

Research Paper

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Dynamics of organisational attractiveness and perceived attributes: Evidence from Turkish construction sector

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Abstract: This study explores the relationship between organisational attractiveness and perceived organisational attributes, focusing on how job seekers' urgency and long-term orientation (LTO) affect their perceptions, specifically within the construction sector. Using data from 270 participants in Central Anatolia's employment agencies, the research employs analysis of variance (ANOVA) and regression analyses to understand how these motivational states impact views of potential employers. Findings indicate that organisational attractiveness significantly influences perceived organisational attributes, consistent with theories positioning it as crucial in employment decisions. A notable moderation effect emerges with job search urgency: while urgency heightens perceptions of organisational attractiveness and attributes, it weakens the impact of organisational attractiveness on perceived attributes when urgency is high. This suggests that urgent job seekers prioritise immediate benefits like job availability over long-term qualities. Conversely, LTO does not significantly moderate the relationship, implying that immediate concerns overshadow potential long-term engagement for job seekers. These insights suggest tailored recruitment strategies: employers aiming to attract urgent job seekers should highlight immediate benefits and support, while those targeting non-urgent seekers should emphasise stability and long-term career opportunities. This study enhances the understanding of employment dynamics, emphasising the need for nuanced recruitment approaches that consider job seekers' varying priorities and urgencies. It contributes to human resource management discourse by showing how urgency and orientation influence employment preferences and decisions, guiding

more effective recruitment practices. These findings have practical implications for the construction industry, suggesting that addressing job seekers' immediate and long-term needs can enhance recruitment effectiveness in a sector often perceived as less attractive due to challenging work conditions.

Keywords: recruitment in construction, organisational attractiveness, job seeking urgency, perceived organisational attributes, moderating effects, long-term orientation

1 Introduction

In today's dynamic job market, organisations face increasing challenges in attracting and retaining top talent. As competition for skilled employees intensifies, understanding the factors that influence organisational attractiveness is crucial for both scholars and practitioners (Highhouse et al. 2003; Chapman et al. 2005).

The construction industry, a vital sector of the global economy, is particularly relevant for this study. This industry not only contributes significantly to national GDP but also plays a crucial role in infrastructure development and economic growth. In Turkey, the construction sector is a major driver of economic activity, accounting for a substantial portion of employment and investment (TurkStat 2023). The rapid urbanisation and large-scale infrastructure projects in Turkey have amplified the importance of the construction industry, making it an essential area for workforce studies.

Despite its economic significance, the construction industry faces unique challenges in attracting and retaining skilled labour. The sector is often perceived as less attractive due to factors such as demanding work conditions, job insecurity and limited career development opportunities (Loosemore et al. 2003). These challenges

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are exacerbated in Turkey, where the construction industry is characterised by cyclical fluctuations, high accident rates and a reputation for being labour-intensive and physically demanding. The need for continuous infrastructure development, coupled with the industry's inherent volatility, further complicates efforts to maintain a stable and skilled workforce.

Understanding how organisational attractiveness influences job seekers' perceptions in this context is critical for developing effective recruitment strategies. This study explores the relationship between organisational attractiveness and perceived organisational attributes within the construction sector, focusing on how job seekers' urgency and long-term orientation (LTO) affect their perceptions. Organisational attractiveness encompasses various factors, including organisational reputation, job characteristics and work environment, which significantly influence job pursuit intentions and the likelihood of accepting job offers (Cable and Turban 2001; Lievens and Highhouse 2003).

Moreover, the urgency to find a job and long-term work orientation are considered potential moderating factors in this relationship. The urgency to find a job reflects job seekers' immediate need to secure employment, which may alter their evaluation of organisational attractiveness and perceived attributes (Boswell et al. 2003). Conversely, long-term work orientation pertains to an individual's inclination to commit to a long-term career within an organisation, potentially influencing their perception of organisational attractiveness (Ng and Feldman 2010).

Several contributions are made to the literature on organisational behaviour and human resource management through this study. First, the direct effect of organisational attractiveness on perceived organisational attributes is empirically examined. Second, the moderating role of job-seeking urgency and long-term work orientation in this relationship is investigated. Finally, valuable insights into the demographic factors that influence these variables are provided, offering practical implications for organisations seeking to attract and retain diverse talent in the construction industry.

By integrating insights from organisational behaviour and human resource management, this study seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing organisational attractiveness and perceived organisational attributes. The findings are expected to offer valuable implications for both researchers and practitioners in enhancing organisational attractiveness and tailoring recruitment strategies to different demographic groups.

2 Organisational attractiveness and perceived organisational attributes

Organisational attractiveness is a critical concept in organisational behaviour, referring to the extent to which potential employees perceive an organisation as a desirable place to work. Previous research has established that organisational attractiveness significantly influences job pursuit intentions and the likelihood of accepting job offers (Highhouse et al. 2003; Chapman et al. 2005). Various factors contribute to organisational attractiveness, including organisational reputation, job characteristics and work environment (Lievens and Highhouse 2003).

Perceived organisational attributes are the characteristics that potential employees associate with an organisation. These attributes include the organisation's culture, values, reputation and opportunities for career development (Cable and Turban 2001). Research has shown that these attributes significantly impact organisational attractiveness and subsequently affect job seekers' application decisions (Turban and Greening 1997). For instance, Rynes and Barber (1990) found that job seekers are more likely to be attracted to organisations that offer positive work environments and growth opportunities.

The construction industry, known for its unique challenges and work conditions, has been the subject of various studies examining workforce dynamics. Loosemore et al. (2003) highlighted that the construction sector often struggles with attracting and retaining skilled labour due to perceptions of job insecurity and demanding work conditions. However, studies such as those by Ling and Leow (2008) have shown that improving organisational attributes, such as offering career development opportunities and enhancing workplace safety, can significantly boost organisational attractiveness in this sector.

