Organizational Attractiveness of Firms in the People’s Republic of China: A Person–Organization Fit Perspective

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The authors investigated factors related to firm attractiveness as an employer in the People’s Republic of China. The organizational attributes of type of ownership, nationality of the supervisor, and firm familiarity in organizational descriptions were manipulated and their effects were measured on firm attractiveness. In addition, the authors adopted a person–organization fit perspective to investigate how individual difference characteristics moderated the effects of these organizational attributes on attractiveness. Although, in general, participants were more attracted to foreign than state-owned firms and to familiar than unfamiliar firms, results provided support for the person–organization fit perspective in that the individual differences moderated the effects of the organizational attributes on firm attractiveness. For example, participants were more attracted to state-owned versus foreign firms when they were more risk averse and had a lower need for pay. Thus, the results provide initial support for the generalizability of the person–organization fit perspective to a non-Western setting.

The economic reforms in China have transformed the economy from a totally planned economy to a more free market system, and foreign-invested enterprises (FIEs) can now operate in China. Before the economic reforms, which started in 1978, the majority of individuals worked for state-owned enterprises (SOEs), and virtually all university graduates were assigned to a job in an SOE. The assigned job, however, might not be commensurate with the individual’s interests or qualifications. Although some graduates are still assigned jobs by the government, the reform of the labor system has allowed most university graduates to seek jobs in an open labor market. Furthermore, FIEs can recruit university graduates and negotiate directly with them concerning employment terms (Ding, Field, & Akhtar, 1997). Thus, university graduates can choose between jobs with SOEs or FIEs, although little is known about factors influencing applicants’ choices. Because of a severe shortage of English-speaking, college-educated workers, a major challenge for firms in China is the recruitment and hiring of competent local professionals (Gross & Mancini, 1996; Yang, 1998). The shortage of qualified professionals limits the growth of FIEs, which compete with each other and with SOEs for workers. Thus, this study extends the literature by investigating factors related to applicant attraction to SOEs and FIEs and by investigating organizational attributes thought to influence applicant attraction. We adopt a person–environment fit perspective to formulate hypotheses concerning individual difference characteristics that will influence attraction to potential employers. First, we provide a brief background of labor market conditions in China. We then discuss organizational attributes we expect to be related to attraction to an employer. We then discuss person–organization fit (P-O fit) theory and propose some hypotheses to test the theory in China.

Background of China’s Labor Market

In China, historically, employees of SOEs were provided with lifetime job security and benefits such as health insurance, retirement plans, and places to live, known as the “iron-rice bowl” policy (Tang, Parish, & Feng, 1996; Warner, 1995). Furthermore, jobs in SOEs placed minimal demands on workers. Although SOEs now have greater autonomy, they are still subject to state control over labor affairs such as hiring, firing, and wages (Gordon & Li, 1999). In addition, cultural norms for cooperation and maintenance of harmonious interpersonal relationships have limited changes in employment practices (Z. M. Wang, 1994). For example, although SOEs can use a wider differential wage range...
(Warner, 1995; Yao, 1997), the wage range remains narrow (Benson, Debroux, & Yuasa, 1998) because of norms emphasizing teamwork and nonindividualistic gains (Z. M. Wang, 1994).

FIEs in China have been granted greater autonomy than SOEs in their operations, including labor affairs. FIEs can design their own human resource management practices and have a more flexible employment system with fewer bureaucratic constraints than SOEs (Chow, Fung, & Ngo, 1999; Sabin, 1994). FIEs tend to offer higher and more flexible compensation packages, and in major cities like Beijing, a typical FIE employee may earn up to three times as much as a similarly qualified employee in an SOE (Liu, 1998; J. Wang, 1998). However, employees in FIEs are required to work harder and to work longer hours (Lee, 1997). Furthermore, there is little job security in the FIEs because all employees have individual labor contracts and can be terminated for unsatisfactory performance (Warner, 1998). To summarize, although reforms allow SOEs more flexibility in managing human resources, governmental influences and cultural norms have limited the extent that SOEs have changed their human resource practices. SOEs provide relatively nonstrenuous jobs and tend to equalize compensation across employees (Benson et al., 1998; Warner, 1995). FIEs offer greater job challenges, higher base compensation, and a stronger linkage between performance and rewards but less job security.

Organizational Attributes

We investigate the effects of three organizational attributes on potential applicants’ attraction to a firm: type of ownership of the firm, nationality of the supervisor, and familiarity with the firm. We expect that these variables will have main effects on attraction to the firm in addition to the interactive effects with individual difference variables, which will be addressed after discussion of the main effects.

Type of Ownership

In general, there are two types of foreign firms in China: an international joint venture (IJV), in which an SOE and a foreign firm are partners in a newly created firm; and a wholly owned foreign enterprise (WOFE), which is a foreign firm doing business in China. Whereas a WOFE is a subsidiary of a foreign firm, an IJV is a partnership between a foreign firm and a local firm (i.e., an SOE) and therefore tends to have characteristics of both the foreign and the local firm (Yang, Farley, & Hoenig, 1999).

Westwood and Leung (1996) surveyed recent university graduates and found significant differences in their perceptions of working conditions in SOEs and FIEs. Respondents indicated that workers in SOEs had little task commitment and a weak work ethic (i.e., low incentive to work hard). Furthermore, respondents thought the lack of a relationship between performance and rewards in SOEs was unfair. Respondents noted that there were more career opportunities and more risks associated with FIEs but that they were prepared to accept the risks associated with such opportunities. Our sample consisted of college students who are a very select group: they attend the top universities in China and know that they have excellent qualifications. Thus, because we expected that our participants desired job challenges and high pay, we expected that they would be more attracted to foreign firms than to SOEs; we expected IJVs to be intermediate in attraction because they have characteristics of both foreign firms and SOEs.

Hypothesis 1: Participants will report the greatest attraction to WOFES, IJVs will be intermediate in attraction, and respondents will be least attracted to SOEs.

