EXAMINING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DECISION-MAKING STYLES AND JOB
SEARCH BEHAVIORS: A TEST OF THE INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES HYPOTHESIS

by

Liam Nield

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Approved by:

_____
Yalcin Acikgoz, Ph.D., Thesis Director

_____
William Hicks, Ph.D., Second Reader

_____
Andrew Smith, Ph.D., Departmental Honors Director

_____
Jefford Vahlbusch, Ph.D., Dean, The Honors College

Examining the Relationship between Decision-Making Styles and Job Search Behaviors: A Test

of the Individual Differences Hypothesis

Liam Nield

Appalachian State University

Abstract

Most organizations have a process in place for recruiting new employees. These processes vary depending on the size of the organization and the vacancies that need to be filled. There is great value in the optimization of this process to reap the best potential employees from an applicant pool. Research conducted into hiring sources has consistently shown differences between these sources in measures of ultimate employee performance. This has resulted in several hypotheses that seek to explain these consistently observed differences, of which three will be focused on. Realism hypothesis, PO/PJ fit hypothesis, and literature associated with them are reviewed, while individual-differences hypothesis is tested using factor analysis. The results are consistent with previous findings regarding differences between hiring sources. Some of the expected correlations were found while others were not. The practical implications of the data are explored. Limitations of the study and potential direction for further research is considered.

Introduction

Employee recruitment is the process by which organizations seek to encourage applicants to apply for their jobs, stay in the applicant pool, and ultimately accept any offers they are given (Breaugh 2008). Despite variations between organizations, the process typically involves some form of targeted advertising about job openings and a subsequent selection process to choose the applicants who have the required qualifications for the job. Employees search for jobs, broadly speaking, through formal or informal methods. Formal methods include utilizing online job search websites, registering through a state employment service, utilizing a trade union network, and searching through newspaper advertisements. Informal methods refer to the utilization of friends or family to ask about job openings, or perhaps applying to an organization on the off chance that there is a vacancy (Reid, 1972).

From the perspective of an organization, the resources applicants use through formal and informal methods can also be described as external and internal hiring sources, respectively. Internal hiring sources refer to the use of resources from within the organization to find new employees. These include in-house job postings, rehiring former employees, referral by current employees, and the use of any other source within the organization. External hiring sources refer to a more active recruitment process on the part of the organization. These involve behaviors employers utilize to bring job openings to the attention of the public outside of the organization, often using individuals as recruiters to represent the company and attract new applicants (Breaugh, 2008). State employment agencies that match job-seeking individuals to available positions are also considered an external source, but typically do not involve any recruitment from the organization itself beyond the posting of the job opening.

The body of research into employee recruitment has grown substantially since the mid-1970s and the publication of the first edition of the *Handbook of Industrial and Organizational Psychology* (1976), in which less than a page was devoted to recruitment (Breaugh & Starke, 2000). Since then, a significant amount of research conducted in the area has focused on the effectiveness of recruitment sources. This has been measured in several ways, most commonly by turnover rate of new employees (e.g., Decker & Cornelius, 1979). Job performance has also been used frequently, although the measure used to define job performance has varied from supervisor ratings to commission and tenure (Hill, 1970; Skolnik, 1987). This inconsistency in operationalization represented a problem with the existing research and the generalizability of its findings. Other inconsistencies, including the type of job being assessed along with variabilities in sample sizes as well as number of sources cited, opened a large void in the literature for other studies to fill and elaborate on.

Research into the relationship between recruitment sources and job performance showed that new employees found through internal hiring sources, on average, demonstrate better performance and lower turnover rates than those found through external sources (Saks, 1994). There is existing literature that has examined the differences between sources in terms of effectiveness. Main hypotheses that have been constructed to explain this observed difference focused initially on the differences in job performance and dismissal rates between hiring sources. This became the foundation for the theory that internal hires perform better than external hires due to the realistic information they receive beforehand (Hill, 1970; Ullman 1966). This idea was amended slightly when the focus shifted to how different hiring sources were related to quitting rates rather than performance or dismissals. This distinction added the dimension of accurate information, or lack thereof for external hires, about the job contributing

to performance and the decision to quit, rather than treating those as isolated decisions (Reid, 1972). A lack of accurate information about the job for external hires can make them disillusioned in the job and can therefore affect their decision to quit. The sum of these observations has become known as the realism hypothesis, which is a theory that has received a large portion of the research attention in the last thirty years (Zottoli & Wanous, 2000).

