

Organizational factors related to attracting job seekers higher in hardiness

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Abstract

Building an organization of workers who thrive in demanding environments begins with recruitment of workers with personality traits predictive of resilience. We integrate fit theories to determine how job advertisement information may attract job seekers higher in psychological hardiness (sense of control, feelings of commitment to many things in life, perceptions of challenge). Across two studies, we manipulated hypothetical job advertisements that were presented to current workers seeking new employment. Job seekers higher in hardiness were more attracted to working with hardy coworkers, less attracted to coping resources, and more attracted to high emotional labor demands compared to job seekers lower in hardiness. A discussion for how organizations may craft job advertisement content to improve their recruitment efforts is provided.

KEYWORDS

hardiness, organizational attraction, personality, recruitment, resilience

1 | INTRODUCTION

Organizations seeking to build a workforce to successfully overcome demanding tasks or thrive during adversity often spend valuable resources on stress management training programs, coping resources, and the selection of the best-fitting applicants (c.f., Britt, Shen, Sinclair, Grossman, & Kleiger, 2016). Although these efforts are often valuable to workers, they can lead to high monetary costs, extensive time commitments, and may not always be successful. Organizations are likely to build a healthier and happier workforce by beginning their efforts during recruitment. Stress-relevant personality characteristics, such as hardiness (sense of control, feelings of commitment to many things in life, perceptions of challenge; Kobasa, 1979), are consistently related to how workers respond to job demands, attitudes toward work and life, and coping behaviors (Eschleman, Bowling, & Alarcon, 2010). Integrating hardiness research with theories on applicant–employee fit and person–job fit can provide organizations with information most likely to attract job seekers who possess these hardiness characteristics (Eschleman & Wright, 2016). The following two studies test if the relationship

between job seekers' psychological hardiness and organizational attraction is dependent upon the type of information presented in a job posting.

1.1 | Hardiness

Hardiness represents a stable psychological characteristic that promotes positive life experiences and buffers against the harmful effects of stressors (e.g., Bartone, 2007). Hardiness is comprised of three components: (a) the idea one has control over their experiences rather than experiences happening because of chance or external factors, (b) the feeling of being committed to many things in life and to the experiences in one's life, and (c) seeing events as an opportunity and challenge to further one's development rather than a hindrance to success (Kobasa, 1979).

Hardiness scales have been used to study the stress process in a wide range of contexts since the late 1960s (Maddi, 1996). Hardiness is most commonly researched among workers in occupations inherently high in stressors, such as health care (e.g., Abdollahi, Talib, Yaacob, & Ismail, 2014; Judkins & Rind, 2005; Kareaga, Exeberria, &

Smith, 2009), military (Escolas, Pitts, Safer, & Bartone, 2013; Pitts, Safer, Russell, & Castro-Chapman, 2016; Skomorovsky & Sudom, 2011), and teaching (Lease, 1999; Otero-López, Mariño, & Bolaño, 2008; Otero-López, Bolaño, Mariño, & Pol, 2010). A quantitative meta-analytic review of hardiness indicated that hardiness was consistently correlated with life satisfaction, job satisfaction, job performance, intentions to quit one's job, job burnout, psychological distress, depression, and posttraumatic stress disorder (Eschleman et al., 2010). Hardiness was also found to be more strongly associated with well-being variables (e.g., psychological strain, life satisfaction) compared to other stress-relevant personality traits (e.g., core-self evaluations, Five Factor Model; Eschleman et al., 2010). A rare example of hardiness being studied in a selection context was conducted with the U.S. Army Special Forces. Psychological hardiness measured prior to hiring was positively correlated with subsequent completion of the program onboarding training program (Bartone, Roland, Picano, & Williams, 2008). Given the substantial evidence for the benefits of a psychological hardiness, we propose organizations can begin building a workforce higher in hardiness during the recruitment stage of selecting future employees.

1.2 | Applicant–employee fit and person–job fit

Organizational attractiveness is one's likelihood to pursue a job based on the attitudes toward the company as a potential employer (Highhouse, Lievens, & Sinar, 2003) and is rooted within person–organization fit theory (P–O fit; Kristof, 1996; Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005). Within P–O fit theory, a person is attracted to environments that provide compatibility (or fit) with their beliefs and values. Applicant–employee fit (Van Hoye & Turban, 2015) and person–job fit (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005) are two types of fit relevant to job seekers and the current study. Applicant–employee fit describes the extent to which a job applicant shares values and characteristics with the current workforce of an organization (their prospective team members). Applicant–employee fit is similar to the concept of person–group fit, which is the fit between a worker and their team. Person–job fit is the extent to which a worker's needs align with job resources provided or the worker's abilities match the job tasks assigned.