Income levels can influence individuals' perceptions and expectations of potential employers. Studies have indicated that individuals from different income groups prioritise different organisational attributes when evaluating potential employers (Judge and Bretz 1992). Higher income groups may place greater emphasis on job security and advancement opportunities, while lower income groups might prioritise immediate employment and financial stability. This differentiation underscores the importance of tailoring recruitment messages to address the specific needs and priorities of different income groups. Therefore, it is hypothesised that:

H1: Organisational attraction, organisational attributes and long-term orientation to work significantly differ between income groups.

The urgency to find a job, defined as the immediate need to secure employment, can significantly affect job seekers' evaluations of potential employers. Individuals with a high urgency to find a job may prioritise different organisational attributes compared with those with lower urgency (Boswell et al. 2003). This urgency can influence their perceptions of organisational attractiveness and the importance of certain organisational attributes. For instance, Boswell et al. (2003) found that job seekers under high urgency are more likely to overlook long-term organisational benefits in favour of immediate job availability and security. Thus, attraction, perceived attributes and LTO difference between urgency it is hypothesised as:

H2: Organisational attraction, organisational attributes and long-term orientation to work significantly differ between urgency groups.

The relationship between organisational attraction and perceived organisational attributes has been well-documented in the literature. Organisational attraction is often seen as a predictor of how potential employees perceive various attributes of an organisation (Highhouse et al. 2003). Positive perceptions of organisational attributes can enhance an organisation's attractiveness, making it more likely that job seekers will pursue employment opportunities with that organisation. Breugh and Starke (2000) emphasised that organisations perceived positively are more successful in attracting high-quality applicants. Hence, the relationship between attraction and perceived attributes is hypothesised as:

H3: Organisational attraction predicts perceived organisational attributes.

Long-term work orientation refers to an individual's intention to remain with an organisation for an extended period. This orientation can moderate the relationship between organisational attractiveness and perceived organisational attributes. Individuals with a strong LTO may have different perceptions and evaluations of organisational attractiveness and attributes compared with those with a short-term orientation (Kim et al. 1996). Ng and Feldman (2010) argued that individuals with a LTO are more likely to consider future career development opportunities and job security when evaluating potential employers. Therefore, the moderation role of being oriented long-term is hypothesised as:

H4: Long-term orientation has a moderating role in the effect of organisational attraction on perceived organisational attributes.

The urgency to find a job can also moderate the relationship between organisational attractiveness and perceived organisational attributes. Individuals with a high urgency to find a job may evaluate organisational attributes differently than those with lower urgency, potentially altering the impact of organisational attractiveness on their perceptions (Boswell et al. 2003). The immediate need to secure employment can lead to a stronger focus on short-term benefits, such as immediate job availability, over long-term organisational qualities (Boswell et al. 2003). Lastly, the role of urgency in the relationship between attraction and perceived attributes is hypothesised as:

H5: The urgency to find a job has a moderating role in the effect of organisational attraction on perceived organisational attributes.

3 Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework guiding this study is grounded in the interactionist perspective, which posits that individual behaviours and perceptions are shaped by both personal attributes and situational factors (Lewin 1935). This perspective is particularly relevant in understanding how organisational attractiveness and perceived organisational attributes interact with individual differences, such as the urgency to find a job and LTO.

3.1 Interactionist perspective

The interactionist perspective emphasises that behaviour is a function of both the person and the environment. The Lewin's (1935) field theory suggests that behaviour (B) is a function of the person (P) and their environment (E), represented as $B = f(P, E)$. This framework helps explain how job seekers' perceptions of organisational attractiveness and attributes are influenced by their personal circumstances and the specific attributes of the organisation they are considering. This perspective aligns with the broader principles of social cognitive theory (SCT), which also underscores the role of individual–environment interactions in shaping behaviours (Bandura 1986).

SCT, developed by Bandura (1986), explains how behaviour is shaped by the dynamic interplay between personal factors, environmental influences and behaviours themselves. Central to SCT are concepts such as

self-efficacy, observational learning and outcome expectations (Bandura 1986). In the context of organisational attractiveness, SCT is particularly relevant because it helps explain how job seekers form perceptions about organisations through social influences and observational learning. For example, potential employees may observe current employees or rely on social cues, such as a company's reputation, to form judgements about an organisation's attractiveness.

Self-efficacy also plays a crucial role in this process. Job seekers with high self-efficacy may view challenging organisational attributes as opportunities for growth, thereby enhancing the organisation's attractiveness. Conversely, those with lower self-efficacy might shy away from organisations perceived as demanding, reducing their perceived attractiveness. By incorporating SCT into this study, the research gains a deeper understanding of the cognitive processes driving job seekers' decisions, adding a psychological dimension that complements other theories used to explain job seekers' behaviours.

3.2 Organisational attractiveness and perceived organisational attributes

Organisational attractiveness is influenced by several organisational attributes, including reputation, culture, job characteristics and opportunities for career development. These attributes shape job seekers' perceptions and decisions. According to Cable and Turban (2001), job seekers' employer knowledge and perceptions are critical in determining organisational attractiveness. This aligns with the signalling theory (Spence 1973), which posits that organisations send signals through their attributes that job seekers interpret to form perceptions. These signals can include the organisation's brand, job security and growth opportunities, which collectively enhance or diminish organisational attractiveness.

3.3 Moderating role of LTO

LTO reflects an individual's propensity to plan for and commit to long-term goals. In the workplace, this manifests as a preference for stability and career growth within an organisation. Kim et al. (1996) suggested that individuals with a strong LTO value organisational attributes that offer career development and job security. This orientation can moderate the relationship between organisational attractiveness and perceived organisational attributes by altering the weight given to long-term benefits. For instance, an individual with a high LTO may prioritise

opportunities for career advancement and organisational stability, thereby perceiving the organisation as more attractive.

