceived chances of getting a promotion, and perceived fairness at work. In a study conducted by Bell and colleagues (1997), Asian immigrants held attitudes towards affirmative action programs similar to racial minorities. Furthermore, when asked about beliefs regarding the effect that AAPs had on improving job opportunities for females and minorities or equal chances for qualified workers, Asian immigrants viewed those beliefs and the effect of AAPs more favorably than Whites. These studies demonstrate how various attitudes towards employment decisions are formed based on sense making processes via perceived work-related expectancies and beliefs. Statements about international diversity will affect perception about perceived work related expectancies in similar ways.

Hypothesis 1: International diversity emphasis is positively related to perceived work related expectancies.

The Effect of Work Visas on Perceived Work-Related Expectancies

Compensation is offered to employees in various forms (Yeganeh & Su, 2011). It has been described as monetary, nonmonetary, direct, or indirect rewards offered to employees in exchange for their contributions to the organization (Geringer & Frayne, 1990). Job characteristics including indirect compensation, or benefits, increase perceptions of organizational attractiveness when specific information about them is provided (Rynes & Miller, 1983). Because work visas incur a monetary cost for employers who hire immigrant workers,

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they operate in the same way as work benefits, a nonmonetary or indirect reward for employees in exchange for their services. Job seekers also value and pursue items that serve an instrumental purpose and offer tangible benefits in exchange for work (Cable & Judge, 1994; Rynes & Barber, 1990; Schwoerer & Rosen, 1989). There is limited research that examines compensation in the form of work visas as benefits, or indirect compensation. We contend that work visas are tangible benefits that serve an objective purpose for immigrant job seekers in the same way that indirect compensation and work benefits attract job seekers to organizations. When job seekers perceive they will be compensated fairly, and their job is secure, their favorable attitudes will transfer towards other inferred characteristics of the organization including expectations about work.

The Value of Work Visas and Fairness to Job Seekers

As noted above, we posit that emphasizing visa sponsorship affects job applicants in the same way as indirect compensation. Although, work visas hold instrumental value, offering these benefits also may signal fairness, a less tangible attribute, to job seekers.

Some scholars have discussed many discriminatory and exploitative practices of employers towards immigrants (e.g., Akinlade, Lambert, & Zhang, 2015; Avery et al., 2010; Bell et al., 2010; Bloomekatz, 2007; Moss & Tilly, 2001; Turchick-Hakak, Holzinger, & Zikic, 2010). Such practices may consist of lower wages, longer work hours, hazardous work conditions, and routine harassment (Avery, et al., 2010; Bloomekatz, 2007), for immigrants in various types of jobs (construction, internships, technology). For example, Loh and Richardson (2004) compiled data on fatal occupational injuries during a five-year period and found that

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although such injuries for U.S. workers as a whole declined by 5% during that period, the share of fatal injuries for foreign-born workers rose by 43%. A 2011 case against Hershey and Excel, Inc. alleged that foreign students interning at a Hershey distribution plant on travel visas were being compensated between \$40 and \$140 USD in exchange for 40-hour work weeks (Jamieson, 2011). In a 2013 case, Indian company Infosys paid \$34 million to settle allegations of visa fraud, the largest amount ever paid in an immigration case. Authorities alleged that Infosys used lower paid workers to increase profits. Although they paid to settle the case, a statement that “denies and disputes any claims of systemic visa fraud, misuse of visas for competitive advantage, or immigration abuse,” was posted on the company website (Wigglesworth, 2013).

Immigrant workers are sensitive to adverse working conditions (Avery et al., 2010) such as these. Considering there are firms that hire international workers and treat them unfairly, specific job attributes may need to be promoted in order for immigrant job seekers to develop positive expectations about working for a firm that values international diversity. Although work visas can be restrictive for immigrant employees, work visas are governed by laws to which U.S. employers must adhere that may signal to immigrants they can expect fair expectations regarding work, and have some recourse if treated unfairly.

Hypothesis 2: Work visa sponsorship emphasis is positively related to perceived work related expectancies.

The Interaction Between International Diversity Emphasis and Work Visa Sponsorship Emphasis

Bundles of human resource practices are effective in attaining positive firm outcomes (Gooderham, Parry, & Ringdal, 2008; Huselid, 1995; MacDuffie, 1995; Perry-Smith, & Blum,

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2000). Strategically combining different messages in recruitment materials may strengthen the effect that each message has on targeted job seekers. These message can also be perceived as a form of organizational support to employees. Eisenberger, Fasolo, and Davis-La Mastro (1990) showed that perceived organizational support was related to effort-reward expectancies which included attitudes about work related expectations. Immigrant workers who feel deprived of equal opportunity, given the roadblocks posed by visa restrictions and lack of diversity, will be receptive to work visa sponsorship or international diversity being emphasized because they offer support towards gaining employment and not feeling alienated. Moreover, we contend that work visa emphasis strengthens the effect that a diversity emphasis has on signaling fairness, inclusion, and opportunity at organizations, and consequently, increasing perceived work related expectancies. When job seekers perceive that the firm employs members from their cultural identity group, they will be more attracted to that organization (Perkins et al., 2000; Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987). However, for some foreign-born job seekers that may not serve as sufficient evidence that they are eligible to work for that organization. Statements regarding work visa sponsorship is an explicit announcement to applicants that policies and mechanisms are in place to assist in the recruitment of foreign-born job applicants. Job seekers recognize this, and may perceive these firms as making a strong commitment to international diversity as expressed in diversity statements.

