Small but attractive: Dimensions of new venture employer attractiveness and the moderating role of applicants' entrepreneurial behaviors

Abstract:
Operating under high levels of uncertainty and limited public recognition, one of the most significant challenges for new ventures is attracting qualified employees. Building on the concept of legitimate distinctiveness, our study investigates how recruitment-related heterogeneous and homogeneous entrepreneurial identity claims influence applicants' judgments of new ventures' employer attractiveness. We combine anticipatory psychological contract theory and legitimacy theory to build theory about the way applicants evaluate new venture employer attractiveness. Using a metric conjoint experiment, we study 9,824 employer attractiveness judgments made by 307 job seekers. Our multi-level approach also yields cross-level interaction effects of job applicants' innovative behavior, which offer novel insights into which new venture employment dimensions specifically attract entrepreneurially-minded potential employees. We derive implications for new venture
recruitment theory and offer practical implications for startup staffing.

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