3.4 Moderating role of urgency to find a job

The urgency to find a job introduces a different dynamic into the evaluation process. Urgent job seekers are driven by immediate needs, which can overshadow other considerations. Boswell et al. (2003) found that urgency can lead to a focus on immediate job availability and short-term benefits. The urgency to find a job moderates the relationship between organisational attractiveness and perceived organisational attributes by prioritising immediate over long-term benefits. Boswell et al. (2003) noted that in high-urgency situations, job seekers may overlook desirable organisational attributes in favour of securing immediate employment.

3.5 Integrating these moderators

By integrating the concepts of LTO and urgency to find a job, this study adopts a comprehensive approach to understanding job seekers' decision-making processes. The interactionist perspective provides a robust framework for examining how these individual differences interact with organisational attributes to influence perceptions of organisational attractiveness. This theoretical approach allows for a nuanced analysis of the complex factors that shape job seekers' evaluations and decisions. The hypotheses developed regarding the relationships between concepts are depicted in Figure 1.

3.6 Contributions to theory and practice

This study contributes to the literature by highlighting the complex interactions between organisational attributes and individual differences, such as job-seeking urgency and LTO. It expands the current understanding of how these moderating factors influence job seekers' perceptions and decisions, offering a more detailed explanation of the mechanisms at play. The study provides an integrated model that combines elements of signalling theory, field theory and SCT to explain job seekers' behaviours.

In the existing literature, organisational attractiveness is widely recognised as a critical factor influencing employment decisions. However, the research on its impact across different industries, particularly in the construction sector, remains limited. While some studies

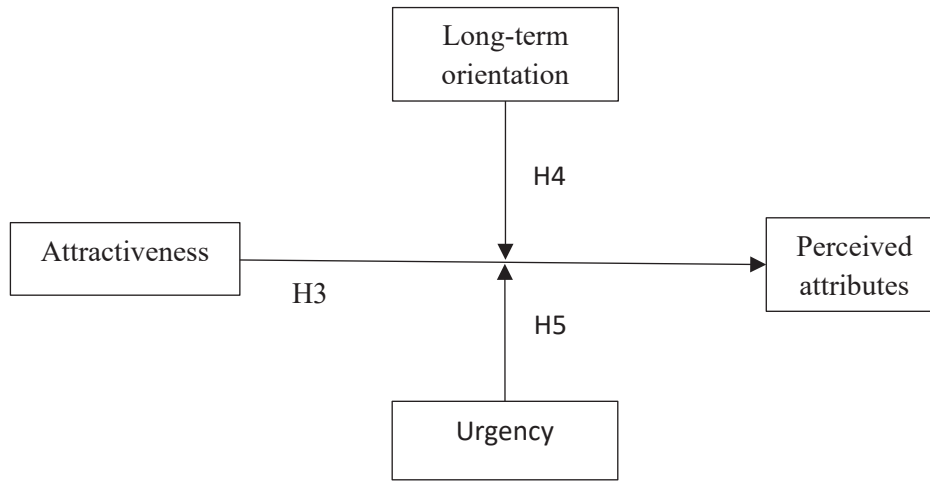


Fig. 1: Conceptual model.

emphasise the universal importance of organisational attractiveness (e.g., Highhouse et al. 2003), others suggest that industry-specific factors, such as the cyclical nature of construction work, might moderate this relationship. Additionally, there are debates on whether socioeconomic factors, such as income levels, significantly influence job seekers' perceptions, with some studies finding strong correlations (Judge and Cable 1997) and others, including this study, finding minimal effects. This inconsistency highlights a gap in the literature that warrants further exploration. By focusing on the construction sector, this study aims to contribute to filling this gap and offer a nuanced understanding of how organisational attractiveness functions in high-variance industries.

Practically, organisations can use these insights to tailor their recruitment strategies based on the urgency and LTO of their target job seekers. For urgent job seekers, highlighting immediate job benefits and organisational support can be effective, while for those with a strong LTO, promoting career development and stability can enhance attractiveness. By understanding the specific attributes that different segments of job seekers value, organisations can enhance their employer branding efforts to attract a diverse and talented workforce.

In summary, the theoretical framework of this study leverages the interactionist perspective to explore the intricate relationships between organisational attractiveness, perceived organisational attributes and individual differences in urgency and LTO. This comprehensive approach provides valuable insights into how organisations can enhance their attractiveness to diverse job seekers, ultimately aiding in more effective recruitment and talent management.

4 Methodology

4.1 Participants and procedure

This study targeted job seekers within the construction sector, a crucial industry known for its significant contributions to economic growth and infrastructure development, particularly in Turkey. The construction sector in Turkey has been a major driver of employment, accounting for a substantial portion of the workforce (TurkStat 2023). However, it also faces unique challenges in attracting and retaining skilled labour due to perceptions of job insecurity and demanding work conditions (Loosemore et al. 2003).

Participants in this research were job seekers registered with employment agencies in two neighbouring provinces in the Central Anatolia region of Turkey and seeking for a job position in construction sector. Using a convenience sampling method, participants were approached and asked if they would voluntarily participate in a survey. Those who agreed were presented with a job posting for a general construction position at a local construction firm and then asked to complete the survey. A total of 426 job seekers were approached, and 287 agreed to participate. However, 12 participants did not complete the survey because they found the job posting unsuitable, and 5 participants were excluded due to inconsistent responses. To ensure data quality, responses were checked for consistency by identifying patterns indicative of inattentive or careless responding, such as straight-lining (as marking all questions the same point) or logically contradictory (marking as one for the first half

then five to rest) answers. Participants whose responses showed significant inconsistencies were excluded from the final analysis to maintain the integrity of the data set. Ultimately, data from 270 participants who completed the survey were used in the research.

