Leveraging Cause-Marketing as an Organizational Strategy: Exploring the Impact on Job Seekers—An Abstract

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Abstract Managers face increasing pressure to engage their firms in socially responsible behaviors such as cause marketing. As they seek to become more socially responsible for both philanthropic and economic reasons, their efforts are affecting not only consumers and society, but the employees who work for them and the potential employees they may attract. The majority of research on cause marketing, a type of marketing involving the cooperative efforts of a for-profit business and a nonprofit organization for mutual benefit, has focused on the impact on consumers; therefore, little is known about the effects of social initiatives on employees.

Firms spend a large amount of financial resources and time attracting, hiring, and retaining employees. Given the high costs of the hiring process and employee turnover, knowledge of how an organization's CM initiatives relate to the top factors that job seekers look for when making employment decisions is valuable. An understanding of how job seekers are affected by CM will help inform management and marketing theory and practice, positioning organizations to leverage social change as an organizational strategy. Drawing on signaling theory (Connelly et al. 2011; Spence 1973) and the halo effect (Nisbett and Wilson 1977; Thorndike 1920), the purpose of the current study is to examine how primary factors in the employment decision process such as salary and firm prestige compare with CM initiatives in signaling experiential factors that employees desire in the workplace. Through integrating employee literature with work on CM, the current research demonstrates how a job seeker's perceptions of an organization's CM initiatives can impact his or her anticipated job meaningfulness and organizational commitment, increase organizational attractiveness, and increase perceptions of ethical culture and collectivism.

References Available Upon Request.

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