Thierry's reflection theory on compensation suggests that compensation positively influences employee behavior when it is meaningful to the target employee (Thierry, 2001). Specifically, individuals are responsive to characteristics of compensation that enhance, and do not threaten their self-identity. Thierry proposed that compensation that reflects events directly

related to individuals will increase their satisfaction. Although this model applies to individuals already employed by organizations, information contained in recruitment materials may also signal (Spence, 1973) job seekers to evaluate their future experience with employers as being positive since recruitment sources are often perceived as an accurate representation of organizations (Rynes & Miller,1983).

Because of the unique situation of immigrant employees, recruitment materials containing both international diversity emphasis and visa sponsorship statements may also serve as psychological safeguards to job seekers, implying to them that their effort in pursuing employment with a company that perceivably values international diversity will not be wasted due to lack of support for visa policy issues. We contend that the visa emphasis in recruitment materials strengthens the signal by diversity emphasis to job seekers that the firm not only has a large number of foreign-born workers, but also that foreign- born employees are more likely to successfully be hired, treated fairly and reap positive benefits once employed. Visa sponsorship emphasis for a perceivably large number of foreign-born workers (when combined with diversity emphasis) also signals that a firm values them, making foreign-born job seekers believe they will fit well there if hired. The relationship between stated support for immigrants, work related expectancy, and organizational attractiveness is complex. Drawing from the theoretical and empirical support mentioned above, we propose work visa emphasis strengthens the effect that international diversity emphasis has on work related expectancy. Specifically, work visa emphasis should strengthen the signal that international diversity emphasis communicates of being an employer that values foreign-born workers and is diverse, thereby increasing the perceived work related expectancies of job seekers.

Hypothesis 3: Work visa sponsorship emphasis moderates the effect of international diversity emphasis on perceived work related expectancies, such that work visa sponsorship emphasis will strengthen the positive effect of international diversity emphasis.

Firms are more attractive to job seekers if they are viewed as instrumental to them attaining their goals (Lievens et al., 2001; Vroom, 1966). When recruitment materials signal to job seekers they can be successful at the company, they are more likely to pursue working there due their perception of highly valent opportunities (Rynes, 1989). Job seekers form attitudes about employers during early stages of recruitment before they begin working there (Wanous, 1992). Positive expectations about their future work experience are formed based on the recruitment messages they interpret. If job seekers perceive that their contributions to a firm will be valued, then they will anticipate fair rewards for their effort (Eisenberger et al., 1990). These work related expectancies help organizations grow and succeed (Eisenberger et al., 1990). Prior research shows that perceptions about positive work expectations strengthen the attractiveness of organizations (Jones, et al., 2014; Kravitz, 1995). It is fair to assume that employers perceived as fair and offering opportunities for positive work outcomes will be attractive to job seekers. Drawing from signal theory (Spence, 1973) and prior research investigating mechanisms through which the effect of organizational environmental characteristics on organizational attractiveness occur (Jones, et al., 2014; Kravitz, 1995), we predict:

Hypothesis 4: Perceived work-related expectancies will be positively related to organizational attractiveness.

Thus far we have proposed that international diversity emphasis and work visa sponsorship emphasis will be positively related perceived work-related expectancies and that the relationship between international diversity emphasis and perceived work-related expectancies will be moderated by work visa sponsorship emphasis. We propose that perceived work-related expectancies is a signaling mechanism explaining why and how diversity-related job advertisements are ultimately related to organizational attractiveness. Thus not only do we propose that perceived work-related expectancies will be related to organizational attractiveness (i.e., Hypothesis 4 above), we also propose that a conditional indirect effect exists for international diversity emphasis and work visa sponsorship on organizational attractiveness through perceived work-related expectancies. Based on prior research, this type of model is a moderated-mediation model (James & Brett, 1984; Preacher, Rucker, & Hayes, 2007) resulting in our final hypothesis (full model shown in Figure 1).

Hypothesis 5: International diversity emphasis will be related to organizational attractiveness via conditional indirect effects, such that its relationship with organizational attractiveness will be moderated by work visa sponsorship emphasis and mediated by perceived work-related expectancies.

Method

Participants

All graduating MBA students, a total of 136, from an international business school located in Southeast Asia were recruited from various capstone business courses to participate in the current research study where they provided their names and email addresses as contact

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information. Afterwards, a link to the survey was sent to the participants via e-mail. And, because student-recruited samples have been shown to have no significant differences with non-student-recruited samples and to have conservative effect sizes on observed relationships (Wheeler, Shanine, Leon, & Whitman, 2014), the participants were also asked to recommend peers who are graduating students from business programs to participate in this study. Participants then forwarded an electronic survey link to those identified individuals who lived both inside and outside of the country where the study took place. As a result, the sample population for the current study included an internationally diverse pool of participants with citizenship from different countries outside the U.S. located in the Asia-Pacific region. The participants were told they would be entered in a raffle for a \$15 iTunes gift card for their participation. College students are often targeted by organizations recruiting talent for their workforce (Powell & Goulet, 1996) making college student samples an appropriate sample for this study.

Subjects with missing data related to the variables being investigated were removed. As a result, 195 valid responses (N=195) were used. Respondents were 63.1% male with an average age of 26.4 years (SD=2.62). Most were Indians (64.6%), and followed by other Asian ethnicities (e.g., Chinese, Filipinos, and Indonesians). Most respondents (83.3%) identified themselves as currently seeking employment.