While convenience sampling allowed for the efficient collection of data, it presents certain limitations that could impact the generalisability of the findings. Convenience sampling, by its nature, may not accurately represent the broader population of job seekers in the construction industry. The sample may be biased towards individuals who are more readily accessible or willing to participate, potentially skewing the results. This limitation suggests that the findings should be interpreted with caution when generalising to other populations or contexts. Future research could benefit from employing more rigorous sampling methods, such as stratified or random sampling, to enhance the representativeness and robustness of the results.

4.2 Survey instrument and measurements

The survey consisted of three parts. The first part included a job advertisement for a general construction position at a local construction firm. This was designed to reflect typical job postings in the construction sector, highlighting aspects such as job security, career development opportunities and workplace safety, which are crucial in attracting job seekers to this industry.

The second part contained measurement items totaling 10 items. The scales for organisational attractiveness and perceived organisational attributes were adapted from Gomes and Neves (2011). Given that the original scale items were in English, a translation and back-translation process was conducted for Turkish participants. All items were assessed using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from '1-strongly disagree' to '5-strongly agree'. Organisational attractiveness (ATTRACT) and perceived organisational attributes (ATTRIB) were measured using three-item scales. A sample item for attractiveness is 'This would be a good company to work for'. A sample item for perceived attributes is 'This organisation would provide good career perspectives to employees'.

Long-term work orientation items were adapted from Kim et al.'s (1996) intent to stay scale. Sample items for LTO include 'I would prefer to make a long-term contract with this company' and 'I would like to work with this company as long as possible'. One item, 'I think that the employees of this company have been working for a long

time and will work until they retire', was removed due to its low factor loading and its negative impact on the reliability coefficient of the scale. This issue likely arose because most participants did not work at the company featured in the job posting, making their responses to this item unclear.

The final part included demographic questions regarding age, gender, average income over the last year, urgency to find a job and current employment status. Participants ranged in age from 22 to 49 ($M = 27.4$, $SD = 3.5$), with 30.3% being female, which is consistent with the gender distribution in the construction sector. Among the participants, 44.8% were urgently seeking a job and 46.3% were currently employed. The income levels over the past year were classified as follows: 27.8% ($N = 75$) were in the low-income group, 30% ($N = 81$) were in the low-mid group, 23.7% ($N = 64$) were in the high-mid group and 18.5% ($N = 50$) were in the high-income group.

4.3 Descriptive statistics and reliability analysis

Descriptive statistics for the participants, including skewness and kurtosis statistics, are provided in Table 1. The scales' reliability and validity were assessed using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). Construct validity was evaluated through the average variance extracted (AVE), with values of 50% or higher considered indicative of good construct validity (Hair 2009). The AVE values were 70% for ATTRACT, 64% for ATTRIB and 61% for LTO. The Cronbach's alpha and critical ratio (CR) values with CFA results are detailed in Table 2. Additionally, CFA results demonstrated a good model fit ($CFI = 0.989$, $TLI = 0.983$, $RMSEA = 0.0488$, and $\chi^2/df = 1.64$), confirming the validity of the measurement model.

To address potential biases from measuring dependent and independent variables simultaneously, common method bias was assessed. Although longitudinal studies are preferable, they were impractical for this research. Harman's single-factor test revealed that the total variance extracted by a single factor was 46.8%, which is below the critical threshold of 50% (Podsakoff et al. 2003), indicating that common method bias was not a significant issue. Furthermore, collinearity issues were mitigated by examining the variance inflation factor (VIF), which yielded values between 1.00 and 1.02, well below the critical threshold of 3.3 (Kock 2017), indicating minimal collinearity among variables.

Tab. 1: Descriptive statistics.

	Mean	SD	Skewness	SE	Kurtosis	SE
ATTRACT	3.693	0.901	-0.64	0.148	0.5232	0.295
ATTRIB	3.530	0.835	-0.35	0.148	0.3288	0.295
LTO	3.419	0.867	-0.12	0.148	-0.0326	0.295

Tab. 2: CFA results.

Factor	Indicator	Estimate	SE	Z	p-value	Std. Est.	AVE	CR	α
ATTRACT	ATTRACT1	0.829	0.0578	14.3	<0.001	0.810	70%	0.858	0.855
	ATTRACT2	0.854	0.0549	15.6	<0.001	0.829			
	ATTRACT3	0.885	0.0544	16.3	<0.001	0.878			
ATTRIB	ATTRIB1	0.593	0.0577	10.3	<0.001	0.594	64%	0.837	0.821
	ATTRIB2	0.853	0.0475	18.0	<0.001	0.900			
	ATTRIB3	0.837	0.0494	16.9	<0.001	0.865			
LTO	LTO1	0.845	0.0526	16.1	<0.001	0.837	61%	0.819	0.811
	LTO3	0.671	0.0596	11.3	<0.001	0.647			
	LTO4	0.910	0.0566	16.1	<0.001	0.837			

AVE, average variance extracted; CFA, confirmatory factor analysis; CR, critical ratio.

5 Results and discussion

The correlations between variables, as well as their densities and scatterplots, were analysed using Jamovi software (Love and Dropmann 2023). The visual and statistical representations of these relationships are provided in Figure 2. The scatterplots illustrate the linear relationships between the variables, while the density plots offer insights into the distribution of each variable.

The correlation analysis revealed that all three factors— ATTRACT, ATTRIB and LTO—are positively correlated with each other. Specifically, organisational attractiveness showed a strong positive correlation with perceived organisational attributes ($r = 0.546, p < 0.001$), indicating that as job seekers find an organisation more attractive, they are also more likely to perceive its attributes positively. Similarly, LTO was positively correlated with both organisational attractiveness ($r = 0.626, p < 0.001$) and perceived organisational attributes ($r = 0.694, p < 0.001$), suggesting that individuals who are inclined to stay with an organisation for the long term also tend to view the organisation more favourably and find it more attractive.