Realistic information about a job conveyed by an internal source, often a friend or a former colleague, leads to the job living up to expectations and therefore being more satisfying to the new employee (Wanous, 1980). This serves to reduce turnover by allowing applicants to opt out of a job they may not find suitable based on the information provided, making them less likely to quit due to their personal tie to the organization or a person within it (Taylor & Schmidt, 1983). Organizations have formal methods for conveying realistic information known as Realistic Job Previews (RJP). RJPs have not consistently shown a great amount of influence across studies, perhaps due to the relatively small sample sizes seen in many studies, but when samples are pooled together a significant difference in turnover rate emerges between employees exposed to an RJP vs. those who were not (Phillips 1998). However, the inconsistencies in the literature on RJPs extend to further gaps in previous research. Studies have focused largely on post-hire outcomes, like job survival, and have not adequately explored pre-hire outcomes like job appeal and individual job search behaviors (Bretz & Judge, 1998). This is an important distinction because information about pre-hire outcomes is arguably of more use to employers, who can use it to make their organization more attractive to applicants.

Another explanation for observed differences among hiring sources involves the employees' perception of how they fit into an organization and a specific job within that organization. Person/Organization fit (PO) and person/job fit (PJ) are collectively known as the

fit hypothesis, which has its roots in the earliest recruitment studies. Ullman (1966) and Hill (1970) each included the ability to assess PO and PJ fit as a potential reason why internal hires outperform and outlast external hires. It is tempting to see PO and PJ fit as one and the same, but they have been shown to be separate constructs in the minds of recruiters (Kristof-Brown, 2000). Despite being conceptually different, PO and PJ fit undoubtedly influence each other and correlate highly in most situations. In practice, a recruiter focused on finding a candidate with job-specific knowledge, skills, or abilities (KSAOs) would be more interested in PJ fit at first but would likely use PO fit to choose between candidates that display similar PJ fit. There are various other relationships that an employee will develop, including person-supervisor and person-group fit, which further complicates the relationship between PO and PJ fit. These different dynamics make it difficult to determine which is most important and how they affect individuals in different situations (Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005). PO and PJ fit both affect job satisfaction, which directly effects job performance and is therefore a point of interest for organizations that seek optimal performance (Judge, Thoresen, Bono, & Patton, 2001). PO and PJ fit have been operationalized with numerous content dimensions like values, preferences, and personality traits to name a few (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). This makes generalizing results difficult as the varying dimensions between studies make PO and PJ fit hard to pin down (Judge & Ferris, 1992).

Differences in hiring sources are also apparent when it comes to the PO and PJ fit new employees feel in their new jobs. For hiring personnel, PO fit is assessed primarily through values and personality traits, ensuring that the prospective employee is a good social fit in the organization. This differs from PJ fit, which is based more on KSAOs and material directly relating to the tasks a position is responsible for (Kristof-Brown, 2000). PO fit especially is

likely to be perceived to be better by the individual and the organization when they are hired through internal sources as people who are hired through a friend or a connection they have with a company would be expected to establish a better PO fit earlier on than the external hires. Greater possibility of a good PO fit is a key factor in what makes internal hires more successful, especially when measured by job turnover. This familiarity with a person before they are employed allows better hiring decisions to be made and ultimately results in more satisfied new employees that are less likely to leave.