Manipulation

One way to influence a job seeker's perception of an organization's attractiveness as an employer is through its recruitment website (Walker et al., 2012). Hence, to test our hypotheses, four web-based recruitment advertisements were developed for a fictitious company, LEJ

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Management & Consulting, based upon those found on the websites of popular businesses. All advertisements were identical in name but varied in descriptive paragraphs and images based on the condition presented to participants. The specific wording was adapted from a number of actual Fortune 500 company recruitment websites and wording used in prior studies on organizational attractiveness (e.g., Avery, 2003; Kim & Gelfand, 2003; Schwoerer & Rosen, 1989; Walker et al., 2007). The participants read fictitious web recruitment advertisements with statements that manipulated the emphasis or omission of the two variables, international diversity emphasis and work visa sponsorship emphasis. With two variables, at two levels each, we used a 2x2 design, resulting in four statement conditions: (1) international diversity omission x work visa sponsorship omission, (2) international diversity omission x work visa sponsorship emphasis, (3) international diversity emphasis x work visa sponsorship omission, (4) international diversity emphasis x work visa sponsorship emphasis.

The two conditions with the international diversity omission included the text, “LEJ Management & Consulting is an Equal Opportunity Employer” and three photos, all of which included white employees (men only for two photos, and men and women for the third photo). The two international diversity emphasis conditions included the following statement:

“Together— we stand as one. We believe in the power of diversity and inclusiveness — people with different backgrounds, opinions, and viewpoints. We’re committed to creating a work environment that provides the flexibility and support to accommodate people’s personal as well as professional needs. Right from day one, you’ll be able to seize every opportunity to contribute, grow and succeed.”

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This condition also included three photos with individuals in similar poses to those in the international diversity climate omission condition. One photo depicted an Indian man, a second photo depicted an East Asian man, and the third photo depicted an East Asian man and woman conversing with a white man and woman.

The work visa emphasis conditions were manipulated by either including or omitting the following statement from the web ads described above: “In order to foster a culture of innovation and expression, LEJ attracts the best and brightest from all over the world. In many instances, LEJ will sponsor temporary work (H-1B) visas to attract or keep great employees.” The recruitment statement conditions were dummy-coded. International diversity omission and work visa sponsorship omission were coded as 0 and international diversity emphasis and work visa sponsorship emphasis were coded as 1.

At the end of the surveys, statements were included to evaluate the effectiveness of the conditions for ad international diversity emphasis manipulations and work visa sponsorship emphasis manipulations. Respondents’ level of agreement with the statement “This company values international cultural diversity” was used to assess the effectiveness of the ad’s international diversity emphasis manipulation. Respondents’ level of agreement with the statement “This company offers work visas to its employees” assessed the manipulation of statements regarding the emphasis of work visa sponsorship. Confirming the effectiveness of the manipulation, mean differences between the work visa sponsorship omission ($M = 4.32$) and the work visa sponsorship emphasis condition ($M = 5.37$) were significant, $t(166) = -5.16$, $p < .05$ (one-tailed). Additionally, the international diversity omission condition ($M = 4.81$) was significantly different than the international diversity emphasis condition ($M = 5.14$), $t(166) = -1.89$, $p < .05$

(one-tailed).

Measures

Organizational attractiveness. The dependent variable organizational attractiveness was measured using a six item, 5-point Likert scale adapted from the Attraction, Image and Compatibility (AIC) Scale with a prior coefficient $\alpha=0.90$ (Perkins et al., 2000). The AIC consists of three subscales. Participants are asked questions that assess their perceived image of the company, their perceived level of compatibility with the company, and their level of attraction to the company. The subscale measuring attraction was used for the current study and yielded a coefficient $\alpha=0.80$. Sample items include “I would request additional information regarding the possibility of employment with this company” and, “I think this organization is attractive.”

Perceived work-related expectancies. The mediating variable perceived work related expectancies was measured using a nine-item 5-point Likert scale with a prior coefficient $\alpha=0.89$ adapted from Eisenberger and colleagues (1990). This scale assesses employee effort-reward expectancies that performance will lead to increased recognition. Sample items include “When I finish my job on time, my job is more secure at [company name]” and “It is more likely that I will be given a pay raise or promotion at [company name] if I finish a large amount of work.” The coefficient α for our study is 0.91.

Controls. Consistent with prior studies on diversity and organizational attractiveness (e.g., Aiman- Smith et al., 2001; Avery, 2003; Thomas & Wise, 1999; Walker et al., 2007; Walker et al., 2009), we controlled for age, sex, and ethnicity on the endogenous variable in our model (i.e., organizational attractiveness). Age was entered as a continuous variable and sex

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was coded 0= female, 1= male. Since the majority of our sample consisted of Indian participants (64.6%), we wanted to account for the possible variance in our models that might be due to participant ethnicity. Therefore we created a dummy variable consisting of 0 = Non-Indian, 1=Indian.

Procedures

Online surveys were used to collect the data for this study. Participants replied to a link sent to their email address after having signed up to be a part of the research study. Upon clicking on the link, participants were redirected to an introductory web page where they were instructed to evaluate a recruitment website for a fictitious consulting firm in the United States. Participants created a unique identification number to proceed and were informed that their responses would remain anonymous. They were then assigned to one of the four experimental conditions randomly using an application included in the online survey software. This function of the web survey redirected them to one of the four web pages. After viewing the webpage and clicking on the continue button, participants were asked to complete survey questions measuring their opinion on the webpage. Next, respondents were directed to subsequent pages that measured their attraction to the organization, work attitudes, perceptions about the website and the company, and basic demographic information.