These positive correlations among the three factors suggest that they are interrelated, thereby providing a strong foundation for further regression and moderation analyses. The positive relationships indicate that increases in one variable are associated with increases

in the others, which is essential for understanding the dynamics between ATTRACT, ATTRIB and LTO. The scatterplots further confirm these relationships by depicting consistent patterns of association across the variables.

Given the positive correlations and the theoretical underpinnings, it is warranted to explore the predictive power of ATTRACT on ATTRIB through regression analysis. Additionally, the moderation effects of urgency to find a job and LTO can be examined to understand how these factors influence the primary relationship between ATTRACT and ATTRIB. The initial findings from the correlation analysis thus set the stage for more detailed and nuanced statistical investigations, which will provide deeper insights into the mechanisms underlying these relationships.

5.1 Testing the first hypothesis: Variations across income groups

The descriptive statistics presented in Table 3 indicate a trend where the means of ATTRACT, ATTRIB and LTO decrease as the income group increases. Specifically, lower-income groups tend to report higher levels of ATTRACT, more favourable ATTRIB and a stronger LTO compared with higher-income groups. This pattern suggests that individuals in lower income brackets may have more positive perceptions and a stronger desire for stability within organisations.

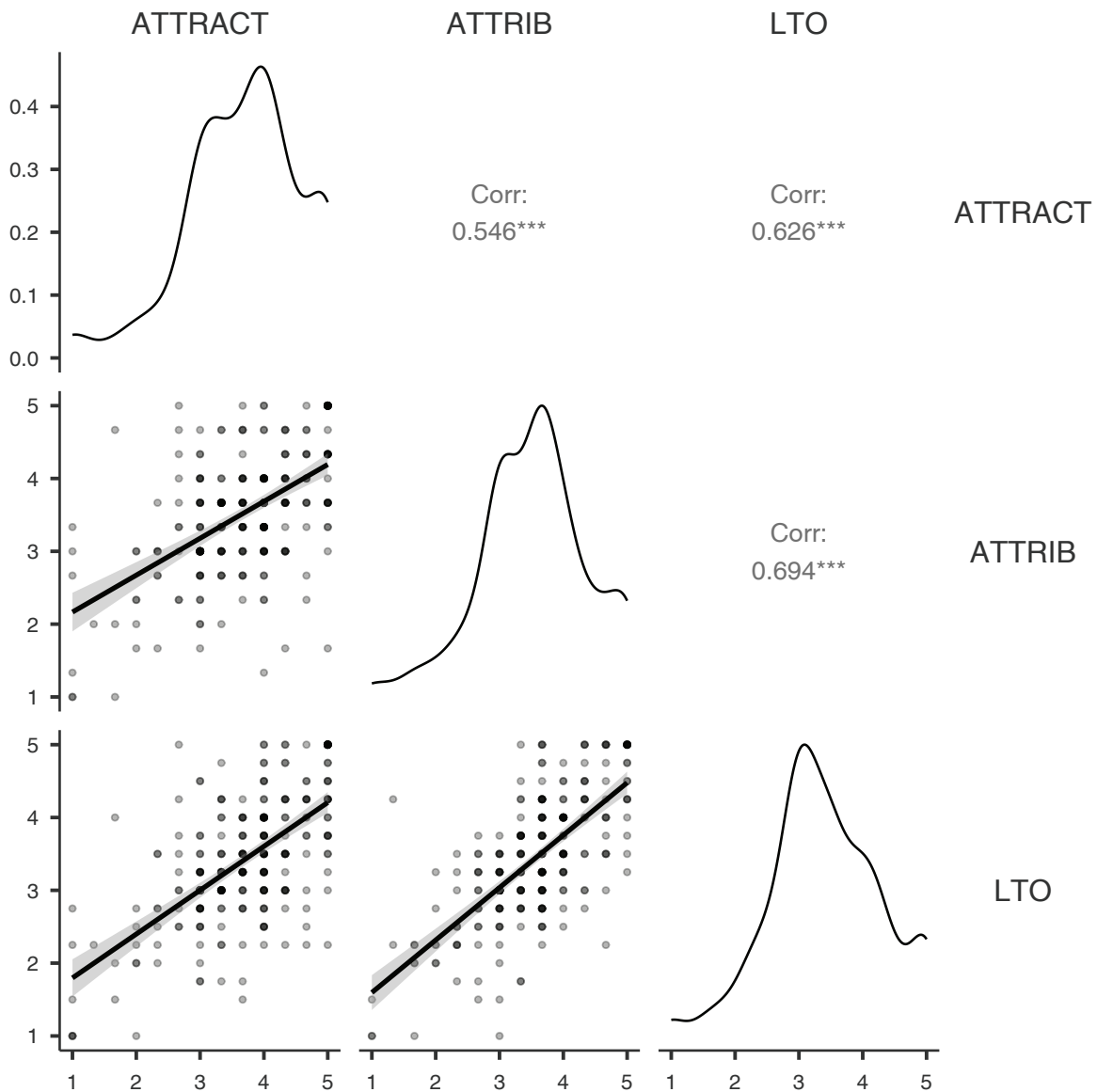


Fig 2: Scatterplots and densities.

Note. H_a is positive correlation, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$, one-tailed.

Since the data are not normally distributed (Shapiro–Wilk, $W = 0.964–0.980$, $p < 0.001$) and variances are not homogeneous (Levene’s Test, $F = 1.86–4.41$, $df = 3$, $p < 0.05$) between income groups, non-parametric tests were conducted. To assess the statistical significance of differences across income groups, a Kruskal–Wallis Test, a non-parametric alternative for analysis of variance (ANOVA), was conducted. The test results, detailed in Table 3, reveal that the differences in means across the four income groups are not statistically significant for

any of the three factors as: ATTRACT ($\chi^2 = 1.61$, $df = 3$, $p = 0.658$), ATTRIB ($\chi^2 = 2.41$, $df = 3$, $p = 0.491$) and LTO ($\chi^2 = 1.58$, $df = 3$, $p = 0.664$). This lack of statistical significance indicates that while there may be observable trends in the data, these differences could be due to random variation rather than a true effect of income on the variables of interest. The first hypothesis (H1), which posited that organisational attraction, organisational attributes and LTO to work would significantly differ between income groups, is not supported by the data.