The third hypothesis to receive a large amount of recruitment research attention suggests that performance and job survival differences between hiring sources reflect individual differences in the applicant pool generated by each source. A study examining and comparing this hypothesis to realism hypothesis utilized several individual difference measures including attendance, tenure, and performance to assess whether the source the employees were hired through had any effect on these variables. This study showed that, in this sample, rehires had much longer tenure than internal recruits. They compared employees at a food packaging plant based on their hiring source and found that individuals recruited through employee referrals did not have significantly better attendance or tenure when compared to other hiring sources (Taylor & Schmidt, 1983). This fails to support the realism hypothesis which suggests referred employees would have longer tenure and better attendance compared to employees hired through external sources. Instead, the individual differences hypothesis' explanation that discrepancies in hiring source effectiveness can be attributed to differences in the application pool using each source was supported. There is potential to analyze these recruitment sources to find out more generalizable information about what types of applicants use them. A study conducted to investigate individual differences among hiring sources indicated that personality characteristics,

like motivation, and practical ideas like perceived job mobility could help explain differences in hiring sources (Breaugh & Starke, 2000). Further research is required to meaningfully group applicants based on hiring source and the likely characteristics of an individual using each source.

Although previous research has lent some credence to the idea that different hiring sources yield different kinds of applicants, a common limitation of those studies was their focus on only one part of the process. Like the literature on RJPs, the present research focuses on post-hire outcomes and therefore falls victim to a potential bias from the hiring organization, who may favor certain hiring sources. If an organization typically hires people using certain sources, then all their employees will represent those sources rather than a more representative sample that would have applicants from all of the different sources. These preferences skew the data on recruitment source effectiveness when only applicants that have already been hired are used in the sample pool. It means the sample taken does not accurately reflect the initial population of applicants. To fully test the individual differences hypothesis, pre-hire outcomes should also be studied. Knowing that individual differences in the applicant groups contributes to the observed effectiveness of hiring sources, analyzing these differences and their implications can provide the basis for future research.

Individual differences between job seekers using each hiring source are relevant to employers who may be looking for certain attributes in their applicants. One attribute that may potentially be of interest to employers is decision-making styles utilized by applicants given there is evidence that decision-making styles predict job performance. Specifically, Riaz, Riaz, & Batool (2004) examined how managers' decision-making styles can affect their own performance as well as that of their subordinates and found that low performing sales managers

exhibited a more avoidant decision-making style than their high performing counterparts, who were more loyal and satisfied within their role as well as demonstrating less stress (Russ, McNeilly, & Comer, 1996). Accordingly, significant links between a preference for certain hiring sources and different styles of decision-making may allow employers to put more emphasis on certain hiring sources based on the characteristics they desire in their applicants.

To draw any conclusions about how different recruiting sources may relate to different styles of decision-making, we first need to define the distinct decision-making styles that can be used. Five decision-making styles have been identified by previous research; rational, intuitive, dependent, avoidant, and spontaneous (Scott & Bruce, 1995). A rational style of decision-making is characterized by a logical and thorough approach that carefully considers all options before acting. This style would likely lead a person to using a multitude of different sources to find a job and would choose between any offers by using a logical approach based on their needs and desires. The intuitive decision-making style utilizes subjective instincts to make choices, relying on so-called 'gut feelings' deemed to have one's best interest in mind. An intuitive decision-maker might use circumstantial information associated with each of two job offers to decide between them and may only use whichever hiring source 'feels right.' A dependent decision-making style involves a reliance on external resources and advice from others. Using this style would perhaps make an individual more likely to go to a job search agency to have one-on-one counseling with an expert rather than independently search for a job. Avoidant decision-making, as mentioned above, seeks to use any method that takes personal decision-making out of the process to avoid having to choose at all. Random chance, like flipping a coin, is an approach an avoidant decision-maker might use. The final style of decision-making that has emerged through research is spontaneous, meaning no discernible pattern is present that can fit into any of the

previous four. Spontaneous decision-makers will use any of the other four types at any given time, making their style unpredictable.