Results

Table 1 shows means, standard deviations and bivariate correlations for all study variables. The main analysis used for testing the hypotheses was hierarchical multiple regression with bootstrapping techniques for significance testing. Most social science researchers consider a power level of .80 or above to be acceptable (Cohen, 1988). Prior research investigating the

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effect of diversity recruitment ads on organizational attractiveness has produced betas ranging from .22 to .51 (e.g. Avery, 2003; Perkins et al., 2000; Walker et al., 2009). Assuming a sample size of 195 subjects and anticipating a medium effect size using three predictor variables (Cohen & Cohen, 1983), power level was calculated to be .99 for the model F-tests. This exceeded minimum requirements.

Insert Table 1 about here

The full conceptualization for our study consists of a moderated mediation model built from hypotheses 1-4, culminating with hypothesis 5. To test this model we followed the technique delineated by Preacher, Rucker, and Hayes (2007) for testing moderated mediation through the use of the MODMED macro in SPSS. Further, we present out results in accordance with the usage of this macro as demonstrated by Ambrose, Schminke, and Mayer (2013).

Mediator model. When using the MODMED technique the results are provided in a multi-step process. First, as shown in Table 2, results are shown for the mediator model. Specifically, the effects of the two independent variables (international diversity emphasis and work visa emphasis) and their interaction on the mediator (perceived work related expectancies) are shown. This step tests hypotheses 1-3.

There is a significant positive effect of international diversity emphasis on perceived work-related expectancies, supporting hypothesis 1. Additionally, there is a significant positive effect for work visa emphasis on perceived work-related expectancies providing support for hypothesis 2. The interaction between international diversity emphasis and work visa emphasis

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was significant predicting an additional 4% of variance in perceived work-related expectancies ($\Delta R^2 = .04$, $F_{(1,188)} = 7.35$, $p < .01$). However, as the graph in Figure 2 indicates, it is not in the direction hypothesized. Instead of work visa emphasis strengthening the positive effect of international diversity emphasis on perceived work-related expectancies, the presence of both international diversity emphasis and work visa emphasis resulted in lower perceived work-related expectancies. Therefore, hypothesis 3 was not supported.

Insert Table 2 here

Insert Figure 2 here

Dependent variable model. The second step of the MODMED technique displays results for the effect of the mediator variable on the dependent variable while controlling for the main effects of the independent variables and their interaction term. This provides a test for hypothesis 4. This step of the model predicted 21% of the variance in organizational attractiveness ($R^2 = .21$, $F_{(7,187)} = 6.91$, $p < .001$). According to Cohen (1988), effect sizes of $R^2 > .15$ are considered large. The output displaced at the bottom of Table 2 reveal a significant effect of perceived work-related expectancies on organizational attractiveness, supporting hypothesis 4. It is worth noting, that a significant direct effect for the interaction variable was also present. A breakdown of the significance of the direct effects of the interaction on organizational attractiveness are shown at the top of Table 3 below.

Conditional indirect effects. The final step of analysis is to examine if there is a significant conditional indirect effect of international diversity emphasis on organizational attractiveness through perceived work-related expectancies (i.e., hypothesis 5). Bootstrapping techniques, using 10,000 bootstraps, were used to determine if a significant conditional indirect effect was present. When using bootstrapping with a dummy variable as the moderator, 95% confidence intervals are given around the indirect effect of the IV (international diversity emphasis) when the moderator variable is present (1 = work visa was emphasized) and when it was not present (0 = work visa was not emphasized). According to Preacher et al. (2007), moderated mediation is present if zero is not in the confidence interval for at least one level of the conditional indirect effect.

Insert Table 3 here

The bootstrapping results for the conditional indirect effects are shown in Table 3. These indicate the existence of a significant conditional indirect effect, supporting hypothesis 5. A more fine-grained analysis of the results demonstrates the nature of the moderated mediation. The conditional indirect effect of international diversity emphasis on organizational attractiveness through perceived work-related expectancies is significant and positive when there is no work visa emphasis. Conversely, when there is an emphasis of work visa sponsorship, the conditional indirect effect is not significant (i.e., zero is not in the 95% confidence interval).

Overall, the results of the MODMED procedure provide support for the presence of moderated mediation. International diversity emphasis and work visa sponsorship emphasis are

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both positively related to perceived work-related expectancies. Additionally, perceived work-related expectancies are positively related to organizational attractiveness, and international diversity emphasis is indirectly related to organizational attractiveness through perceived work-related expectancies when there is no emphasis of work visa sponsorship. The hypothesized direction of our interaction hypothesis (i.e., H3), however, was not supported, as the significance of the interaction was in the opposite direction, provoking further theoretical examination.

Discussion

In this study, we significantly contributed to the organizational attractiveness literature by investigating the relationship between recruitment ads that emphasize international diversity and organizational attractiveness. Increasingly, U.S. companies are recruiting Asian immigrants for professional positions, yet little is known about the effectiveness of recruitment materials used that emphasize the sponsoring of work visas or highlight valuing international diversity. Additionally, scant attention is made towards identifying what underlying signals produced by recruitment materials are perceived by job seekers to attract them to organizations.

Our first two hypotheses, that perceived work-related expectancies of foreign job seekers would be affected by recruitment statements emphasizing valuing international diversity and emphasizing work visa sponsorship were supported.