Several studies have applied these fit theories to explain the relationships between organizational profiles and organizational attraction. Cable and Judge (1996) studied job seekers over time to determine if greater fit during the recruitment stage was associated with turnover intention after jobs were accepted. Perceptions of congruence between the organization's values and their personal values were related to job choice intentions and work attitudes, even after controlling for demographic similarities between the worker and organizational representatives. Judge and Cable (1997) presented organizational profiles to a sample of job seekers and determined fit using both objective ratings (researcher ratings of congruence) and self-report. Organizational attraction for job seekers was positively associated with fit between the self-reported Five-Factor Model ratings and the organizational culture profile. Nolan and Harold (2010)

manipulated organizational profiles to represent varying organizational cultures. Participants who reported the profiles to match their self-concepts also reported higher organizational attraction.

The effects of fit on organizational attractiveness is further demonstrated empirically by Van Hoye and Turban (2015). Van Hoye and Turban found that personality congruence between the applicant and the organization's employees increases organizational attraction for the applicant. The pattern of results was consistent with attraction to similar others, but only for applicants high in desirable traits. That is, applicants high in desirable traits were more attracted to work with employees similarly high. However, applicants low in desirable traits were not more attracted to work with employees similarly low. Van Hoy and Turben conclude that applicants are attracted to the organization because the environment will allow them to express the trait while at work (Tett & Burnett, 2003).

Despite the evidence that applicant–employee fit and person–job fit is a driving mechanism of organizational attractiveness, fit theories have not been empirically applied to the recruitment of job seekers higher in hardiness. Rentsch and McEwen (2002) found that fit based on the congruence with personality traits has a unique effect on organizational attractiveness beyond congruence with values or goals. By incorporating hardiness research with fit theories, organizations can make strong predictions about strategies for increasing organizational attraction among job seekers higher in hardiness.

1.3 | Attracting job seekers higher in hardiness

Given the importance of hardiness, organizations will benefit from recruiting a greater number of workers higher in hardiness. We propose that information pertaining to coworkers, available coping resources, and job demands are likely to influence the fit perceptions.

1.3.1 | Advertisement of hardy coworkers or coping resources

Job seekers are likely to evaluate the personalities of current employees to determine their attractiveness to an organization. Organizations often advertise this information in job advertisements or through various media on the company website. For example, job seekers can gather this information on social media websites that provide public testimonials from current employees. An applicant will perceive applicant–employee fit if their personality aligns with the personalities of coworkers.

Organizations often offer resources to workers to help cope with the demands of the job, such as stress management training, access to mental health counselors, access to spiritual counselors, or a forum for peer-to-peer social support groups, whereas the advertisement of similar others may attract job seekers higher in hardiness, the advertisement of coping resources may attract job seekers lower in hardiness. Specifically, job seekers lower in hardiness may perceive greater fit when presented with coping resources. Hardiness is a psychological resource that enables a person to overcome stressors effectively. A person lower in hardiness will need

additional resources from their environment to overcome stressors. The fulfillment of one's need for coping resources will promote greater fit and organizational attraction. Leveraging both applicant-employee fit and person-job fit theories, we predict that job seekers' hardiness will be related to their choice between working with hardy coworkers or coping resources.

Hypothesis 1 *Job seeker ratings of hardiness will be related to their attractiveness choice between organizations advertising hardy coworkers or coping resources. Specifically, job seekers higher in hardiness will be more likely to choose working with hardy coworkers versus coping resources when compared to job seekers lower in hardiness.*

1.3.2 | Advertisement of emotional labor demands

Information acquired by job seekers may also deter them from applying to an organization. Realistic job previews have been used by organizations for this purpose in an effort to deter job seekers that would lack fit with the organization or profession for long-term success (Phillips, 1998). A realistic job preview emphasizes both positive and negative daily tasks and experiences of workers and are commonly used for occupations that have chronic job demands. For the purpose of the current study, we focus on emotional labor demands as they are a common stressor in occupations that have high rates of strain, such as social work, health care, social services, and education (e.g., Johnson et al., 2005).

Emotional labor demands are the expectations that employees control the outward expression of strong emotions in front of peers, coworkers, and/or clients. Emotional labor includes suppressing emotions that are felt in order to provide comfort, assurance, and stability to others (Glomb & Tews, 2004). Surface acting is a form of emotional labor in which the worker fakes expected emotions and suppresses felt emotions. Deep acting, however, involves using emotional regulation in order to empathize and embody required emotions (Gabriel & Diefendorff, 2015). Although emotional labor can provide positive feelings of accomplishment for workers, emotional labor can have severe negative consequences due to emotional exhaustion (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002). As a result, the presentation of emotional labor demands in a job advertisement is a form of realistic job preview that may deter job seekers in general.