Nationality of Supervisor

In general, Chinese workers are highly interested in their personal development and consider the presence of training and developmental opportunities to be an important job characteristic (Benson et al., 1998; J. Wang, 1998). In addition, Chinese managers recognize the value in working for a foreign supervisor, who can provide coaching and mentoring (Cheng, 1999). Human resource specialists whom we interviewed as part of a pilot study investigating factors related to firm attractiveness as an employer reported that foreign supervisors were seen as providing more developmental opportunities for subordinates than were local People’s Republic of China supervisors. Foreign supervisors were seen as more knowledgeable about current management practices, and therefore the subordinate could learn such practices by observing the supervisor. In addition, subordinates could practice their English with a foreign, rather than a local PRC, supervisor. Because we expected supervisor nationality to influence perceptions of developmental opportunities, we described supervisors as either a Westerner, a local Chinese, or a Hong Kong Chinese. On the basis of the similarity attraction paradigm (Byrne, 1971), one might expect that respondents would prefer a local Chinese supervisor, who would be seen as similar to them. We expected, however, that participants would prefer Westerners over local Chinese because of the greater developmental opportunities provided by Westerners. We were unsure whether participants would prefer Hong Kong Chinese over Westerners or local Chinese, however. Some participants in the pilot study suggested that Hong Kong Chinese might be perceived to have current management techniques and to understand employees better than Westerners and therefore might be preferred over Westerners and local Chinese. Other participants suggested, however, that Hong Kong Chinese were seen as somewhat similar to local Chinese but as not as supportive as local Chinese supervisors. Therefore, we expected that Westerners would be preferred over local Chinese, but we made no predictions concerning the relative attraction of jobs with Hong Kong Chinese.

Hypothesis 2: Participants will be more attracted to jobs with a Western supervisor than with a local PRC supervisor.

Familiarity

Recent evidence at the organizational level of analysis indicates that firms that are more familiar to applicants are rated as more attractive employers (Gatewood, Gowann, & Lautenschlager, 1993; Turban & Greening, 1997), although little research has investigated this relationship at the individual level. Nonetheless, evidence indicates that increased exposure to an object increases positive evaluations of that object (Zajonc, 1968). Furthermore, on the basis of propositions from social identity theory and signaling theory, we expect that firm familiarity will be related to firm attractiveness. Social identity theory suggests that individuals clas-
sify themselves into social categories based on factors such as the firm they work for and that these social categories influence the individual's self-concept (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Dutton, Dukerich, & Harquail, 1994; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). As shown by Dutton and Dukerich (1991), public actions by firms can influence employees' self-concept because of how others perceive the firm. We theorize that applicants would feel proud associating with a familiar firm because it is seen as a prestigious employer by others and thus would be seen as an attractive employer. In particular, Chinese job seekers are very concerned about the image of potential employers because they can earn "face" among family and friends by working for well-known, respected firms (Lasserre & Ching, 1997).

Furthermore, marketing scholars have argued that brand awareness (a concept similar to firm familiarity) has value because people like the familiar and because brand awareness may serve as a signal of important attributes such as the quality of the brand (Aaker, 1991). By extension, one might expect that firm familiarity may be interpreted as providing a signal about attributes of the potential employer, such that familiar firms are seen as having more positive attributes and thus are more attractive employers. To summarize, we expect familiar firms to be seen as more attractive because applicants may "earn face" (i.e., respect from others) by working for a more familiar firm and because familiarity may serve as a signal of important attributes.

**Hypothesis 3:** Participants will be more attracted to familiar than unfamiliar firms.

**P-O Fit Theory**

In general, we expect that applicants will be more attracted to firms that (a) are foreign versus state-owned enterprises, (b) have a Western rather than a local PRC supervisor, and (c) are familiar versus unfamiliar. On the basis of P-O fit theory, however, we expect that individual characteristics will moderate the influence of these organizational attributes on firm attractiveness. The fundamental premise of P-O fit theories is that different types of people are attracted to different types of organizations (Kristof, 1996; Schneider, 1987). More specifically, people are attracted to firms with values and behavioral norms that they view as important and to firms that provide opportunities for goal attainment (Chatman, 1989; Pervin, 1989). Evidence suggests that foreign firms and SOEs differ in working conditions, values, and norms (Warner, 1998). Because individuals have different goals, we expect these different working conditions to be differentially attractive to individuals, depending upon individual difference characteristics. Before discussing the individual differences that we expect will moderate the effects of the organizational attributes on firm attractiveness, we briefly review empirical research conducted in the United States concerning P-O fit theory.

Several studies investigating P-O fit have investigated individual differences that moderate the effects of reward systems on firms' attractiveness as employers. For example, evidence suggests that high-need-for-achievement individuals prefer individual pay systems more than do low-need-for-achievement individuals (Bretz, Ash, & Dreher, 1989; Turban & Keen, 1993). Cable and Judge (1994) found that high-self-efficacy individuals were more attracted to individual-based pay systems than were low-self-efficacy individuals and that risk-averse job seekers were more attracted to organizations with fixed pay systems than were risk seekers. Recent evidence indicates that P-O fit is important for actual job choice decisions and the organizational entry process for applicants involved in a job search (Cable & Judge, 1996; Judge & Cable, 1997). In summary, evidence indicates that P-O fit influences job search decisions and that the compensation system is an important aspect of the organization that applicants attend to and assess for fit with their personality characteristics and values.

In her review of P-O fit theory, Kristof (1996) noted that there are various conceptualizations of P-O fit. A common conceptualization of P-O fit is the needs-supplies perspective, which conceptualizes fit as the extent that organizational systems meet the individual's needs. Individuals are theorized to vary in their needs, and environments to vary in the extent to which they supply the opportunity for need fulfillment; fit results when individuals are in environments that supply opportunities for important needs to be satisfied. For example, one might expect that individuals who have a strong need for pay will be more attracted to firms that provide greater opportunities to earn high pay. The demands-abilities perspective is another conceptualization of fit; it suggests that people vary in their abilities and firms vary in terms of which abilities are needed and that fit occurs when individuals have the abilities to meet the firm's demands. Although the demands-abilities perspective of fit has been used more for selection decisions than for applicant attraction preferences (i.e., firms select applicants with the abilities to meet their demands), this perspective is thought to influence firm attraction because applicants will be attracted to firms when they believe they have the abilities to meet the firm's demands (Kristof, 1996). Kristof (1996) suggested that it is useful to examine more than one type of fit in a study; thus, we examine fit from the needs-supplies and demands-abilities perspectives.