Our fourth and fifth hypotheses were also supported. The significance of our proposed moderated mediation model demonstrates that when recruitment literature emphasizes work visa sponsorship and international diversity, its effect on organizational attractiveness is partially explained by the perceptions that are formed by job seekers of the different work-related experiences they might encounter within the organization. Understanding that work-related

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expectancies are a significant aspect of this process may be helpful to organizations as they craft advertisements that more clearly depict what working at the organization is like for foreign-born job seekers. Our findings further indicate that although the emphasis of international diversity and work visa sponsorship interact to affect organizational attractiveness, they also influence each other to produce signals to job seekers which communicate expectations about a firm. The perceived work related expectancies signaled by the recruitment materials influences job seekers' decisions to pursue employment at targeted firm. Moreover, the international diversity emphasis \times work visa sponsorship emphasis interaction signals to job seekers the favorability of work related expectations as they process information about an organization's perceived climate. By successfully uncovering the signaling mechanism of perceived work-related expectancies in the organizational attraction process, we address numerous calls for explaining the *why* and the *how* for diversity-related job advertisements and their effect on organizational attractiveness (Breugh, 2008; Celani & Singh, 2010; Jones et al., 2014).

Our third hypothesis, that an emphasis on work visa sponsorship would moderate the effect of international diversity emphasis on perceived work-related expectancies, was partially supported but with significant results. Contrary to our expectations, recruitment advertisements emphasizing work visas that also emphasized valuing international diversity weakened perceptions of favorable work-related expectancies. As noted by Almeida et al. (2012: 1963), factors influencing the recruitment of immigrant professionals “are complex, and may be contradictory”. We returned to the literature to help understand this counterintuitive finding and believe that some possibilities might explain our results.

First, it is possible that, rather than signaling a climate of equality and inclusion, an emphasis on visa sponsorship, coupled with statements about valuing international diversity, may instead signal a climate ripe for exploitation of immigrants whose presence in the country is completely controlled by employers. Second, perceived tokenism may signal either positive or negative outcomes for immigrants thereby affecting their perceptions about an organization. We elaborate on these possibilities below.

As mentioned earlier, Avery and colleagues (2010) found that, contrary to what employers may perceive, immigrants in their study were very attuned to unfair treatment and had heightened justice perceptions compared to U.S. workers. Ngo, Tang, and Au (2002) hypothesized and found that more educated Chinese workers were more sensitive to employment discrimination than those with less education and were more likely to take action against it. It is possible that our highly educated sample is aware of immigrant mistreatment by unscrupulous employers and more sensitive to and suspicious of statements about the combination of international workers and visas. Employers may wish to use one, but not both in their recruitment materials.

Another possible explanation for our findings is based on the immigrants' perspective towards tokenism. Although tokenism may weaken job seekers' attraction to organizations because they may believe they will be exploited, tokenism may also signal to them opportunities for advancement as a direct result of their solo status (Avery, 2003). When a recruitment statement emphasizing visa sponsorship does not depict diversity literally or visually, foreign job seekers may visualize themselves as one of few immigrant employees working for that organization. Additionally, when companies promote a climate of diversity without mentioning

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visa sponsorships, foreign job seekers may perceive the application process as more selective than that of companies that promote both. As a result, they may believe that fewer immigrant applicants will apply or be hired as it is challenging to gain worker visa status. Both examples of solo status could be perceived by foreign job seekers as allowing greater visibility (Kanter, 1977) for themselves, believing it could be used to their advantage in demonstrating the performance needed to obtain positions of leadership within the organization. Again, practitioners may wish to emphasize either international diversity or work visa sponsorship, rather than both in their recruitment materials.

Limitations and Future Research

This study offers valuable contributions to our understanding of how recruitment materials including statements emphasizing international diversity and work visa sponsorship influence organizational attractiveness. Specifically, a major finding is information about how emphasizing work visa sponsorship and international diversity can be used by firms to attract Asian immigrant workers. The study also identifies perceived work-related expectancies as a signaling mechanism that explains how diversity recruitment materials affect job seekers. However, the investigation has some limitations. First, simulated recruitment advertisements instead of actual advertisements were presented to graduate students. Although university students are typically targeted by companies as potential recruits (Rynes & Boudreau, 1986), making our sample suitable for this study, the scenarios were not real-life situations. Furthermore, we did not measure the credibility the participants placed on such recruitment advertisements, more so in a cross-cultural context, being that they are not from the United States. However, since most participants were active job seekers and were international students,

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diversity, visa sponsorships, and how they affect perceptions of organizational attractiveness are germane to them. In addition, other recruitment and organizational attractiveness studies have used similar online scenario-based studies and university student samples (e.g., Walker, Feild, Giles, Armenakis, & Bernerth, 2009; Walker, Feild, Giles, & Bernerth, 2008). Second, by collecting data online, we were unable to control environmental factors that may affect participant responses. However, we collected participant information and randomly verified that actual participants completed the survey. Also, we carefully analyzed contact information to ensure against multiple submissions. These measures, and the established equivalence between online survey methods and paper-and-pencil forms (Deutskens, de Ruyter, & Wetzels, 2006), suggest our data collection methods are not a major problem. Finally, because self-report measures were used, social desirability effects and mono-method bias as a result of common method variance may also be present (Spector, 1994).

Future research should expand the scope of this study by investigating how perceived workplace diversity may be interpreted differently in countries outside the United States. More specifically, further exploration is needed to investigate how perceptions of international diversity versus intra-national racial diversity affect the organizational attraction of foreign job seekers. What are international applicants' reactions to photographs depicting African American or Hispanic employees?

