ABSTRACT

Applicant impressions of organizations are a critical antecedent to applicant decisions within the recruitment process. Recruitment research has examined how applicant perceptions are influenced by organization-specific information within a given industry. However, current recruitment models fail to describe the process of impression formation during recruitment, which inhibits understanding of the recruitment process. Specifically, only limited research has considered how applicants integrate context-related associations (such as perceptions about an industry) with recruitment materials in forming initial perceptions about the organization. Over the course of two experimental studies, I integrate social cognitive research on impression formation into recruitment models to develop a model of impression formation during recruitment and suggest that context-related associations influence the effectiveness of organization-specific information on applicant perceptions. I further draw on information processing theory to suggest that applicants are more likely to discount negative context-related associations when they are provided with highly credible organization-specific information that refutes context-related associations. The findings from this dissertation suggest the importance of further exploring the process of impression formation in recruitment and point to several new directions for recruitment research.