**Risk Aversion Versus Risk Seeking**

Individuals are thought to vary on the extent to which they attempt to avoid risks (risk averse) or are willing to seek risks (risk seeking; Cable & Judge, 1994; Slovic, 1972). Evidence indicates that individuals' risk aversion is related to preferences for certain reward systems. For example, Gomez-Mejia and Balkin (1989) found that individuals who were risk averse reported higher withdrawal cognitions when they worked for firms with more variable pay (i.e., compensation that is not part of the base salary) than when they worked for firms with less variable pay. Similarly, Cable and Judge (1994) found that risk-averse individuals preferred fixed-pay systems to contingent-pay systems.

Evidence suggests that SOEs provide greater job security and less variable compensation than FIEs (Bjorkman & Lu, 1997; Chen, 1998; Zhu, 1995). Thus, we expect that risk-averse individuals will be more attracted to SOEs and less attracted to foreign firms than will risk seekers. Furthermore, to the extent that firms described as more familiar have less risk than unfamiliar firms, one might expect that risk-averse individuals will be less attracted to unfamiliar firms than will risk-seeking individuals because of the uncertainty associated with unfamiliar firms.

**Hypothesis 4a:** Risk aversion will moderate the relationship of ownership type and firm attractiveness, such that individuals with greater
risk aversion will be less attracted to FIEs and more attracted to state-owned enterprises than will individuals with lower risk aversion (i.e., risk seekers).

Hypothesis 4b: Risk aversion will moderate the relationship of firm familiarity with firm attractiveness, such that individuals with greater risk aversion will be less attracted to unfamiliar firms than will individuals with less risk aversion.

Need for Achievement

Individuals with a high need for achievement tend to prefer work environments that provide moderately challenging tasks, personal responsibility for outcomes, and opportunities to try new ways of doing things (McClelland, 1965, 1985). In addition, high-need-for-achievement individuals prefer organizations that provide performance-based pay (Bretz et al., 1989; Turban & Keon, 1993). Foreign firms in China generally provide more challenging work, greater responsibility for employees, more career development opportunities, and are more likely to link performance with rewards than SOEs (Bjorkman & Lu, 1999; J. Wang, 1998). Thus, we expect that need for achievement will moderate the effects of ownership type on firm attractiveness, such that individuals with a higher need for achievement will be more attracted to foreign than state-owned firms. Additionally, because foreign and local PRC supervisors are expected to have different management styles, we theorize that individuals will expect a more challenging work environment with a foreign versus a local PRC supervisor.

Hypothesis 5a: Need for achievement will moderate the relationship of ownership type and firm attractiveness, such that high-need-for-achievement individuals will be more attracted to foreign firms and less attracted to state-owned firms than will low-need-for-achievement individuals.

Hypothesis 5b: Need for achievement will moderate the relationship of supervisor nationality and firm attractiveness, such that high-need-for-achievement individuals will be more attracted to foreign supervisors and less attracted to local PRC supervisors than will low-need-for-achievement individuals.

General Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy is the belief in one’s ability to successfully perform a certain behavior (Gist, 1987; Sherer, Maddux, Mercuri, Prentice-Dunn, Jacobs, & Rogers, 1982). Although self-efficacy was originally conceptualized as a situation-specific belief, evidence indicates that individuals vary in their general self-efficacy beliefs such that some individuals have stronger beliefs than others in their abilities to perform important behaviors (Sherer et al., 1982). Because foreign firms are more challenging and demanding than state-owned firms (Lee, 1997; Westwood & Leung, 1996), we expect low-self-efficacy individuals to be less attracted to foreign firms and more attracted to state-owned firms than high-self-efficacy individuals. Similarly, to the extent that Western supervisors are more demanding than local PRC supervisors, one might expect that individuals higher in self-efficacy will be more attracted to Western supervisors than individuals lower in self-efficacy.

Hypothesis 6a: Self-efficacy will moderate the relationship of ownership type and firm attractiveness, such that high-self-efficacy indivi-

Hypothesis 6b: Self-efficacy will moderate the relationship of supervisor nationality and firm attractiveness, such that high self-efficacy individuals will be more attracted to Western supervisors and less attracted to local PRC supervisors than will low self-efficacy individuals.

Need for Pay

Evidence indicates that individuals vary in their desire for pay, labeled need for pay (Helmreich & Spence, 1978). Foreign firms in China provide much higher pay than state-owned firms, and we thus hypothesize that need for pay will moderate the relationship between ownership type and firm attractiveness, such that individuals high in need for pay will be more attracted to foreign firms and be less attracted to state-owned firms than individuals low in need for pay.

Hypothesis 7: Need for pay will moderate the relationship of ownership type and firm attractiveness such that high-need-for-pay individuals will be more attracted to foreign firms and less attracted to state-owned firms than will low-need-for-pay individuals.

English Proficiency

In general, English is the language of business for foreign firms in China, even if their headquarters is not in an English-speaking country. English is so important that many FIEs equate English-language skills with professional capability, and some evidence suggests that employees in FIEs in China are promoted partly based on their English language skills (“World congress survey reveals China HR confusion,” 1996). We expect that individuals with low English proficiency will perceive that they do not have the ability to perform well in foreign firms that place a high demand on English proficiency. Thus, based on the demands-abilities conceptualization of P-O fit, we expect that English proficiency will moderate the relationship of ownership type with firm attractiveness, such that individuals with less English proficiency will be less attracted to foreign firms than will individuals with more English proficiency. On the basis of the same logic, we expect that individuals with less English proficiency will be less attracted to foreign supervisors than individuals with more English proficiency.

Hypothesis 8a: English proficiency will moderate the relationship of ownership type and firm attractiveness, such that low-English-proficiency individuals will be less attracted to foreign firms and more attracted to state-owned firms than will high-English-proficiency individuals.

Hypothesis 8b: English proficiency will moderate the relationship of supervisor nationality and firm attractiveness, such that low-English-proficiency individuals will be less attracted to foreign supervisors and more attracted to local PRC supervisors than will high-English-proficiency individuals.