Future research should also measure participants' understanding of how to obtain a work visa to understand better how literature promoting work visa sponsorship relates to organizational outcomes. The current study only focused on H-1B visas which are administered for professional occupations in the United States. There is a lack of research investigating the

many types of work visas administered for other types of work and in other countries in the management literature. We hope to see future research on this topic, especially due to the documented recent discrimination and exploitation of immigrant workers by employers in both professional and non-professional occupations.

The current study included subjects mainly from the Asia-Pacific region which limits its generalizability, although it increases our understanding about attracting a specific subset of foreign job seekers to U.S. companies. Future research should also consider immigrants and employers from different areas. Although Asians are the second largest proportion of immigrants to the United States and the fastest growing, there are numerous other nationalities that immigrate to the United States for work, and individuals' workplace behavior and decision making regarding employment may differ based on cross-cultural differences (Hofstede, 2001). They may also differ based on economic conditions and opportunities for work in their home country, among other factors (Baum & Kabst, 2013). However, given the growing importance of diversity around the world and widespread immigration in many regions (Jonsen, Maznevski, & Schneider, 2011), although immigration laws and requirements are different in different contexts, these results may nonetheless shed some light on some of the complexities regarding diversity, immigration, and organizational attraction in non-U.S. contexts. For example, although the specific stipulations for H-1B work visas are limited to the United States, whether immigrants will feel they will be treated fairly and their contributions valued is of widespread relevance. Similarly, immigrants' contribution to organizational diversity and perspective that diversity is also valued has broad relevance and generalizability.

Data for the current study was primarily collected using survey data collection methods.

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Future researchers should develop more qualitative methods such as interviews to collect richer data that may explain circumstances under which foreign-born job seekers will not be attracted to firms that emphasize diversity or visa sponsorship in recruitment materials. Because of our surprising results, that the interaction effect between diversity emphasis and work visa emphasis recruitment materials decreased work-related expectancies, we created a focus group comprised of some of the study participants once the study ended. Ten students who participated in the study were randomly selected to participate in a focus group discussion approximately one month after the study ended. We reviewed the study with them and shared the overall results. Afterwards, they were asked to identify what attracts them to organizations, and in their own words offer an explanation for the study results. Each participant submitted a one-page narrative that included one or more pieces of this information. Some of the statements from the student narratives include the following:

“High Visa, Low Diversity creates a situation where the respondent may perceive that it is normally hard for people of his race to get into the organization but that he is an exception; thus, he may be the only “Filipino” or “South East Asian” in the company which makes him less comparable to peers; the unique perspective that only he can bring to the organization also makes him more valuable.”

“High Visa, High Diversity creates a situation where there might be more people of the respondent’s race than desirable; there comes a certain point of congestion where every additional Filipino may yield diminishing returns (less perceived value) to each Filipino who are already in the company.”

“The major factors that should be looked upon are diversity in the company...”

“An employee would prefer an organization which helps in the Visa clearance and work permit. It also gives a sense of trust that the organization is there to help in settling in other country...”

“The foremost important thing is how the minorities and foreign nationals are treated in an organization...The organization need (sic) to treat all employees fairly and should have equal growth opportunity.”

We hope that statements collected from participants during the focus group discussion assist future researchers in developing rigorous qualitative studies to better understand the complexities of attracting foreign job seekers to U.S. companies.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to examine how emphasizing work visa sponsorships and valuing international diversity influence the attraction of foreign job seekers to organizations. Given projections of the continued need for highly skilled immigrants, implications of the current study may further employers’ understanding of what factors play a role in attracting international job candidates. The findings from our study should also inform recruiters how to create more targeted ads to attract highly skilled immigrants in industries where they need them. We found that both work visa sponsorship and international diversity in recruitment literature is related to perceived work-related expectancies which also mediate the combined effect of work visa sponsorship emphasis and international diversity emphasis on organizational attractiveness.

These findings offer a unique insight into the influence of recruitment statements on job seekers outside of the United States and suggest that further research is needed to understand what types of recruitment tools are useful when targeting foreign job seekers. Foreign job

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candidates may not be affected by international diversity advertisements in the same way as native-born racial minorities have been found to be affected in previous research on recruitment materials that promote racial diversity and inclusion. Job candidates foreign to the United States may also not be as attracted to American companies and visa sponsorships as many recruiters might, on the surface, expect. Further investigation is needed to parcel out differences between how foreign-born and native-born racial minority job seekers are attracted to organizations.

Our unexpected findings may suggest that prospective immigrant job seekers are aware of the mistreatment and exploitation that some immigrants experience. They may also possess different perspectives from domestic job seekers regarding being viewed with token status in organizations based on their ethnicity. This study is a step toward further understanding the complexity of recruiting from an increasingly diverse labor market that includes international workers. A continuation of this line of research will contribute to a better understanding regarding the relationships among both the constructs and how managers can best develop recruitment literature to increase their labor pool of international job applicants.