Leveraging the person-job fit theory, we expect the deterrent effect of emotional labor demands is greater for job seekers lower in hardiness in comparison to job seekers higher in hardiness. Higher hardiness is, in part, characterized by seeing demanding situations as a challenge and a rewarding opportunity to grow. Job seekers higher in hardiness will perceive an organization with emotional labor demands as an opportunity to fulfill one's need for challenge, thus eliciting person-job fit. We predict that job seekers' hardiness will be related to their choice between working with high emotional labor demands or low emotional labor demands.

Hypothesis 2 *Job seeker ratings of hardiness will be related to their attractiveness choice between organizations advertising high emotional labor demands versus low emotional labor demands. Specifically, job seekers higher in hardiness will be more likely to choose working with high emotional labor demands instead of low emotional labor demands compared to job seekers lower in hardiness.*

2 | STUDY 1 METHOD

2.1 | Participants and procedure

Study recruitment targeted those who were currently employed and considered leaving their respective organizations in the next 6 months. Participants were required to be currently employed because applicants with more job options presumably can choose better-fitting organizations (Chatman, 1991, 1989). In other words, currently employed participants are more likely than unemployed participants to incorporate fit into their decisions because they have more options. Turnover intention was a requirement because job seekers provide the most generalizable results when incorporating hypothetical advertisements (Cable & Judge, 1996).

Participants were recruited using Amazon's Mechanical Turk to participate in a two-wave survey study over 1 week for \$5.00. A final sample of 296 participants completed both waves and provided useable data. The final sample only included participants who scored in the top quartile (job seeker higher in hardiness; $n = 146$) or bottom quartile (job seekers lower in hardiness; $n = 150$) on the hardiness scale. The sample was 60% female, 60% Caucasian, 14% African American, 16% Asian, 7% Native American, and an average age of 35 years old. All participants indicated they were currently living within the United States. Wave 1 included demographic questions and a hardiness scale. In wave 2, participants evaluated four hypothetical job advertisements by selecting the organization they were most interested in working for. The study protocol was approved by the authors' ethics review board prior to data collection.

2.2 | Measures

2.2.1 | Job advertisements

The four job advertisements were presented simultaneously and included a combination of two statements. First, a statement was included regarding hardy coworkers or coping resources. Second, a statement was included regarding high emotional labor demands or low emotional labor demands. These combinations result in four options to choose between: (a) hardy coworkers with high emotional labor, (b) hardy coworkers with low emotional labor, (c) coping resources with high emotional labor, and (d) coping resources with low emotional labor. The order of the four options was randomized. The hardy coworkers statement incorporated content from a hardiness

scale (Sinclair & Oliver, 2003): "Work with others who are confident, view obstacles as an opportunity for growth, and believe they can affect the world in positive ways." The coping resources statement was based on common organizational efforts for stress management interventions (Richardson & Rothstein, 2008): "Work in an organization that provides access to counseling, stress management training, and peer support groups." The high emotional labor statement ("Maintain professional relationships with coworkers and customers. Express positivity regardless of circumstance.") and low emotional labor statement ("Maintain genuine relationships with coworkers and customers. Express your individuality freely.") were developed based on items within emotional labor scales (e.g., Glomb & Tews, 2004). Emotional labor was selected as a job demand because it is one of the most common demands associated with severe strain.

2.2.2 | Organizational attractiveness

Participants rank ordered the four advertisements on their preference to work for the organization. The rankings were coded as 1 for top rank or 2 for other rankings (i.e., second, third, or fourth).

2.2.3 | Hardiness

Hardiness was measured with the average of 12 items from the Dispositional Resilience Scale II (Sinclair & Oliver, 2003) that measured the sub-facets of commitment, control, and challenge. Ratings were on a 5-point scale from (1) Definitely false to (5) Definitely true. An example challenge item is, "I see stressful events as opportunities to grow personally." An example control item is, "My successes are related to the choices I make." An example commitment item is, "I really look forward to the tasks I have to do each day." A quartile split was used on wave 1 participants to determine *higher hardiness* ($Mean = 4.63$, $SD = 0.24$) and *lower hardiness* ($Mean = 2.79$, $SD = 0.48$). A quartile split was conducted to provide a binary indicator of higher versus lower hardiness; a binary moderator is required for the analyses used in Study 1. A quartile split was used rather than a median split to more closely represent the decisions made within a selection protocol, which are typically select-in applicants very high on a characteristic or select-out applicants very low on a characteristic. The hardiness scale had an alpha reliability of 0.90.