In summary, we extend the literature base by sampling prospective new labor market entrants in China to investigate factors related to firm attraction as an employer. We hypothesize main effects of ownership type, supervisor nationality, and firm familiarity on attraction, and based on the P-O fit perspective, we expect
that individual differences will moderate the relationship of these organizational attributes with attraction. In addition to testing the P-O fit hypotheses with scenario descriptions of firms, we investigate whether individual differences of respondents are related to their attraction to jobs in a typical foreign firm and a typical state-owned firm.

Method

Procedure

Data were collected as part of a larger project that examined college students’ perceptions of working conditions in FIEs and SOEs. A survey printed in Chinese characters was administered to students of seven key universities in Shanghai and Beijing. The survey was written in English and then translated and back-translated to insure accuracy of the translation. Members of the research team contacted professors at several universities in China who agreed to help us distribute the questionnaires in class to their students. We requested access to classes with a majority of graduating students. In general, a member of the research team administered the surveys personally or under the direction of a faculty member at the university. Students completed the questionnaire during the normal class meeting, and each respondent was given approximately $3 as a token of appreciation for completing the survey.

The survey included various sections, some of which were used for this study. Participants were asked to read a description of an organization and to answer some questions about the firm and their attraction to the firm as an employer. The descriptions, in the form of scenarios, included the organizational attributes manipulations. Another section of the survey included the individual difference variables. Finally, respondents were asked to indicate their attraction to a job with a typical FIE and a typical SOE.

Participants

Participants were 1,231 students at universities located in Shanghai and Beijing: 799 from universities in Shanghai and 432 from universities in Beijing. Participants were primarily single (98%), and male (63%), with an average age of 21.1 years. A majority of the participants were business majors (72%), and there were also a substantial number of engineering (14%) and science majors (7%). Most participants reported graduating within 1 year (62%). Finally, the majority of participants reported no work experience (61%).

Experimental Design

The experimental design was a $3 \times 3 \times 2$ between-subjects design. There were three types of firm ownership (SOEs, WOFEs, and JVs), three types of supervisor nationality (local Chinese, Hong Kong Chinese, and a Westerner), and two levels of familiarity (unfamiliar and familiar). Because SOEs predominantly have a local Chinese as a supervisor, to keep the descriptions as realistic as possible, we did not include descriptions for state-owned firms with a Hong Kong or Western supervisor and thus did not have a fully crossed design. We wrote 14 separate descriptions that were randomly distributed to subjects.

Scenario Descriptions

Type of ownership. The firm was described as “a state-owned enterprise,” “a wholly-owned foreign enterprise,” or “an international joint venture in which the foreign enterprise has a majority stake in the venture.”

Nationality of supervisor. The scenario indicated that the supervisor was either “a local Chinese,” “from Hong Kong,” or “a Westerner.”

Firm familiarity. In the unfamiliar condition, participants were told, “You are not familiar with the firm and none of your friends said that they have heard much about this firm. This firm is not well known in (Shanghai or Beijing) and you don’t know anybody who works for this firm.” In the familiar condition, participants were told, “You are somewhat familiar with this firm and many of your friends and family members said that they have heard of this firm. Although you don’t know anybody who works for this firm, in general, you believe it is a relatively well-known firm in (Shanghai or Beijing).”

The following is an example of one of the 14 descriptions, specifically, the SOE with local Chinese supervisor and as a familiar firm.

The firm is seeking applicants in your area of interest and has job openings that are consistent with your education and career goals. You learned that the firm is a state-owned enterprise. You are somewhat familiar with the firm and many of your friends and family members said that they have heard of this firm. Although you don’t know anybody who works for this firm, in general, you believe it is a relatively well-known firm in Shanghai. The individual who will be your supervisor is a local Chinese. The firm is recruiting students and will be interviewing applicants in the next few weeks.

Individual Difference Characteristics

Risk aversion. Risk aversion was measured with six items (5-point scale; $a = .79$) from Cable and Judge (1994). A representative item is, “I am a cautious person who generally avoids risks.” Items were scored such that higher scores indicate greater aversion to risk (i.e., less risk seeking).

Need for achievement. Need for achievement was measured with the six-item Work subscale (5-point scale; $a = .71$) developed by Helmerich and Spence (1978). A representative item is, “I like to work hard.” Helmerich and Spence (1978) reported means of 3.3 for women and 3.4 for men for their sample, which are somewhat lower than the mean of 3.95 with the Chinese sample.

General self-efficacy. We measured general self-efficacy with the 17-item scale (5-point scale; $a = .83$) developed by Sherer et al. (1982). A representative item is, “I am a self-reliant person.”

Need for pay. One item (5-point scale) from Helmerich and Spence (1978) measured need for pay: “It is important to my future satisfaction in life to have a job or career that pays well.” The mean for our sample was 3.64, which is somewhat higher than the means reported by Helmerich and Spence (1978; 3.05 and 2.90 for men and women, respectively).

English proficiency. Three items measured participants’ proficiency in English. Participants were asked how proficient they were in reading and speaking English on a 5-point scale, with 1 indicating no proficiency and 5 indicating proficiency in reading English or speaking English. A third item asked whether participants had passed a standardized English language examination administered by the universities. These three items were standardized and summed to create a scale of English proficiency (standardized $a = .76$).

To provide evidence concerning the validity of our individual difference characteristics in China, we compared our means with results from previous studies that used the same instruments. Although we found only a few studies that used the full measures, as we did, and reported the means, in general, the means found in the Chinese sample were relatively similar to the means reported in previous studies, although as we noted, the Chinese sample means were somewhat higher than the means reported by Helmerich and Spence in 1978. To provide further evidence about the validity of our individual difference characteristics in China, we collected data from 75 college students in the United States (a U.S. sample). The students were predominantly business students, and the majority were graduating within a year. Analyses of variance comparing the means of the U.S. sample with the Chinese sample found no differences for risk aversion ($M = 2.59$ and 2.48 for Chinese and U.S. samples, respectively) or for need for pay ($M = 3.64$ and 3.73 for Chinese and U.S. samples, respectively). There
were significant differences between the U.S. and Chinese samples in self-efficacy \((M = 3.69\) and 4.10 for Chinese and U.S. samples, respectively) and in need for achievement \((M = 3.95\) and 4.44 for Chinese and U.S. samples, respectively). Interestingly, the means for the U.S. sample for self-efficacy and need for achievement were higher than the means for the Chinese sample and were also considerably higher than the means reported in earlier studies. Finally, we examined the pattern of correlations among the individual differences in the U.S. sample and the Chinese sample. In general, the pattern of correlations in the U.S. and Chinese sample were relatively similar and thus provide further evidence concerning the validity of the individual differences in China. To summarize, the average scores and the pattern of correlations among the individual differences measured in China were similar to what was found in the U.S. sample and therefore suggest that the measures given in China were valid.