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Figure 1. Conceptual model being tested

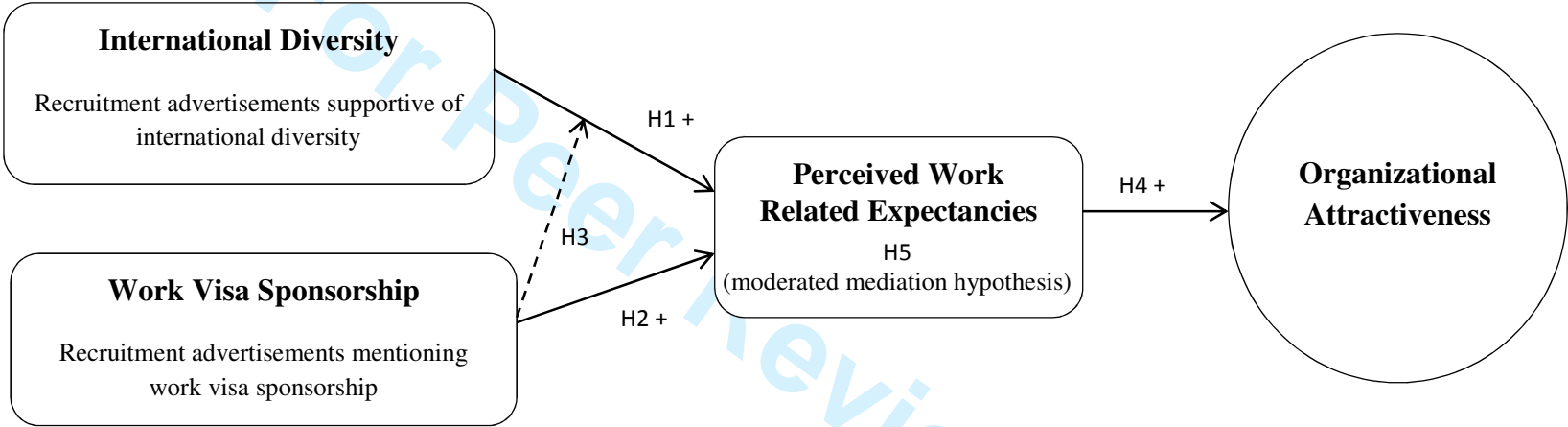


Figure 2.

Interaction of Diversity Emphasis and Visa Sponsorship Emphasis on Perceived Work Related Expectancies

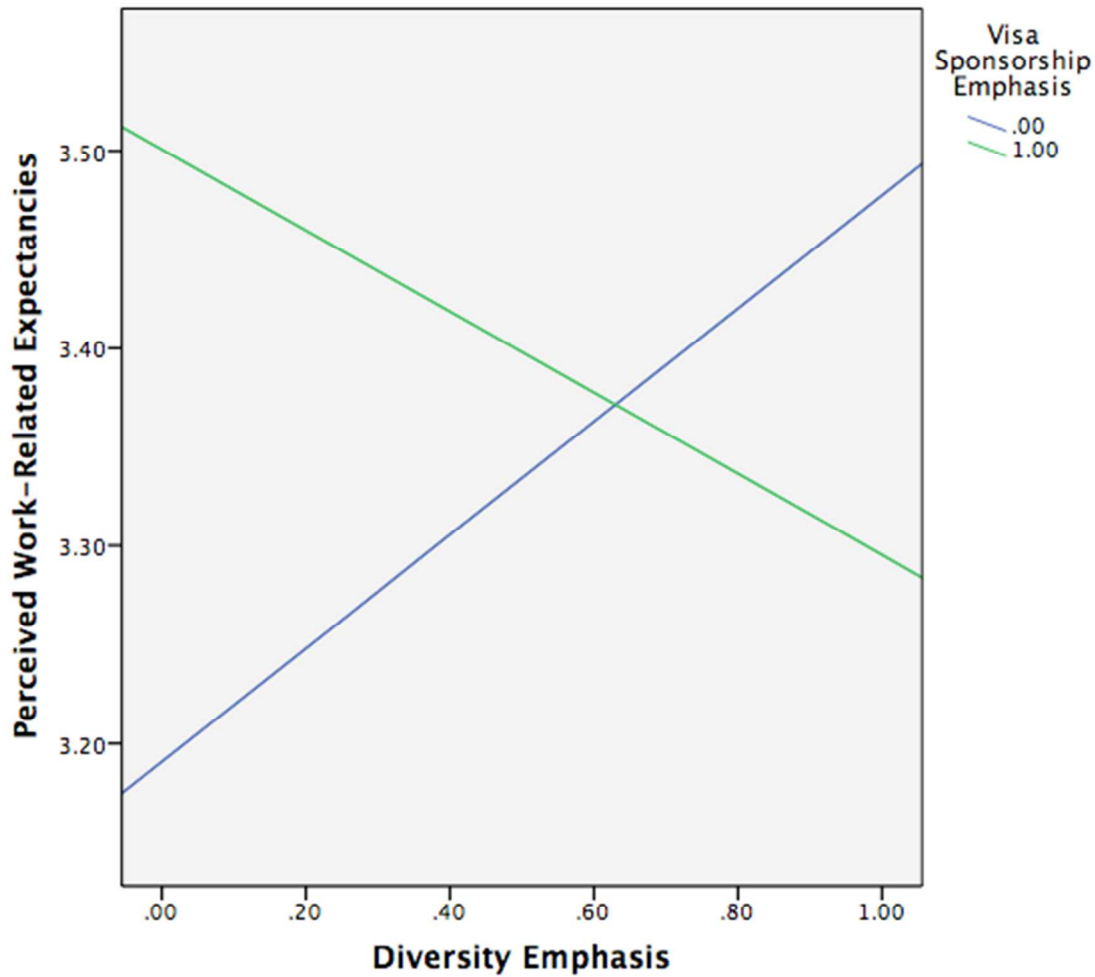


Table 1.