3 | STUDY 1 RESULTS

Discrete choice analysis (Cox Regression) was used to test the Hypotheses 1 and 2 in Study 1. Cox Regression is a common analysis in marketing research to estimate if a binary consumer feature (e.g., male, female) is related to the relative impact of product features on a purchasing decision. An example application of Cox Regression is a comparison of vehicle features (e.g., red, blue, two-door, four-door) on purchase decision of men versus women (e.g., Earnhart, 2002; Sammer & Wüstenhagen, 2006; Tiwari, Itoh, & Doi, 2003). Cox Regression provides a hazard ratio, which is the likelihood that

a feature (e.g., hardy coworkers vs. coping resources) corresponds with the participant's choice. Interaction terms between hardiness and organization features were included in the regression equation to test the hypotheses. Both organizational feature comparisons (hardy coworkers vs. coping resources and high emotional labor demands vs. low emotional labor demands) were tested simultaneously within the same regression model with organizational attraction as the dependent variable. No control variables were included.

3.1 | Advertising hardy coworkers or coping resources

There was no significant main effect for participants choosing between hardy coworkers and coping resources. That is, participants were equally likely to choose either hardy coworkers or coping resources as their top choice (hazard ratio = 1.04, $p = 0.63$; 95% confidence interval: 0.89–1.22). An interaction between participant's ratings of hardiness and their choice between hardy coworkers versus coping resources was used to test Hypothesis 1, which predicts that the relationship between hardiness and organizational attraction differs based on advertisement information. A significant interaction was found in the expected direction using discrete choice analysis, which supports Hypothesis 1. Specifically, job seekers higher in hardiness were 63% more likely (hazard ratio = 1.63, $p < 0.01$; 95% confidence interval: 1.29–2.07) than job seekers lower in hardiness to select an organization with hardy coworkers instead of coping resources.

The raw data describe a similar pattern. An organization with hardy coworkers was selected by job seekers higher in hardiness 74% of the time (108 of 146), whereas job seekers lower in hardiness made the same selection 52% of the time (78 of 150). Overall, job seekers higher in hardiness were more likely to select an organization advertisement that described hardy coworkers compared versus coping resources. Job seekers lower in hardiness did not differentiate between hardy coworkers versus coping resources when selecting the most attractive organization.

3.2 | Advertising emotional labor demands

There was a significant main effect for participants choosing between high emotional labor demands and low emotional labor demands. That is, participants were 49% less likely to choose high emotional labor demands compared to low emotional labor demands (hazard ratio = 0.51, $p < 0.01$; 95% confidence interval: 0.42–0.60). An interaction between participant's ratings of hardiness and their choice between high emotional labor demands versus low emotional labor demands was used to test Hypothesis 2, which predicts that the relationship between hardiness and organizational attraction differs based on advertisement information. A significant interaction was found in the expected direction using discrete choice analysis, which supports Hypothesis 2. Job seekers higher in hardiness were 45% more likely (hazard ratio = 1.45, $p = 0.01$; 95% confidence interval: 1.08–1.82) than job seekers lower in hardiness to select an

organization with high emotional labor demands rather than low emotional labor demands.

The raw data describe a similar pattern. An organization with high emotional labor demands was selected by job seekers higher in hardiness 33% of the time (48 of 146), whereas job seekers lower in hardiness made the same selection 20% of the time (30 of 150). Overall, all job seekers were more attracted to organizations with low emotional labor demands compared to high emotional labor demands. However, job seekers higher in hardiness were more attracted to organizations with high emotional labor demands compared to job seekers lower in hardiness.

4 | STUDY 2

While Study 1 hypotheses and results are based on a within-person design that categorically labeled participants as higher or lower in hardiness, Study 2 incorporated a between-person correlational design that measured hardiness as a continuous variable. The between-person correlational design enabled us to test the relationship of hardiness within each of experimental conditions without participants having to make a direct comparison. In other words, participants in Study 2 are presented with only one advertisement and asked to rate their organizational attractiveness. Study 2 design is generalizable to the pre-application stage of job seeking. Job seekers during preapplication can choose to apply to any job and do not need to directly compare organizations until the hiring stage. The use of a continuous measure of hardiness is also a more accurate representation of the hardiness construct and provides more variability in our measurement. These collective differences between Study 1 and Study 2 provide a more comprehensive test of the relationship between hardiness and organizational attractiveness.

The theoretical rationale for the expected effects is the same in Study 2 as Study 1. However, our hypotheses differ slightly in an effort to test the independent relationships that occur in each of the conditions of the between-person design. In other words, we predict relationships between hardiness and organizational attractiveness that occur independently within each experimental condition. We predict that hardiness will be positively correlated with organizational attractiveness when an organization advertises coworkers with hardiness characteristics.

Hypothesis 3 *Psychological hardiness will be positively associated with organizational attractiveness when an organization advertises hardy coworkers.*

We predict that hardiness will be negatively associated with organizational attraction when an organization advertises coping resources available to employee.