Knowledge of these decision-making styles and what form they take in real life situations allows us to develop hypotheses relating them to different types of hiring sources. As previously mentioned, rational decision-makers are likely to conduct a more thorough search for jobs that is likely to include multiple sources. Rational decision-making style is characterized by a methodical and calculated approach to making choices. This suggests that any individual employing this style would carefully consider multiple options and weigh them against each other before choosing among them. This method of careful choice implies a balance amongst resources used by an individual to acquire what they want or need. This could manifest in many aspects of life, perhaps shopping around many different stores to find the best deals or trying many different brands of the same product to decide which is preferable. Research has shown that rational decision-makers are more likely to use an integrative style, one that utilizes various resources and strategies, when dealing with conflict management (Shabbir, Atta, & Adil, 2014). Rational decision-making style has also been associated with high levels of conscientiousness (Chartrand, Elliott, & Caldwell, 1993), implying a more focused and self-driven methodology when searching for a job. It is a time consuming but ultimately profitable approach as it gives a clear idea of all available options.

To apply this rational style to a job search, one would likely develop a strategy to best utilize all available options and find what they are looking for. In a study about career interventions, participants who began using a more rational decision-making style after their intervention reported more success on follow up than those using other styles (Tinsley, Tinsley, & Rushing, 2002). This demonstrates that conscious use of a certain decision-making style can

influence getting hired for a job and therefore merits further research. The style used will vary from individual to individual, but the common thread between all rational decision-makers searching for a job should be the presence of a clearly defined plan. Accordingly, the following is hypothesized:

Hypothesis 1: There will be a positive correlation between using a rational decision-making style and using STRATEGIC job search.

A dependent decision-making style puts the emphasis on the opinions and advice of peers or experts. Individuals using this style will lean towards others and defer their decisions if possible. This strategy allows for input from external sources but often puts a disproportionate weight on them, leading to a skewed perception of their reliability and validity. Dependent decision-makers will take the opinions coming from those they trust, like a preferred brand or critically acclaimed movie, and use them to make their decision rather than research themselves. Previous research has indicated that dependent decision-making may be linked with limited persistence when completing tasks (Reynolds & Gerstein, 1991), an effect that would likely be more pronounced the more difficult the task becomes. Given the range of options most individuals have when searching for a job, it could be argued that this is one of the more difficult decisions to make. This suggests that when searching for jobs, a dependent-decision maker could become overwhelmed and seek help from others to make the decision for them.

When looking for a job, a dependent decision-making style would lead an individual to seek advice from others and put off making any sort of plan to find a job. Dependent decision-makers are characterized by letting their friends and family decide things for them and therefore would not actively seek for a job in any clearly defined way. This could be attributed to a lack of openness regarding which jobs they would take. A lack of openness has previously been linked

to a dependent decision-making style (Chartrand et al., 1993), and if it applies to job search then no specific method will be used. Accordingly, the following is hypothesized:

Hypothesis 2: There will be no correlation between dependent decision-making style and any of the job search methods.

Avoidant decision-making style is characterized by a tendency to procrastinate or entirely dodge the responsibility to make decisions. Individuals with this style of decision-making may flip a coin to decide between two options or defer giving their opinion when asked. For example, if an avoidant decision-maker was asked by a friend where they would like to go for lunch, they may say they do not mind or insist on the friend deciding even if they have a preference in mind. Avoidant decision-making style has been linked to elevated social anxiety (Pittig, Alpers, Niles, & Craske, 2015), which could factor into how these individuals search for a job. Specifically, it is possible that individuals with an avoidant decision-making style do not search for a job actively at all, as this process requires making various choices about what kind of a job is desired and how to go about applying. For this reason, it is likely that personal connections will be instrumental for many of the jobs avoidant decision-makers find themselves in. Having a personal connection with someone can alleviate much of the decision-making process and any anxiety associated with it. It provides less of a choice between jobs and more of an obvious fit with a familiar person to ease the entry process. For example, if an individual wanted a job but was being avoidant about deciding how to get one then the most likely way for them to end up with one is to be told by a friend or family member and given a foothold in the application process, which they would then feel more comfortable due to the more personal entry route. Accordingly, the following is hypothesized:

Hypothesis 3: There will be a positive correlation between using an avoidant decision-making style and using personal connections for job search.