Descriptive Statistics and Bivariate Correlations

Variable	Mean	S.D.	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Age	26.42	2.63						
2. Sex	.63	.48	.22**					
3. Ethnicity	.64	.48	-.03	.11				
4. Diversity Emphasis	.48	.50	-.01	.02	.01			
5. Work Visa Sponsorship Emphasis	.53	.50	.04	-.03	-.02	.02		
6. Perceived Work-Related Expectancies	3.37	.64	-.01	.08	-.19**	.02	.06	
7. Organizational Attractiveness	3.38	.71	-.05	-.03	-.05	.03	.05	.41**

Notes: N=195, Sex (0 = female, 1= male), Ethnicity (0 = Non-Indian, 1 = Indian)
**p<.01

Table 2.

Hierarchical Regression Analyses (MODMED Procedure)

Predictor	<i>B</i>	(<i>SE</i>)
Mediator Model: Perceived Work-Related Expectancies		
Constant	3.56**	(.47)
Age	-.01	(.02)
Sex	.13	(.10)
Ethnicity	-.24*	(.09)
Diversity Emphasis	.29*	(.13)
Visa Sponsorship Emphasis	.31*	(.13)
Diversity Emphasis x Visa Sponsorship Emphasis	-.49**	(.18)
R²	.09**	
ΔR² (interaction term)	.04**	
Dependent Variable Model: Organizational Attractiveness		
Constant	2.11**	(.55)
Age	-.01	(.02)
Sex	-.09	(.10)
Ethnicity	.08	(.10)
Perceived Work-Related Expectancies	.42**	(.08)
Diversity Emphasis	.32*	(.14)
Visa Sponsorship Emphasis	.30*	(.13)
Diversity Emphasis x Visa Sponsorship Emphasis	-.54**	(.19)
R²	.21**	
ΔR² (interaction term)	.03**	

Notes: N=195, Sex (0 = female, 1 = male), Ethnicity (0 = Non-Indian, 1 = Indian)

*p<.05

**p<.01

Table 3.

Bootstrapped Moderated Mediation Results

Predictor	<i>B</i>	(<i>SE</i>)
DV: Organizational Attractiveness		
Constant	2.11**	(.55)
Age	-.01	(.02)
Sex	-.09	(.10)
Ethnicity	.08	(.10)
Diversity Emphasis	.32*	(.14)
Visa Sponsorship Emphasis	.30*	(.13)
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Perceived Work-Related Expectancies	.42**	(.08)
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Notes: *N*=195, 10,000 bootstraps, Sex (0 = female, 1= male), Ethnicity (0 = Non-Indian, 1 = Indian)

**p*<.05

***p*<.01

Table 4.

Conditional Direct and Indirect Effects of Diversity Emphasis on Organizational Attractiveness With or Without Work Visa Sponsorship Emphasis

Level of Moderator	Effect	LLCI	ULCI
Conditional Direct Effects			
No Visa Sponsorship Emphasis (0)	.32*	.04	.59
Visa Sponsorship Emphasis (1)	-.22	-.48	.03
Conditional Indirect Effects (through mediator: Perceived Work-Related Expectancies)			
No Visa Sponsorship Emphasis (0)	.12*	.02	.25
Visa Sponsorship Emphasis (1)	-.09	-.21	.01

Notes: N=195, 10,000 bootstraps

*zero is not in the confidence interval

Figure 1. Conceptual model being tested

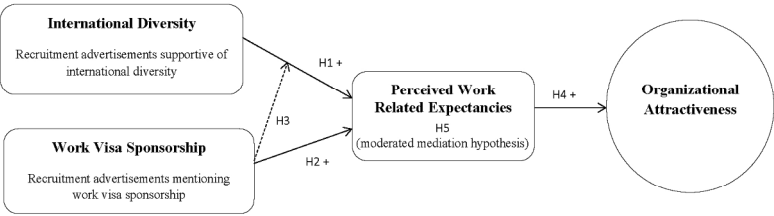


Figure 1. Conceptual model being tested

279x215mm (200 x 200 DPI)

Figure 2.

Interaction of Diversity Emphasis and Visa Sponsorship Emphasis on Perceived Work Related Expectancies

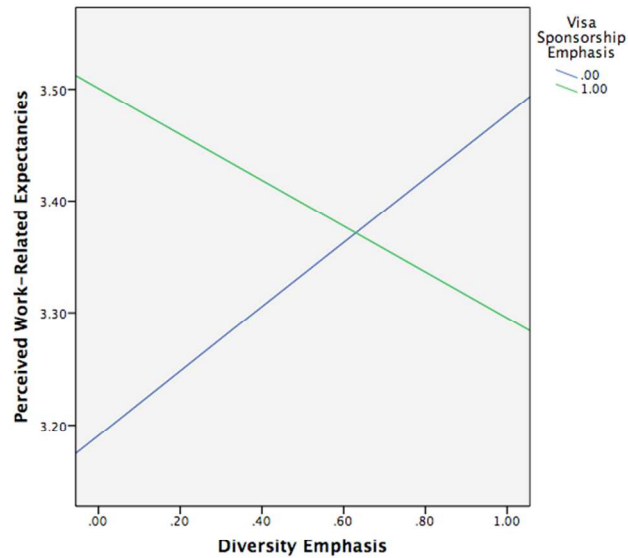


Figure 2.

Interaction of Diversity Emphasis and Visa Sponsorship Emphasis on Perceived Work Related Expectancies

215x279mm (96 x 96 DPI)

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215x279mm (200 x 200 DPI)

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215x279mm (200 x 200 DPI)

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215x279mm (200 x 200 DPI)

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215x279mm (200 x 200 DPI)