Hypothesis 4 *Psychological hardiness will be negatively associated with organizational attractiveness when an organization advertises coping resources.*

We predict that hardiness will be positively associated with organizational attraction when an organization advertises high emotional labor demands.

Hypothesis 5 *Psychological hardiness will be positively associated with organizational attractiveness when an organization advertises high emotional labor demands.*

5 | STUDY 2 METHOD

5.1 | Participants and procedure

Similar to Study 1, participants were required to be currently employed and have thought about changing organizations within the next 6 months. Nine hundred participants were recruited using Amazon's Mechanical Turk to participate in a two-wave survey study over 1 week in exchange for \$5.00. Wave 1 included demographic questions and a hardiness scale. In wave 2, participants evaluated one of three hypothetical job advertisements using an organizational attractiveness scale. Participants were excluded if they did not complete the wave 2 survey, failed to answer an attention check question in wave 1 (i.e., "Please mark Somewhat Disagree"), or failed a manipulation check during wave 2. The manipulation check was a one-item quiz presented immediately after the advertisement. Participants were instructed to identify which of three quotes was included in the advertisement. The quotes represented each of three condition manipulations (e.g., "A work environment with stress management training and resources."). A "none of the above" option was also available. The study protocol was approved by an academic ethics review board prior to data collection.

A final sample of 564 participants completed both waves and provided useable data. Participants were randomly assigned to review one of the following advertisements: hardy coworkers ($n = 191$), coping resources ($n = 181$), or high emotional labor demands ($n = 192$). The sample was 57% female, 76% Caucasian, 10% African American, 6% Asian, 6% Native American, and an average age of 37 years old. All participants indicated they were currently living within the United States.

5.2 | Measures

5.2.1 | Job advertisements

Appendix A includes the hardy coworkers advertisement condition. Appendix B includes the coping resources advertisement condition. Appendix C includes the high emotional labor demands advertisement condition. The three job advertisement conditions included content similar to Study 1, but the advertisements were designed to appear more realistic with additional information. The content used in Study 1 was distributed throughout the advertisement in sections about a company description and quotes

about the organization from current employees. Advertisements also included statements about career opportunities and the U.S. federally protected groups (U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 2017), which remained constant across all advertisements.

5.2.2 | Organizational attractiveness

Organizational attractiveness was measured using five items from Highhouse and colleagues (2003). Ratings were on a 5-point scale from (1) Strongly Disagree to (5) Strongly Agree. An example item is, "This company is attractive to me as a place for employment." The organizational attractiveness scale had an alpha reliability of 0.94.

5.2.3 | Hardiness

Hardiness was measured with the same scale and instructions as was used in Study 1. Hardiness was scored as a continuous variable (1 to 5) in Study 2 instead of categorical (low or high). The hardiness scale had an alpha reliability of 0.92.

6 | STUDY 2 RESULTS

Prior to testing hypotheses, hardiness scores were compared between the three conditions using a one-way ANOVA. The mean hardiness scores did not significantly differ between groups ($F = 0.45$, $df = 2$, $p = 0.72$): hardy coworkers ($M = 3.80$, $SD = 0.78$; 95% confidence interval = 3.69–3.91), coping resources ($M = 3.73$, $SD = 0.64$; 95% confidence interval = 3.64–3.83), and high emotional labor ($M = 3.75$, $SD = 0.69$; 95% confidence interval = 3.65–3.85). The similar mean hardiness scores across the three conditions indicate that the random assignment of participants into conditions was successful and that the study findings are not likely due to group characteristics.

Correlation analysis was used to test the Study 2 Hypotheses. The correlation between hardiness and organizational attractiveness was calculated for each of the three advertisement conditions. This analysis enabled the hardiness–organizational attractiveness relationship to be tested for each condition separately without comparing the effects across conditions. The lines of best fit for each independent correlation are presented in Figure 1.

6.1 | Advertising hardy coworkers

The overall mean organizational attractiveness score for the hardy coworkers condition was 4.06 ($SD = 0.89$; 95% confidence interval = 3.93–4.19), which indicates that participants expressed a favorable attitude toward the organizational advertisement. Consistent with Hypothesis 3, hardiness was positively correlated with organizational attraction ($r = 0.36$, $p < 0.01$) for participants assigned to the advertisement with hardy coworkers.

6.2 | Advertising coping resources

The overall mean organizational attractiveness score for the coping resources condition was 3.84 ($SD = 0.84$; 95% confidence interval = 3.71–3.96), which indicates that participants in this condition expressed a favorable attitude toward the organizational advertisement. Consistent with Hypothesis 4, hardiness was negatively correlated with organizational attraction ($r = -0.19$, $p = 0.01$) for participants assigned to the advertisement with coping resources.