Intuitive decision-making relies on so-called gut instincts to make decisions. These instincts are hard to pin down and are naturally prone to the various external factors that influence them. For example, when prompted with a multiple choice question an intuitive decision maker may get a gut feeling that one of the choices is right when they are not sure. This gut feeling could come from the knowledge being in their brain but not being retrieved correctly or could just be a random guess that is largely baseless. If they are correct, their reliance on gut instinct is reinforced even if it was just luck. This represents a level of disregard for logical reasoning in favor of trusting personal feelings and instincts. This reversal of rational decision-making and the conscientiousness associated with that is backed up by previous research (Chartrand et al., 1993) and could apply to how intuitive decision-making can be used in a job search.

This random reinforcement based on chance makes it difficult to predict a pattern for intuitive decision-makers when it comes to searching for a job. Different individuals that exhibit the same intuitive style will have varying amounts of success with it due to the randomness of the outcomes. This makes their decision-making like that of an individual using a spontaneous style. Spontaneous decision-making style is characterized by unpredictability and is therefore also difficult to fit into a pattern for job searching. Previous research has differentiated between external and internal types of spontaneous styles, external demonstrating more willingness to use outside sources than internal (Osipow & Reed, 1985). This distinction was recognized as significant in a study about career decision-making in college students, where spontaneous and external decision-makers reported more success in their career choices. For this reason, I believe

that intuitive and spontaneous decision-makers will use multiple sources to find jobs.

Accordingly, I hypothesize the following:

Hypothesis 4: There will be significant correlations between using intuitive and spontaneous decision-making styles and the use of multiple sources to search for a job.

Methods

Participants and Procedure

The hypotheses of the study were tested by utilizing a sample of 255 MTurk workers who were invited to take an online survey including measures of job search behaviors and decision-making styles. The sample was 59.6% male with a mean age of 37.83 (SD = 10.51). Among those who participated, 11.5% had a high school diploma or less, 79.8% had some college education or a college degree, and 8.7% had a master's degree or higher. Sample was 78% White, 9.2% Black or African American, 10.1% Asian, 4.6% Hispanic and 0.5% American Indian or Alaskan Native. There was the option to select more than one race when filling out the survey, which resulted in the percentages adding to over 100%.

Measures

Job search behaviors. Job search behaviors were measured using the items developed for this study. A literature review was conducted to find the behaviors people perform when searching for jobs, which resulted in a total of 76 items. Participants were asked to indicate the frequency with which they perform each activity on a scale of 1 (never) to 5 (always). Sample items included "I attend a career fair to search for jobs", "I use a public recruiting agency to help search for a job", and "I ask existing employees if their job is hiring.". Next, as described in more detail in the results section, a factor analysis was performed to determine the factor

structure and find different types of distinct job search strategies. This resulted in six factors, which were named college, strategic, traditional, social media, recruiter, and personal connections job search strategies. The internal consistency reliability statistics are provided in Table-2.

Decision-making styles. Decision-making styles were measured using the scale developed by Scott and Bruce (1995). The measure includes 25 items measuring five types of decision-making styles: rational, dependent, intuitive, avoidant, and spontaneous. Participants were asked to indicate the extent to which they agree with each statement on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Sample items include "My decision-making requires careful thought (rational)", "I often need the assistance of other people when making important decisions (dependent)", and "I postpone decision-making whenever possible (avoidant)". The internal consistency reliability statistics are in Table-2.

Results

To test the hypotheses, I first ran a factor analysis of the items in the job search behaviors scale. Principal component analysis with direct oblimin rotation, with a minimum loading threshold of .40, resulted in six factors (see Table-1). These factors were the use of college resources, strategic planning, utilizing recruiters, utilizing social media, utilizing personal connections, and using traditional methods (e.g newspaper ads, online postings, etc.). The items associated with these factors were then used as measures of distinct job search behaviors, and the relationship between each behavior and decision-making styles were analyzed through a correlational analysis. Table-2 includes means and standard deviations of and correlations between the variables used to test this study's hypotheses.