Tab. 3: Descriptives and non-parametric AVONA (Kruskal–Wallis) test results.

	Income	N	Mean	SD	SE	χ^2	df	p-value
ATTRACT	Low	75	3.75	0.842	0.0972	1.61	3	0.658
	Low-mid	81	3.77	0.697	0.0774			
	High-mid	64	3.69	0.975	0.1218			
	High	50	3.49	1.145	0.162			
ATTRIB	Low	75	3.63	0.821	0.0948	2.41	3	0.491
	Low-mid	81	3.57	0.668	0.0742			
	High-mid	64	3.46	0.911	0.1139			
	High	50	3.41	0.986	0.1394			
LTO	Low	75	3.49	0.851	0.0983	1.58	3	0.664
	Low-mid	81	3.49	0.818	0.0909			
	High-mid	64	3.39	0.785	0.0982			
	High	50	3.23	1.045	0.1478			

ANOVA, analysis of variance.

5.2 Testing the second hypothesis: Differences between urgency groups

To evaluate the second hypothesis, which proposed differences in factors between urgency groups (not-urgent and urgent), Mann–Whitney *U* Test was conducted. Given the normality (Shapiro–Wilk, $W = 0.953–0.988$, $p < 0.001$) violated, non-parametric form of the Student’s *t*-test and Mann–Whitney *U* Test were used, even though the variances are homogeneous (Levene’s Test, $F = 0.02–1.22$, $df = 1$, $p = 0.27–0.86$) between urgency groups. The results and descriptive statistics are detailed in Table 4. Across all three factors—ATTRACT, ATTRIB and LTO—mean scores were observed to be higher in the urgency group compared with the non-urgency group.

Specifically, the Mann–Whitney *U* statistics indicate a significantly higher mean for ATTRACT in the urgency group ($M = 3.88$, $SD = 0.859$) than in the non-urgency group ($M = 3.54$, $SD = 0.909$), with a significant difference ($U = 7071$, $p = 0.001$). Similarly, the mean for ATTRIB in the urgency group ($M = 3.73$, $SD = 0.770$) was significantly higher than in the non-urgency group ($M = 3.37$, $SD = 0.853$), showing a notable difference ($U = 7034$, $p < 0.001$). Lastly, the mean for LTO in the urgency group ($M = 3.64$, $SD = 0.840$) also surpassed that in the non-urgency group ($M = 3.24$, $SD = 0.849$), with a substantial difference ($U = 6876$, $p < 0.001$).

Given these results, the second hypothesis (H2), suggesting significant differences in ATTRACT, ATTRIB, and LTO between the urgency and non-urgency groups, is supported. The findings highlight the role of job-seeking urgency in shaping individuals’ perceptions and orientations towards potential employers.

5.3 Testing the third hypothesis: Prediction of ATTRIB by ATTRACT

Regression analysis with moderators was performed by R based Jamovi MedMod (lavaan) package (Rosseel 2012). The findings in Table 5 indicate that ATTRACT significantly predicts ATTRIB ($b = 0.1604$, $CI [0.0423, 0.2859]$, $p < 0.001$). This result supports Hypothesis 3 (H3), confirming that ATTRACT is a significant predictor of ATTRIB.

5.4 Testing the fourth hypothesis: Moderating role of LTO

The LTO also significantly predicts ATTRIB ($b = 0.5588$, $CI [0.4298, 0.6850]$, $p < 0.001$). However, the interaction term $ATTRACT \times LTO$ does not significantly predict ATTRIB ($b = -0.0296$, $CI [-0.1132, 0.0578]$, $p = 0.398$). This finding indicates that the effect of ATTRACT on ATTRIB does not vary significantly at different levels of LTO. Therefore, Hypothesis 4 (H4), which proposed a significant moderating effect of LTO on the relationship between ATTRACT and ATTRIB, is not supported.

The unexpected non-significance of the LTO as a moderating factor suggests potential limitations in how this construct was measured. The removal of one item due to low factor loading may have reduced the scale’s ability to fully capture the complexity of LTO, especially in a sector like construction where career trajectories can be highly variable. This limitation is acknowledged, and future studies are encouraged to refine the measurement scale by incorporating additional items or alternative approaches to better capture long-term career intentions.

Tab. 4: Descriptives and Mann–Whitney *U* Test results between urgency groups.

	Group	<i>N</i>	Mean	SD	SE	<i>U</i>	<i>p</i> -value
ATTRACT	Not-urgent	149	3.54	0.909	0.0745	7071	0.001
	Urgent	121	3.88	0.859	0.0781		
ATTRIB	Not-urgent	149	3.37	0.853	0.0699	7034	<0.001
	Urgent	121	3.73	0.770	0.0700		
LTO	Not-urgent	149	3.24	0.849	0.0696	6876	<0.001
	Urgent	121	3.64	0.840	0.0764		

Note: $H_0: \mu_{\text{Not-Urgent}} < \mu_{\text{Urgent}}$.

Tab. 5: Moderation estimates for long-term orientation.

	Estimate	Lower	Upper	SE	<i>Z</i>	<i>p</i> -value
ATTRACT	0.1604	0.0423	0.2859	0.0413	3.882	<0.001
LTO	0.5588	0.4298	0.6850	0.0413	13.529	<0.001
ATTRACT × LTO	−0.0296	−0.1132	0.0578	0.0350	−0.844	0.398

Lower and upper indicates the 95% confidence intervals (BC2000).