6.3 | Advertising high emotional labor demands

The overall mean organizational attractiveness score for high emotional labor demands condition was 3.05 ($SD = 1.27$; 95% confidence interval = 2.87–3.23), which indicates participants expressed an unfavorable attitude toward the organizational advertisement. Consistent with Hypothesis 5, hardiness was positively correlated

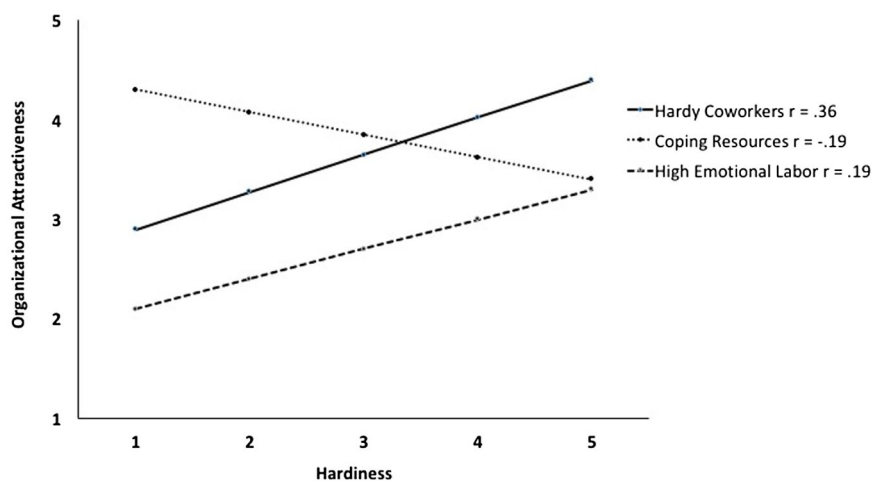


FIGURE 1 Lines of best fit representing correlations between hardiness and organizational attraction for each condition in study 2 [Colour figure can be viewed at wileyonlinelibrary.com]

with organizational attraction ($r = 0.19, p < 0.01$) for participants assigned to the advertisement with high emotional labor demands.

7 | DISCUSSION

Building a workforce that possess the dispositional characteristic of hardiness begins with attracting those hardy individuals at the application phase. Across two studies, job seekers evaluated hypothetical organization advertisements. Study 1 required job seekers to choose between four advertisements (within-person design), whereas Study 2 required job seekers to evaluate their attractiveness to only one advertisement (between-person design).

7.1 | Advertising hardy coworkers or coping resources

The results of Study 1 and Study 2 were consistent despite varying the study designs. As predicted in Study 1, job seekers' hardiness ratings were related to their choice between advertisements of hardy coworkers versus coping resources. Specifically, job seekers higher in hardiness were more likely to choose hardy coworkers over coping resources when compared to job seekers lower in hardiness. The Study 2 between-person design enabled testing the effect of each condition independently rather than a forced-choice comparison.

As predicted in Study 2, hardiness was positively correlated with organizational attractiveness when job seekers were presented with an advertisement of hardy coworkers. This result aligns with theoretical models of applicant-employee fit (Van Hove & Turban, 2015) and person-group fit (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005) such that job seekers are more likely to be attracted to an organization comprised of similar others. In this case, coworkers with characteristics of commitment, challenge, and control are similar to job seekers higher in hardiness.

As predicted in Study 2, hardiness was negatively correlated with organizational attractiveness when job seekers were presented with an advertisement of coping resources. This result aligns with theoretical model of person-job fit (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005) such that job seekers are more likely to be attracted to jobs that meet their needs. In this case, coping resources fulfill the needs of job seekers lower in hardiness.

7.2 | Advertising emotional labor demands

As predicted in Study 1, job seekers' hardiness ratings were related to their choice between advertisements of high emotional labor demands versus low emotional labor demands. Specifically, job seekers higher in hardiness were more likely to choose high emotional labor demands instead of low emotional labor demands when compared to job seekers lower in hardiness. The Study 2 between-person design enabled testing the effect of advertising high emotional labor demands independently rather than a forced-choice comparison.

As predicted in Study 2, hardiness was positively correlated with organizational attractiveness when job seekers were presented with an advertisement of high emotional labor demands. This result aligns with theoretical model of person-job fit (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005) such that job seekers are more likely to be attracted to jobs that use their skills and ability. In this case, high emotional labor demands are likely to use internal coping and regulation skills possessed by job seekers higher in hardiness. Conversely, job seekers lower hardiness will not possess the skills necessary for the job and be more likely deterred from applying.