Hypothesis 1 proposed that there would be a positive correlation between rational decision-making style and using a strategic job search. As can be seen in Table-2, rational decision-making style is positively correlated with using a strategic job search, $r = .26$, $p < .01$. Accordingly, this hypothesis was supported. Hypothesis 2 predicted there would be no correlation between dependent decision-making style and any type of job search strategy. While dependent decision-making style was not positively correlated with any job search strategy, it was negatively correlated with using a strategic job search, $r = -.19$, $p < .01$. Hypothesis 3 theorized that there would be a positive correlation between avoidant decision-making style and using personal connections primarily in a job search. No such correlation was found in our analysis; therefore, this hypothesis was rejected. Hypothesis 4 stated there would be a correlation between intuitive, as well as spontaneous decision-making style and using multiple sources in a job search. Our analysis supported this, with several significant correlations found between each of these decision-making styles and various job search sources.

Discussion

This study was aimed at examining the relationship between job search strategies and decision-making styles by utilizing a sample of MTurk workers who participated in an online survey. The goal was to examine potential links between available hiring sources and the decision-making styles of the individuals who use them. To do this, I conducted a factor analysis using the survey data from the sample with the items measuring the extent to which participants engaged in various behaviors while searching for jobs. This analysis yielded six factors, pertaining to distinct job search styles. The six factors were named for the general resource each item falls under, which were college, strategic, traditional, social media, recruiter, and personal connections. Next, correlation analyses were run to examine the relationship between these

factors and five types of decision-making styles: rational, dependent, avoidant, intuitive and spontaneous. The results show significant correlations between several job search behaviors and different decision-making styles and therefore partially support the individual differences hypothesis. Rational decision-making style was strongly correlated with a strategic job search, while both intuitive and spontaneous decision-making style showed correlations with several different job search behaviors. These findings supported two of our hypotheses, while the other hypotheses were rejected.

The first hypothesis suggested that there would be a positive correlation between rational decision-making style and the use of a strategic job search. The results of the study supported this hypothesis. In fact, it stands to reason that making decisions in a rational way on a regular basis would naturally lend itself to a planned out and carefully coordinated job search. The strong correlation implies that an individual's tendency to make rational decisions regularly could be inferred from the level of strategy they apply to a job search. For organizations, this information could expedite the hiring process for roles where rational decision-making is a key component. Preferring applicants who use certain resources would be a way of doing this.

The second hypothesis reasoned that dependent decision-making style would show no correlations to any job search strategies. The results of the study partially supported this but produced a single negative correlation with strategic job search. As expected, dependent decision-making style did not have any positive correlation with any job search strategy due perhaps to the lack of any strategy from individuals exhibiting this style. However, it was not expected that a significant negative correlation with strategic job search would emerge. Dependent decision-making is at odds with the use any strategy, so this negative relationship is not surprising. These results give support to our notions about dependent decision-making,

namely that it leads to a lack of any real agency that might resemble a strategy. Organizations would likely want to know if their applicants exhibit this style, as it is hard to imagine many high-level jobs that are suitable for people that defer most of their decisions.

The third hypothesis suggested that there would be a positive correlation between avoidant decision-making style and using personal connections in a job search. The results did not support this hypothesis. Specifically, although the expected relationship was not observed, the results indicated some unexpected significant correlations. Like the dependent decision-making style, a significant negative correlation was found between the avoidant style and strategic job search. The same reasoning applies in this situation as avoidant decision-making, like dependent decision-making, is characterized by making very few decisions to begin with. This approach is the furthest thing from a strategy and so a negative correlation is not surprising. A significant positive correlation was found with the use of social media in a job search. Since social media is an extension of one's personal connections, this result is similar to the one predicted by the third hypothesis. Despite the original prediction not receiving support, the reasoning behind it was somewhat supported and is therefore unsurprising.