**Scenario-Dependent Variables**

*Attraction to firm.* Attraction to the firm was measured with four items (5-point scale; \(\alpha = .90\)), adapted from Turban and Kon (1993), measuring the extent to which participants would exert a great deal of effort to work for this company, would like to work for this company, would choose this company as a top choice for an employer, and would find a job with this company attractive.

*Probability of seeking interview.* Participants were asked to indicate the probability that they would interview with this firm for a job on a 10-point scale where 1 indicated no probability and 10 indicated 100% probability.

*Probability of accepting offer.* Participants were asked to indicate the probability that they would accept a job offer with this firm for a job on a 10-point scale where 1 indicated no probability and 10 indicated 100% probability.

*Job and organizational attributes.* Participants responded to 12 items (5-point scale; \(\alpha = .80\)) by indicating the extent to which they agreed that the item described the job. Items were adopted from earlier research (Harris & Fink, 1987; Powell, 1984; Turban, Campion, & Byring, 1995) and measured job and organizational attributes such as advancement possibilities, benefits, compensation, coworkers, type of work, and training and development.

*Pride in being an employee.* Participants indicated the extent to which they agreed with these three items (5-point scale; \(\alpha = .83\)): “I would feel proud to be an employee of this firm,” “I would receive respect from others if I worked for this firm,” and “My family would feel proud of me if I worked for this firm.”

**Additional Variables**

In an earlier and separate section of the survey, respondents had been asked to indicate their attraction to a job with a typical SOE and FIE.

*Attraction to typical SOE.* These three items (5-point scale; \(\alpha = .89\)) measured attraction to a typical SOE: “A job with a state-owned enterprise would be attractive to me,” “I am willing to work for a state-owned enterprise,” and “A state-owned enterprise satisfies my expectations of a job.”

*Attraction to typical FIE.* The same items used to measure attraction to a typical SOE were used to measure attraction to a typical FIE by replacing “state-owned” with “foreign-invested.” Coefficient alpha for this three-item scale was .86.

**Analyses and Results**

Table 1 presents the means, standard deviations, and zero-order correlations among the variables. In general, the correlations among the individual differences were either insignificant or of moderate size (the largest correlation was .41, between self-efficacy and need for achievement). The dependent variables, which measured attraction to a firm as a potential employer, were moderately correlated, with correlations ranging from .59 to .68.

**Manipulated Organizational Attributes**

*Effects on job–organizational attributes and pride in being an employee.* Before testing the hypotheses, we investigated whether the manipulated organizational attributes of type of ownership, supervisor nationality, and firm familiarity influenced respondents’ perceptions of job and organizational attributes and whether they would be proud to be an employee of the firm (see Table 2). For job attributes, a univariate analysis of variance indicated significant effects for type of ownership, \(F(2, 1211) = 26.70, p \leq .0001, \eta^2 = .04\), and for firm familiarity, \(F(1, 1211) = 34.23, p \leq .0001, \eta^2 = .03\), with no effects for supervisor nationality. Follow-up analyses of individual items indicated that WOFEs and IVJs were rated similarly by respondents, although SOEs were seen as having lower opportunities for advancement, lower pay, better fringe benefits, greater job security, less competent coworkers and supervisors, fewer opportunities to learn and develop on the job, fewer opportunities to use one’s abilities, less stressful work environment, lower quality training and development programs, and less challenging and interesting work. Such results support prior evidence that perceptions of working conditions vary in SOEs versus FIEs. Additionally, respondents saw familiar firms as providing higher pay, better fringe benefits, more competent coworkers and supervisors, more opportunities to learn and develop on the job, better treatment of employees, a more stressful work environment, and better training and development programs than unfamiliar firms. Such results support the contention that firm familiarity serves as a signal about job and organizational attributes. A separate univariate analysis of variance with pride in being an employee as the dependent variable indicated significant effects for type of ownership, \(F(2, 1209) = 6.46, p \leq .01, \eta^2 = .01\), and for firm familiarity, \(F(1, 1209) = 93.42, p \leq .0001, \eta^2 = .07\), with no effects for supervisor nationality. Respondents reported less pride in being an employee of an SOE compared with that of a WOFE or IV (which did not differ from one another) and reported more pride in working for a familiar compared with an unfamiliar firm. In summary, these analyses indicated that the type of ownership and firm familiarity influenced perceptions of job and organizational attributes and pride in being an employee, as we theorized, although there were no such effects for supervisor nationality.

*Hypothesized main effects.* Because the dependent variables measuring job pursuit intentions (i.e., attraction to firm, probability of seeking an interview and of accepting an offer) are correlated, we conducted a multivariate analysis of variance with the manipulated organizational attributes as the independent variables and the measures of job pursuit intentions as the dependent variables. Results indicated significant multivariate effects for type of ownership, Wilks’s lambda = .966, \(F(6, 2410) = 6.91, p \leq .0001\), and for firm familiarity, Wilks’s lambda = .944, \(F(3, 1205) = 23.63, p \leq .0001\), although there were no effects for supervisor nation-
Table 1
Descriptive Statistics and Intercorrelations of Study Variables