5.5 Testing the fifth hypothesis: Moderating role of urgency to find a job

The fifth hypothesis asserts that the urgency to find a job moderates the influence of ATTRACT on ATTRIB. The hypothesis was tested using interaction effects, with the results detailed in Table 6. The analysis confirms that ATTRACT significantly influences ATTRIB ($b = 0.479$, CI [0.3646, 0.5799], $p < 0.001$). It also shows that the urgency to find a job independently predicts ATTRIB ($b = 0.209$, CI [0.0362, 0.3741], $p = 0.016$).

Importantly, the interaction term between ATTRACT and the urgency to find a job (ATTRACT × urgency) has significant but negative ($b = -0.278$, CI [−0.4715, −0.0656], $p = 0.009$) effect on ATTRIB. This negative coefficient indicates that the positive effect of ATTRACT on ATTRIB decreases as the urgency to find a job increases. In other words, although ATTRACT typically enhances ATTRIB, this enhancement is less pronounced among job seekers who are under more immediate pressure to find employment. Thus, this result supports Hypothesis 5 (H5), confirming that the urgency to find a job significantly modifies the impact of organizational attractiveness on perceived organizational attributes by reducing its effectiveness.

5.6 Visual analysis: Scatterplot of ATTRACT and ATTRIB

The relationship between ATTRACT and ATTRIB across urgency groups is visually depicted in Figure 3 with confidence intervals. The scatterplot clearly differentiates

between urgent and non-urgent groups, illustrating the moderating effect discussed.

For the non-urgent group, the scatterplot shows a more pronounced positive slope, indicating a strong positive relationship between organizational attractiveness and perceived attributes. This suggests that in the absence of urgency, the perceived attractiveness of an organisation strongly enhances how its attributes are viewed by potential employees.

Conversely, for the urgent group, the slope is less steep, indicating a weaker relationship. This visual representation aligns with the statistical findings, where the interaction term (ATTRACT × urgency) demonstrates a diminished effect of organisational attractiveness on perceived attributes among those urgently seeking employment. The urgent need to secure a job appears to temper the influence of organisational attractiveness, perhaps because more pragmatic considerations, such as job availability or immediate hiring potential, take precedence over other organisational attributes.

This scatterplot not only supports the findings from the quantitative analysis but also provides a clear, visual confirmation of how urgency modifies the impact of organisational attractiveness on job seekers' perceptions.

5.7 Summary of findings

This study examined several hypotheses concerning the factors influencing perceived organisational attributes. The first hypothesis, which posited significant differences in organizational attractiveness,

perceived organizational attributes and LTO across income groups, was not supported, as no statistically significant differences were found. Conversely, the second hypothesis was supported, with findings indicating that urgency to find a job significantly differentiates perceptions, enhancing perceived organisational attractiveness and attributes in the urgent group compared with the non-urgent group.

Additionally, the third hypothesis was confirmed, showing that organizational attractiveness robustly predicts perceived organizational attributes. However, the

fourth hypothesis, which proposed a moderating role of LTO in this relationship, was not supported, as the interaction effect was non-significant. Most notably, the fifth hypothesis demonstrated that the urgency to find a job significantly moderates the effect of organisational attractiveness on perceived attributes, with the moderation effect reducing the influence of attractiveness among those urgently seeking employment.

These findings collectively advance our understanding of how individual urgency and organisational perceptions interact in the employment-seeking process,

Tab. 6: Moderation estimates for urgency.

	Estimate	Lower	Upper	SE	Z	p-value
ATTRACT	0.479	0.3646	0.5799	0.0546	8.77	<0.001
Urgency	0.209	0.0362	0.3741	0.0862	2.42	0.016
ATTRACT × Urgency	-0.278	-0.4715	-0.0656	0.1060	-2.62	0.009

Lower and upper indicates the %95 confidence intervals (BC2000).