The fourth and final hypothesis predicted that both intuitive and spontaneous decision-making styles would show significant correlations with multiple sources in a job search. The results of the study supported this hypothesis with several significant positive correlations found with each of these styles and several job search resources. Both spontaneous and intuitive decision-making style had significant positive correlations with college, traditional, and social media resources while spontaneous style also showing a significant positive correlation with recruiter resources. This wide spread of resources significantly associated with intuitive and spontaneous decision-making style gives credence to the idea that these styles are unpredictable

and show no real patterns in a job search. This makes the utility of analyzing hiring sources to infer professional characteristics from each of them somewhat less reliable. If there are a handful of intuitive and spontaneous decision-makers in an applicant pool, then their data points may have to be removed to maintain the accuracy and applicability of the findings. Since they show correlations with many resources, they could be mistaken for the other types of decision-makers that are supposed to be identified by showing one of those correlations.

This line of research could prove to be very useful for companies when seeking to hire new employees in an effective way. Assessing hiring sources for more detailed information about the individuals that are most likely to use them can allow employers to focus more on the sources that typically produce suitable candidates. This will arguably vary from job to job depending on the skills and personality traits required, but decision-making style is a trait that would be of interest to employers in any field. If research can solidly establish a link between the way people search for jobs and what type of decisions they will make on the job, this information can be used as a platform for further research into other characteristics that may be inferred from job-search behavior. Knowing the characteristics of people who use certain recruitment sources can optimize the way organizations search for new recruits. For example, if a certain characteristic is needed for a specific job, then having solid evidence that links hiring sources to desired characteristics would allow organizations to focus more on those sources. Accordingly, further research in this area is needed to concretely establish any meaningful links between job search behavior and personality characteristics such as decision-making style.

Despite providing initial evidence to the idea that decision-making styles can be inferred from the way in which an applicant searches for jobs, there were some limitations to this study which need to be acknowledged. First, the representativeness of the sample may be questionable

as a relatively small sample of 255 individuals who were all MTurk workers was utilized as this study's sample. This may limit the generalizability of the findings. However, MTurk workers tend to come from diverse backgrounds (Cheung, Burns, Sinclair, & Sliter, 2014), which may provide some assurance for the external validity of the findings. Second, the measure used in the study to examine different types of job search behaviors was developed for this study, which could negatively impact the internal validity. However, the fact that the measure was developed through an extensive literature review to ensure its comprehensiveness should make the internal validity adequate. Third, considering the sample was asked to self-report their own behaviors, their answers are subjective and may not accurately reflect their true behaviors. The study was also cross-sectional in nature, meaning it only captures the sample at a specific point in time and is therefore not suitable to make any causal inferences.