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<td>6. Firm familiarity</td>
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<td>8. Need for achievement</td>
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<td>10. Need for pay</td>
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<td>-0.01</td>
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<td>12. Attraction to firm</td>
<td>3.71</td>
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<td>0.04</td>
<td>-0.06*</td>
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<td>13. Probability of seeking interview</td>
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<td>0.06*</td>
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<td>14. Probability of accepting offer</td>
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<td>1.98</td>
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<td>-0.05</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.11**</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.17**</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
<td>0.08**</td>
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<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.61**</td>
<td>0.68**</td>
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<td>15. Job &amp; organizational attributes</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
<td>-0.08**</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>0.15**</td>
<td>0.08**</td>
<td>0.15**</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.22**</td>
<td>0.16**</td>
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<td>0.61**</td>
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<td>16. Pride in being an employee</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.09**</td>
<td>0.08**</td>
<td>0.09**</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.27**</td>
<td>0.08**</td>
<td>0.10**</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.06*</td>
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<td>0.54**</td>
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<td>0.41**</td>
<td>0.49**</td>
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<td>Dependent variables—attraction to a typical SOE/FIE</td>
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<tr>
<td>17. Attraction to a typical state-owned enterprise</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>-10**</td>
<td>-0.07*</td>
<td>-0.11**</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>0.21**</td>
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<td>-1.3**</td>
<td>-12**</td>
<td>-12**</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>-12**</td>
<td>-0.06*</td>
<td>0.14**</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
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<tr>
<td>18. Attraction to a typical foreign-invested enterprise</td>
<td>3.81</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>0.09**</td>
<td>0.10**</td>
<td>0.09**</td>
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<td>0.25**</td>
<td>0.23**</td>
<td>-24**</td>
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</table>

Note: For type of ownership, 1 = state-owned enterprise, 2 = wholly owned foreign enterprise, and 3 = international joint venture. For supervisor nationality, 1 = local Chinese, 2 = Hong Kong Chinese, and 3 = Westerner. For familiarity, 1 = unfamiliar and 2 = familiar.

* p ≤ .05. ** p ≤ .01.
Table 2  
Means and Standard Deviations by Conditions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Manipulated organizational attribute</th>
<th>Job and organizational attributes</th>
<th>Proud to be an employee</th>
<th>Attraction to firm</th>
<th>Probability of interviewing</th>
<th>Probability of accepting offer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ownership type</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>SOE</td>
<td>3.31 (56)</td>
<td>2.98 (86)</td>
<td>3.36 (90)</td>
<td>7.16 (220)</td>
<td>6.21 (212)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JV</td>
<td>3.61 (47)</td>
<td>3.07 (87)</td>
<td>3.79 (85)</td>
<td>8.04 (193)</td>
<td>7.12 (135)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WOFÉ</td>
<td>3.60 (47)</td>
<td>3.20 (85)</td>
<td>3.75 (88)</td>
<td>7.93 (198)</td>
<td>7.05 (199)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor nationality</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Local PRC</td>
<td>3.52 (52)</td>
<td>3.12 (86)</td>
<td>3.67 (92)</td>
<td>7.76 (209)</td>
<td>6.81 (205)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Kong Chinese</td>
<td>3.57 (46)</td>
<td>3.09 (84)</td>
<td>3.70 (85)</td>
<td>8.06 (188)</td>
<td>7.14 (179)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westerner</td>
<td>3.62 (47)</td>
<td>3.13 (89)</td>
<td>3.78 (84)</td>
<td>7.84 (201)</td>
<td>7.02 (203)</td>
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<td>Familiarity</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Unfamiliar</td>
<td>3.49 (54)</td>
<td>2.88 (82)</td>
<td>3.51 (90)</td>
<td>7.66 (218)</td>
<td>6.63 (207)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Familiar</td>
<td>3.64 (43)</td>
<td>3.35 (83)</td>
<td>3.91 (81)</td>
<td>8.08 (181)</td>
<td>7.29 (181)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Means with same subscripts are not significantly different from one another. Table entries are means with the standard deviations in parentheses. For ownership type: SOE = state-owned enterprise; JV = international joint venture, and WOFÉ = wholly owned foreign enterprise. For supervisor nationality, local PRC = local People’s Republic of China.

ality and no significant multivariate interaction effects. Follow-up univariate analyses of variance indicated that for all three dependent variables, respondents were significantly more attracted to WOFES and JVs than to SOEs and that there were no differences between wholly owned foreign enterprises and JVs (see Table 2). Such results indicate that foreign firms are rated as more attractive employers than state-owned firms, although respondents did not differ between the two types of foreign firms. Univariate analysis of variance indicated that for all three dependent variables, participants were more attracted to familiar versus unfamiliar firms in support of our expectations.

**P-O Fit Analyses**

To investigate whether the individual difference characteristics moderated the effects of the organizational attributes on attraction to the firm, we conducted hierarchical moderated regression analyses. For these analyses, the organizational attributes were dummy coded: For type of ownership, there were two vectors, and the SOE was coded with all zeros and used as the comparison group; for supervisor nationality, there were two vectors, and the local PRC supervisor was coded with all zeros and used as the comparison group; and for firm familiarity, there was one vector. The first step in the regression analyses entered the demographic control variables of sex, age, and work experience; the second step entered the manipulated organizational attributes; the third step entered the individual difference characteristics; and the fourth step entered the hypothesized interaction terms. We tested and thus only report results from the interactions we hypothesized. The change in $R^2$ associated with the set of interaction terms provides an overall test of whether the set of individual differences moderated the effects of the organizational attributes on the dependent variable. The significance of the regression coefficient provides information about which individual difference moderated the relationship between the organizational attribute and the organizational attractiveness measure. To present a measure of the effect size for each hypothesized interaction, we report the incremental change in $R^2$ when the interaction term (or terms) is added to variables from the third step. When the interaction explained at least 1% of the variance in each of the dependent variables, we plotted the interaction effects following procedures discussed by Cohen and Cohen (1983). More specifically, we depict the form of the significant interaction effects by plotting the slopes for high and low values (±1 SD from the mean) of the individual characteristic for each organizational attribute.