7.3 | Theoretical implications

The significant hardiness-organizational attraction relationship across the two resource conditions has important theoretical implications for both applicant-employee and person-job fit theories. Consistent with prior seminal research on applicant fit (e.g., Cable & Judge, 1996; Judge & Cable, 1997; Nolan & Harold, 2010), organizational profiles and applicant personality interact to effect organizational attraction. The findings indicate that applicant fit theories are applicable to stress-relevant personality characteristics, such as hardiness.

The significant effects found across both studies have important implications to further understand how one's hardiness disposition can affect the workplace. The effects of hardiness on well-being is most commonly described within a reactionary perspective, such that two people who experience the same situation will respond differently based on their hardiness disposition (Eschleman et al., 2010). The current study provides evidence that hardiness affects one's environment choices. In other words, those higher and lower in hardiness are not on a level playing field because they have chosen different situational circumstances.

7.4 | Practical implications

The consistent findings across the within-person and between-person study designs indicate that results are unlikely to be dependent upon the number of organization options available to an applicant. In other words, the findings are likely to generalize to applicants who are evaluating one or multiple organizations. Organizations that have occupations with an inherent risk of trauma (e.g., job burnout or PTSD) are likely to benefit most from the findings. These organizations can become more attractive to job seekers higher in hardiness by advertising the opportunity to work with coworkers who also possess hardiness characteristics. In addition, organizations should take caution in advertising coping resources as they may attract applicants low in hardiness characteristics. Although coping resources are likely a point of pride for the organization and a valuable resource for many workers, we recommend not using this information during the first point of contact. Rather, organizations would benefit by informing applicants later in the interview process or during on-the-job training.

It is important to consider the overall effects of job advertisements on the applicant pool. Larger applicant pools are generally beneficial for organizational recruitment, but it is important to consider why the applicant pool has increased. Organizations that advertise either hardy coworkers or coping resources may see an overall increase in the number of applicants as indicated by the favorable mean ratings of organizational attraction (>3.0) for the coping resources condition. However, the increase for the two types of advertisements is likely for opposite reasons; hardy coworkers increases the number of applicants higher in hardiness, whereas coping resources increases the number of applicants lower in hardiness. In sum, organizations should review the content provided to applicants during initial advertisements when evaluating their selection process.

Efforts to attract job seekers higher in hardiness will also affect subsequent selection practices because they change the applicant pool. An applicant pool with a greater proportion of applicants higher in hardiness reduces the need to measure hardiness in a selection battery. Concerns of faking personality tests during a selection battery have long been a severe limitation and liability for organizations (e.g., Morgeson et al., 2007). In addition, a greater proportion of job seekers higher in hardiness in an applicant pool will enable organizations to use these personality scales to select-out applicants with low scores without jeopardizing the quality of the selection ratio.

7.5 | Limitations and future research

There are several limitations to the current research that can be addressed in future research to further advance our understanding of behavioral tendencies for job seekers higher in hardiness. First and foremost, neither study incorporated a control condition, which would have been an advertisement with no discussion of coworkers, coping resources, nor job demands. A control condition of this type would have provided a baseline comparison for a job seekers organizational attraction without any of our advertisement condition information present. A control group was omitted because the condition is not a generalizable comparison because all realistic organization advertisements include some form of the content we manipulated. Future research should seek ways to study this phenomenon with a control group that is generalizable to a job seeker's real experience.

The job demands selected for the studies highlights another limitation of the current study and a need for future research. We elected to apply person–job fit theory by varying the quantity of a job demand rather than varying the type of job demands. Emotional labor demands were used in the current study because of the potential implication of significant findings; greater emotional labor demands are commonly associated with greater job burnout symptoms (e.g., depersonalization; Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002). We recommend future researchers study the presence and absence of workload (e.g., hours worked per week) because of the theoretical alignment with the psychological hardiness trait. The need for challenge that characterizes those higher in hardiness is likely to result in poor fit within jobs low in workload demands. Alternatively, future

research could manipulate the presence of challenge demands or hindrance demands to better align with the person–job fit model. This distinction of job demands aligns with the challenge factor of hardiness, but also has important practical implications for the workplace. Workers who perceive their work environment to possess challenge demands are consistently more successful than those who perceive their environment to possess hindrance demands (e.g., LePine, Podsakoff, & LePine, 2005; Van den Broeck, De Cuyper, De Witte, & Vansteenkiste, 2010). An experimental manipulation of challenge and hindrance demands in job advertisements would help determine if job seekers higher in hardiness are attracted to a type of job demand rather than the quantity of job demand.

Additional research involving fit with a specific hardiness facet should consider alternative scales that have higher reliability at the facet level (e.g., DRS-15; Hystad, Eid, Johnsen, Laberg, & Bartone, 2010). Measurement of hardiness facets would enable future research on the unique effects of each facet on organizational attractiveness. For example, persons high in hardiness challenge may be attracted to organizations that commonly take risks within their marketplace or jobs that provide risky activities (e.g., astronaut).