Table 1

Factor Analysis Results for the Study

	Loadings					
	College	Strategic	Traditional	S. Media	Recruiter	Personal Connections
I use a college or university employment service to search for jobs.	**.664**	.009	.032	.077	.113	-.036
I complete an internship with a company with hopes of obtaining a job afterwards.	**.595**	-.023	.260	-.046	.066	-.047
I attend a job search training.	**.469**	-.064	.292	.053	.242	-.067
I go to social gatherings or parties to network in search of a job.	**.421**	.245	.097	.240	.096	-.097
I attend a job search workshop at my college/university to learn how to properly job search.	**.516**	.055	-.023	.032	.255	-.103
I perform mock interviews with my universities career center to prepare myself for interviews.	**.520**	-.035	.206	.000	.036	.009
I ask professors for recommendations regarding jobs to apply.	**.574**	.109	-.095	.108	-.050	-.136
I see a career counselor to help me find a job.	**.413**	.135	.078	-.015	.330	-.022
I go to job interviews prepared to increase my chances of being hired.	.029	**.521**	.098	-.196	-.015	-.135
I identify a particular job type I am interested in.	.036	**.707**	-.007	-.163	-.040	-.179
I collect information about the particular job I am interested in.	.026	**.810**	.001	-.031	-.083	-.107
I compare salaries when I am deciding what jobs to apply for.	.060	**.683**	-.077	.026	-.004	.029
I look at the job listings in newspapers to search for jobs.	-.117	.014	**.426**	.025	.218	-.161
I cold-call companies to see if they are hiring.	.009	-.153	**.753**	.035	-.096	-.197
I email companies to see if they are hiring.	.086	-.013	**.714**	.201	-.070	-.024
I meet with companies face-to-face to see if they are hiring.	.119	.053	**.783**	.049	-.009	-.078
I walk into a company or firm, and hand them a few resumes to share with their hiring	-.097	-.028	**.784**	-.001	-.030	-.087
managers.	-.053	.335	**.414**	-.068	-.073	.109
I send my resume and a cover letter to companies in search for a job.	.261	.050	-.068	**.412**	-.113	.087
I use networking sites, such as LinkedIn to search for jobs.	.073	-.040	.133	**.763**	-.171	-.066
I use social media when searching for jobs.	.341	.117	.155	**.431**	.074	-.118
I connect with alumni to search for a job.	.007	-.135	.051	**.782**	.072	.048
I join groups on Facebook to find jobs.	-.089	.131	-.018	**.469**	-.141	-.125
I use Twitter to help me find a job.	-.078	.011	.021	**.448**	-.050	-.135
I use Instagram to help me find a job.	-.135	-.017	-.018	**.760**	.001	-.221
I use Facebook to help me find a job.	.050	-.054	.188	.078	**.711**	.105
I use a public recruiting agency to help search for a job.	.059	-.003	.087	.017	**.732**	.149
I use a private recruiting agency to help search for a job.	.300	.080	.010	.162	**.480**	-.110
I hand out resumes at professional events to search for a job.	-.079	.236	.012	.179	**.453**	-.165
I go to the state or federal employment services office to search for jobs.	.010	.031	-.038	.110	**.642**	-.185
I sign up for a recruitment website to help me search for a job.	.053	-.059	.138	.006	**.634**	-.107
I go to a recruiting station to search for a job.	.232	-.021	-.002	-.093	**.538**	.051
I contact a professional headhunter to help me find a job.	.055	-.184	.082	.007	-.080	**-.838**
I ask my friends or family if they know of any jobs hiring.	.147	.140	.150	.081	-.101	**-.568**
I reach out to someone I know in a company to help search for a job.	-.145	.057	-.049	.008	.102	**-.768**
I ask existing employees if their job is hiring.	.087	.139	.087	.012	-.256	**-.725**
I ask friends for recommendations regarding jobs to apply.	-.053	.118	.007	-.049	.051	**-.686**
I try to be recommended by an existing employee for a job.						
Eigenvalue	22.25	5.76	3.37	2.74	2.52	1.68
% of Total Variance	30.47	7.89	4.62	3.75	3.45	2.30
Total Variance						52.47%

Table 2

Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations between the Variables Used in the Study

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. College	**.89**										
2. Strategic	.16*	**.82**									
3. Traditional	.41**	.20**	**.77**								
4. Social Media	.58**	.09	.40**	**.82**							
5. Recruiter	.63**	.21**	.45**	.49**	**.86**						
6. Personal Connections	.32**	.36**	.42**	.36**	.29**	**.83**					
7. Rational Style	-.08	.26**	.06	-.15**	-.03	.08	**.84**				
8. Intuitive Style	.18**	-.05	.15**	.16**	.02	.02	-.24**	**.93**			
9. Dependent Style	.05	-.19**	.06	.09	-.02	.12	-.01	.09	**.89**		
10. Avoidant Style	.08	-.32**	.06	.14**	.04	-.06	-.26**	.02	.34**	**.95**	
11. Spontaneous Style	.19**	-0.05	.17**	.33**	.16**	.12	-.47**	.47**	.06	.15*	**.88**
Mean	.31	.14	.29	.30	.28	.26	.00	.16	.14	.10	.18
SD	.28	.29	.21	.26	.28	.24	.33	.30	.27	.32	.32

$* p < .05, ** p < .01.$

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