The set of interaction terms was significant for all three dependent variables, providing support for the P-O fit perspective that individual differences moderate the relationship of organizational attributes with organizational attractiveness (see Table 3). Although moderator effects are symmetrical, such that we can describe individual differences as moderating the effects of organizational attributes on attraction or organizational attributes as moderating the effects of individual differences on attraction, for theoretical reasons, we choose to describe our results in terms of the measured individual differences moderating the effects of the manipulated organizational attributes on attraction.) More specifically, the set of interaction terms accounted for between 3% and 4% of the variance in the dependent variables. There was at least partial support for the moderating effect of each of the individual differences, except for self-efficacy, which will not be discussed further.

Turning to the specific hypotheses, examination of the significant regression coefficients and the incremental change in $R^2$ indicates that risk aversion moderated the effects of type of ownership. As shown in Figure 1, in support of Hypothesis 4a, low-risk-averse individuals were less attracted to the SOE than were high-risk-averse individuals and were more attracted to the WOFÉ, although there were no differences in attraction to JVs between low- and high-risk-averse individuals. Thus, in general, risk-seeking individuals (low risk aversion) were less attracted to SOEs and more attracted to foreign enterprises. Results did not support the hypothesis that risk aversion would moderate the effects of firm familiarity on attraction (Hypothesis 4b).

In general, results failed to support the hypothesis that need for achievement would moderate the effects of type of ownership
### Table 3

**Regression Analysis Predicting Firm Attractiveness as an Employer**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step and source</th>
<th>Attraction to firm</th>
<th>Probability of seeking interview</th>
<th>Probability of accepting offer</th>
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</thead>
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<td></td>
<td>Total $R^2$</td>
<td>$\Delta R^2$</td>
<td>$b$</td>
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<td><strong>Demographics</strong></td>
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<td>.006</td>
<td>.016**</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sex (1 = male, 2 = female)</td>
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<td>.00</td>
<td>.39**</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age</td>
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<td>-.03*</td>
<td>.09</td>
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<tr>
<td>Work experience</td>
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<td>-.05</td>
<td>.64</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Organizational attributes</strong></td>
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<td>.084**</td>
<td>.051**</td>
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<tr>
<td>Firm familiarity (Familiarity)</td>
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<td>.51**</td>
<td>.103*</td>
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<td>Type of ownership (WOFE)</td>
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<td>Type of ownership (JIV)</td>
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<td>.24*</td>
<td>.65*</td>
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<td><strong>Set of Interactions</strong></td>
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<td>$H_{7}$: Pay $\times$ JIV</td>
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<td>.30**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$H_{7}$: Pay $\times$ WOFE</td>
<td>.18*</td>
<td>.18*</td>
<td>.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$H_{6a}$: ENG $\times$ JIV</td>
<td>.008**</td>
<td>.008**</td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$H_{6a}$: ENG $\times$ WOFE</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$H_{6b}$: ENG $\times$ HK</td>
<td>.009**</td>
<td>.009**</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$H_{6b}$: ENG $\times$ Westerner</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.44*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: $b$ refers to the unstandardized regression coefficients from the full model. We report $\Delta R^2$ for each set of variables as a whole, and additionally, to provide an estimate of the effect size for each specific hypothesized interaction, we report the incremental $\Delta R^2$ when the interaction term (or terms) is added to the variables from Step 3 individually. $N = 1,185$ for these analyses. WOFE = wholly owned foreign enterprise; JIV = international joint venture; HK = Hong Kong supervisor; H = hypothesis.

* $p \leq .05$. ** $p \leq .01$.

(Hypothesis 5a) and supervisor nationality (Hypothesis 5b) on attraction. Although there was a significant interaction term for the Hong Kong versus PRC supervisor contrast, the interaction terms did not account for a significant amount of variance in any of the dependent variables.

Results indicated that need for pay moderated the effects of type of ownership on attraction, as indicated by the significant regression coefficients and the change in $R^2$. An examination of the interaction plot indicates that in support of Hypothesis 7, high-need-for-pay individuals were less attracted to SOEs and more attracted to FIEs than were low-need-for-pay individuals (see Figure 2).

Finally, in general, the results did not support the moderating effects of English proficiency on the relationship of ownership type and attraction. Although the English proficiency by supervisor nationality interaction term was significant for probability of seeking an interview, the interaction term explained less than 1% of the variance in the dependent variable. We nonetheless examined the plot of means (although we do not provide a figure in the paper), and the plot indicated that individuals with low English proficiency were less attracted to a Western than a PRC supervisor. Such results must be interpreted with caution, however.

### Analyses of Attraction to “Typical” SOEs and FIEs

A separate section of the survey asked respondents to indicate their attraction to a typical FIE and SOE. On the basis of the P-O fit perspective, we expected that the individual difference characteristics would be differentially related to attraction to SOE and FIEs. Table 1 presents the correlations between the individual differences and attraction to a typical SOE and FIE. We also regressed attraction to a typical SOE and a typical FIE on the individual differences to provide additional information about P-O fit (see Table 4). In general, results from these analyses were
somewhat stronger than findings from the scenarios. For example, both need for pay and English proficiency were negatively related to attraction to SOEs and positively related to attraction to FIEs. Risk aversion was positively related to attraction to SOEs and negatively related to attraction to FIEs. Need for achievement was positively related to attraction to FIEs but was not related to attraction to SOEs. Of additional interest is that the individual difference characteristics explained considerably more variance in attraction to a typical FIE than to a typical SOE (e.g., 15.6% vs. 7.7%).

Discussion

We extended the literature by examining factors related to firm attractiveness in China, a country that is transforming from a planned economy to a more free market economy. We examined the main effects of ownership type, supervisor nationality, and firm familiarity and also adopted a P-O fit perspective to understand how individual differences moderate the effects of these attributes on firm attractiveness. We manipulated organizational variables unique to the Chinese context to examine influences of
Table 4
Regression Analyses Predicting Attraction to Typical State-Owned and Foreign-Invested Enterprises

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual difference variable</th>
<th>Attraction to typical state-owned enterprise</th>
<th>Attraction to typical foreign-invested enterprise</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Risk aversion</td>
<td>.23**</td>
<td>-.15**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need for achievement—work</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.15**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-efficacy</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need for pay</td>
<td>-.12**</td>
<td>.20**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English proficiency</td>
<td>-.10**</td>
<td>.19**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total $R^2$</td>
<td>.077**</td>
<td>.156**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$N$</td>
<td>1,203</td>
<td>1,203</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. All values are standardized regression coefficients ($\beta$s) from the full model unless otherwise indicated.
** $p \leq .01$.