We are also limited in that we infer fit as the explanatory mechanism driving the significant effects rather than measuring fit more directly. Conditions of hardy coworkers were expected to induce evaluations of applicant–employee fit or person–group fit whereas profiles of coping resources and job demands were expected to induce evaluations of person–job fit. We recommend that future studies incorporate multiple models of fit when designing their studies because it is likely that job seekers consider many types of fit when evaluating their job options. These fit options may also include person–organization fit or group–organization fit (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005), which were not a focus of the current study.

Future research should also seek to replicate the findings during other stages of an employee's tenure in an organization, similar to the longitudinal method used by Judge and Cable (1997). Although we provide insight into organizational attraction during the initial stage of the recruitment and selection process, future research should investigate why workers higher in hardiness elect to leave an organization that they were previously attracted to. Lastly, the experimental design relies on differences in organizational attraction within non-applicant samples (hypothetical scenario). Meta-analytic evidence on organizational attractiveness found differences in applicant and nonapplicant samples (Chapman, Uggerslev, Carroll, Piasentin, & Jones, 2005). Studies relying on applicant samples weighed job characteristics more heavily than studies relying on nonapplicants. As a result, we may be underestimating the strength of the effects applicable to organizations because of our nonapplicant samples.

Applicant reactions to other content commonly advertised to applicants should also be empirically examined. We recommend evaluating content pertaining to leadership characteristics, which was not examined in the current study. Leadership is consistently found to be related to the hardiness of the subordinate or teams (Bartone, 2006, 2017). An empirical evaluation of applicant attraction to different leadership styles will help determine if the positive effects of

leadership on hardiness are due to recruitment or on-the-job leadership actions by the leader.

7.6 | Summary

We conducted two studies with varying methodologies to evaluate the effect of job advertisements on the relationship between hardiness and organizational attraction. Advertisements were manipulated using person–environment fit theoretical models and prior research pertaining to psychological hardiness in an effort maximize the application of the findings to organizations with an inherent risk of trauma. Consistent results were found across the two studies. Job seekers higher in hardiness were more attracted to an advertisement of working with hardy coworkers than job seekers lower in hardiness. Job seekers higher in hardiness were less attracted to an advertisement of coping resources than job seekers lower in hardiness. Finally, job seekers in higher in hardiness were more attracted to an advertisement of high emotional labor demands than job seekers lower in hardiness. Overall, the findings demonstrate how stress-relevant personality characteristics may manifest into the selection of one's work environment and emphasize the importance of crafting organizational advertisements to recruit job seekers higher in hardiness.

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APPENDIX A: ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE ADVERTISING HARDY COWORKERS IN STUDY 2



Rose Bloom Healthcare

Company Description

At Rose Bloom Health you will have the opportunity to work with others who are confident, optimistic, view obstacles as an opportunity for growth, and believe they can affect the world in positive ways.

Career Opportunities

Career opportunities are available throughout the entire organization and in major cities across the United States. We provide equal employment opportunities to all workers without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or disability.

"Each day I see the true meaning of the work that we do."



Sandra B.
Accountant



"I am grateful to be part of a team full of resilient people."

Alejandro G.
Office Manager

"It is rewarding to face the daily challenges of healthcare with confidence and optimism."

Jules K.
Sales

APPENDIX C: PROFILE ADVERTISING HIGH EMOTIONAL LABOR DEMANDS IN STUDY 2



Rose Bloom Healthcare

Company Description

Rose Bloom Health workers maintain professional relationships with coworkers and customers while providing excellent service. Jobs require displaying appropriate emotions and managing expressions at all times.

Career Opportunities

Career opportunities are available throughout the entire organization and in major cities across the United States. We provide equal employment opportunities to all workers without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or disability.

"Everyone is very professional here."



Sandra B.
Accountant



"At work, I make sure to display appropriate emotions."

Alejandro G.
Office Manager

"We work hard to maintain a consistent environment for our clients."

Jules K.
Sales

APPENDIX B: PROFILE ADVERTISING COPING RESOURCES IN STUDY 2



Rose Bloom Healthcare

Company Description

Rose Bloom Health provides a wide range of resources to support the emotional and physical health of all workers. Workers have access to psychological counseling, stress management training, and peer support groups.

Career Opportunities

Career opportunities are available throughout the entire organization and in major cities across the United States. We provide equal employment opportunities to all workers without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or disability.

"The training on how to handle stress is a great resource."



Sandra B.
Accountant



"The access to counseling services help me be at my best."

Alejandro G.
Office Manager

"I am provided the resources to cope with the daily obstacles in healthcare."

Jules K.
Sales