P-O fit on organizational attractiveness among prospective labor market entrants in China. Results supported the P-O fit perspective that different individuals are attracted to different firms (Schneider, 1987). Thus, this research extends P-O fit research to a non-Western setting and provides initial evidence suggesting that P-O fit may be a universal theoretical perspective, although clearly more research is needed in other settings.

An important contribution of this study to the P-O fit literature is the investigation of ownership type, which is an important environmental attribute in China. Most studies investigating P-O fit manipulated organizational attributes (e.g., reward systems) and examined whether individual differences moderated the relationships of those attributes with firm attractiveness. We examined the effects of ownership type, which is an economic and political attribute of firms resulting from changes in the economic system in China. Type of ownership influenced perceptions of working conditions, and respondents were more attracted to foreign firms than to state-owned firms, although individual differences moderated these effects. Risk-averse individuals were more attracted to SOEs and less attracted to foreign firms than those seeking individuals, and individuals with a greater need for pay were more attracted to foreign firms and less attracted to state-owned firms. Such results are interesting from a theoretical viewpoint and also may have implications for firms in China.

From a theoretical viewpoint, the results corroborate evidence that risk aversion is an individual difference that influences the attractiveness of certain organizational attributes (Cable & Judge, 1994; Gomez Mejia & Balkin, 1989). From a practical viewpoint, the results suggest that foreign firms in China may be attracting individuals who are risk seekers with a high need for pay, although care should be taken in generalizing from our results because the effect sizes were not large and are based on an experimental design. Nonetheless, foreign firms in China are having difficulty retaining workers (Goodall & Burgers, 1998; Swaak, 1995). Perhaps risk seekers with a high need for pay are more likely to change jobs (for higher pay) than those who are more risk averse and with a lower need for pay. Foreign firms in China might investigate the characteristics of individuals that are attracted to them and develop managerial practices to support such individuals. In any case, firms that adopt a strategy that integrates compensation and career development, perhaps by providing housing loans, overseas training, and other developmental opportunities, are likely to attract and retain high-quality employees.

Firm familiarity was positively related to firm attractiveness but did not have an interactive effect with any of the individual differences. Nonetheless, such a result corroborates recent evidence from an organizational level of analysis that more familiar firms are seen as more attractive employers than are less familiar firms (Gatewood et al., 1993; Turban & Greening, 1997). We theorized that firm familiarity would influence perceptions of organizational attributes because people would attribute positive characteristics to familiar firms and because individuals would feel greater pride in working for a familiar versus an unfamiliar firm. Results supported both of these theorized relationships. We urge researchers to specifically investigate the mechanisms through which firm familiarity influences attractiveness and to measure, rather than manipulate, firm familiarity. Although our manipulation of firm familiarity influenced variables as we theorized, “actual” familiarity with a firm may be different than manipulated familiarity, and future researchers might measure actual familiarity. Finally, although care must be taken in generalizing from this experimental study, an implication of our results is that to attract top-quality applicants, firms in China might consider adopting recruitment techniques used in the United States to increase their familiarity with potential applicants (Breaugh, 1992). For example, firms might send representatives to college campuses to interact with faculty and students.

An important question for researchers interested in P-O fit is what aspects of the organization and of the individual to investigate (Kristof, 1996). We described firms in terms of ownership type, supervisor nationality, and firm familiarity because these are salient and important characteristics of firms attempting to attract applicants in China. On the person side, we measured risk aversion, need for achievement, self-efficacy, need for pay, and English proficiency because these variables have been shown to be important influences on work perceptions and behaviors in Western settings. We did more, however, than just examine whether relationships found with Western samples work with a Chinese sample because we manipulated organizational attributes and measured individual difference characteristics based on our understanding of unique aspects of the Chinese culture. Our results indicate that the basic proposition of P-O fit theory, that individual differences influence the attractiveness of certain organizational characteristics, generalizes across cultures, although the important organizational attributes and individual differences may vary across cultures.

The design of this study has some limitations. We used written scenarios to describe organizations, which provides incomplete information about the firm. Further evidence is needed to determine whether our effects would be diminished if more information about the job was provided. Nonetheless, such scenarios are not that dissimilar from the situation of recruitment brochures. Also, participants indicated their attraction to a firm rather than their actual job decisions. Recent evidence indicates, however, that ratings of firm attractiveness are related to subsequent job offer decisions, suggesting that firm attractiveness is an important dependent variable (Cable & Judge, 1996; Powell & Goulet, 1996; Turban et al., 1995). Participants in this study were college students, not individuals in the workforce. Although there are limitations in this sample, we believe it is important to understand the
job search behavior of new labor market entrants, particularly in China, where college graduates are in short supply. Nonetheless, most of the participants were without much work experience, and thus, their perceptions and expectations about the attractiveness of these organizations may differ from more experienced workers. Although we expect the results from this study to generalize to other college students, future research is needed to investigate generalizability to individuals with more work experience.

This study used the scenario and survey method and collected data from participants at one point in time. Such studies can be susceptible to alternative explanations for the results, such as priming, hypothesis guessing, and so on. However, we used a between-subjects design, in which participants reviewed only one description, and we also examined the relationship between the individual differences and attraction to typical state-owned and foreign-invested firms. Given our pattern of results, we do not think that priming or hypothesis guessing is a viable alternative explanation for our results. Nonetheless, follow-up studies might track participants over time to provide insight concerning influences of P-O fit in terms of job search, organizational commitment, and turnover in China. Although such studies have methodological difficulties, especially in China, they would provide scholars a better understanding of human resource issues in emerging economies such as China.

In summary, this study makes a contribution toward understanding organizational attractiveness in the People’s Republic of China. We extended P-O fit research into an emerging economy by investigating whether the personality characteristics of potential job applicants influence the relative attraction of FIEs or SOEs as potential employers. Additionally, this study addresses a timely issue and provides practical implications for both SOEs and FIEs that need qualified workers by providing useful information for management to consider in formulating an appropriate human resource strategy.

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