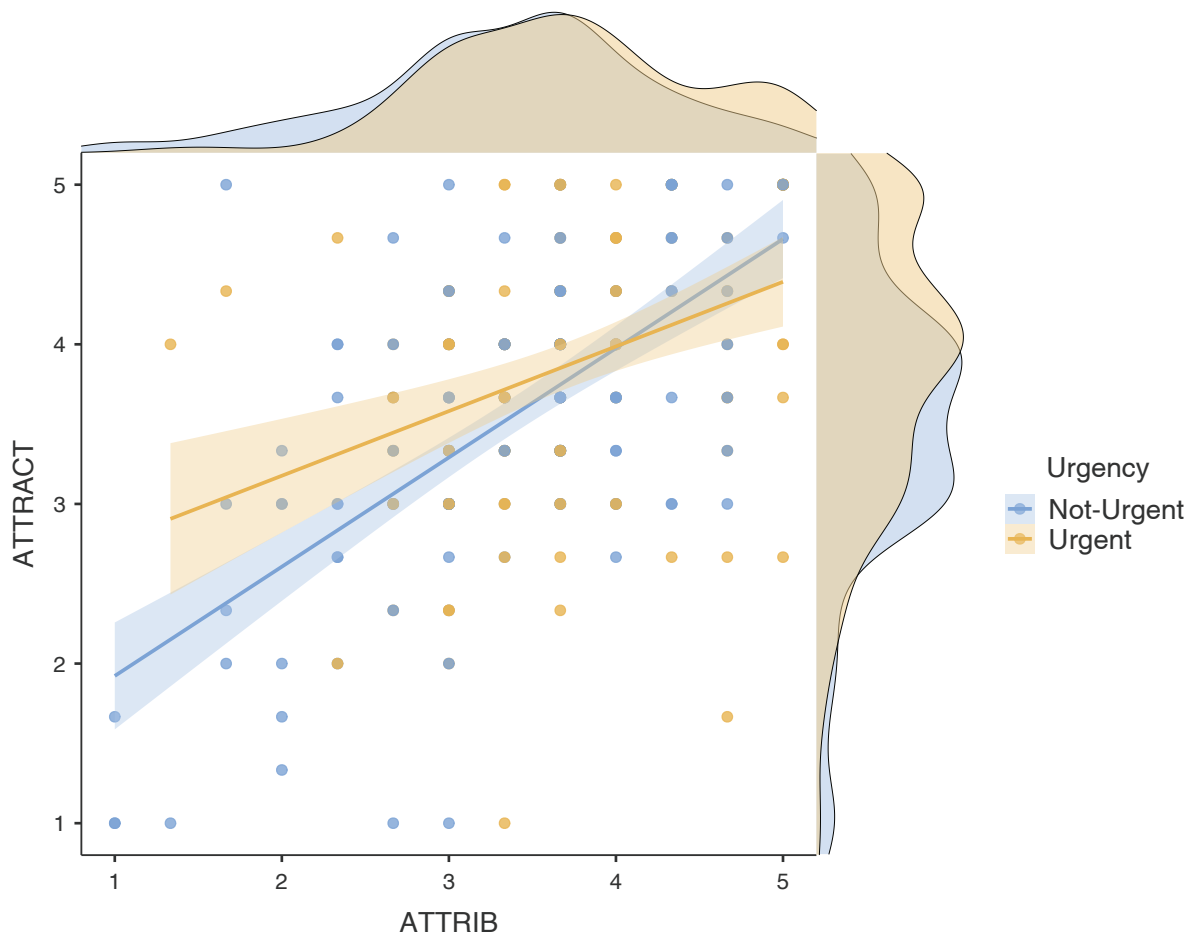


Fig 3: Scatterplots and densities for ATTRACT and ATTRIB in the role of urgency.

highlighting the complex dynamics at play in how potential employees evaluate organisational opportunities.

6 Conclusion

6.1 Interpretation of findings

This study explored the relationships between organizational attractiveness, perceived organizational attributes and the moderating effects of job-seeking urgency and LTO within the construction sector. The findings reveal that organizational attractiveness significantly predicts perceived organizational attributes, reinforcing the importance of organisational attractiveness in influencing job pursuit intentions (Highhouse et al. 2003; Chapman et al. 2005). This strong positive correlation suggests that when job seekers find an organisation attractive, they are more likely to perceive its attributes favourably. Interestingly, the study also found that income levels did not significantly influence job seekers' perceptions of organizational attractiveness, perceived attributes or long-term orientation (H1), contrasting with previous research (Judge and Bretz 1992). This suggests that factors beyond economic status, such as individual values and personal circumstances, may play a more critical role in shaping how potential employees perceive organisations.

The lack of a significant moderating effect of LTO is intriguing and suggests that immediate job-related factors may overshadow long-term considerations in the construction sector. This finding diverges from earlier studies (e.g., Ng and Feldman 2010), which emphasised the importance of long-term career intentions. It is possible that industry-specific dynamics, such as project-based employment and fluctuating job security, reduce the impact of LTO. This suggests a need for further research to explore how different industries influence the salience of long-term career goals in employment decisions. Practically, HR professionals in the construction sector might focus more on immediate job benefits rather than long-term career paths when targeting potential employees.

The urgency to find a job emerged as a significant factor in moderating the relationship between organizational attractiveness and perceived organizational attributes. Job seekers with high urgency levels reported higher perceptions of organisational attractiveness and attributes compared to those with lower urgency. This finding aligns with Boswell et al. (2003), who noted that job-seeking urgency can shift priorities, making immediate employment opportunities more attractive. The

moderation analysis revealed that the positive impact of organizational attractiveness on perceived organizational attributes diminishes as the urgency to find a job increases (H5). This suggests that urgent job seekers prioritise immediate benefits, such as job availability and immediate support, over LTO qualities. This finding provides a nuanced understanding of how urgency affects job seekers' evaluations, highlighting the need for organisations to tailor their recruitment strategies to address the specific needs of urgent job seekers.

Contrary to expectations, long-term orientation did not significantly moderate the relationship between organizational attractiveness and perceived organizational attributes (H4). This finding diverges from the work of Ng and Feldman (2010), who argued that long-term career intentions heavily influence perceptions of organizational attributes. The lack of a significant moderation effect suggests that immediate job-related concerns might overshadow long-term career considerations for job seekers, even those with a strong LTO.

6.2 Theoretical implications

This study contributes to the literature by highlighting the complexity of factors that influence job seeker perceptions and decision-making processes within the specific context of the Turkish construction market. It extends the current understanding of how job-seeking urgency and income levels interact with perceived organisational attributes and attractiveness, emphasising the importance of local circumstances in a globalised economy. By integrating the interactionist perspective with signalling theory and SCT, the study offers a more comprehensive model that explains job seekers' behaviours. The findings challenge and expand upon existing models by demonstrating that immediate practical needs, such as job availability, can significantly influence job seekers' perceptions and priorities, often outweighing long-term career goals. This underscores the necessity of understanding local market dynamics, particularly in regions like Turkey, where economic and cultural factors uniquely shape employment decisions.

6.3 Practical implications

Practically, the findings suggest that employers in Turkey need to tailor their recruitment strategies based on the urgency levels of their target applicants. For job seekers in urgent need, emphasising immediate job benefits and

organisational support may be more effective in attracting them. For those not in urgent need, promoting long-term benefits and career development opportunities could be more appealing. While these findings are specific to the Turkish construction sector, they may offer insights applicable to similar regions, though caution should be exercised when generalising to other contexts. Understanding these dynamics can help organisations enhance their employer branding efforts to attract a diverse and talented workforce. Specifically, recruitment messages should be customised to address the varying priorities of job seekers, ensuring that both immediate and long-term benefits are communicated effectively.

6.4 Limitations and future research

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. The reliance on data from a single geographic area, specifically Central Anatolia, may limit the generalisability of the findings to other regions or sectors. Future research could address this limitation by replicating the study in different contexts, both within other regions and internationally, to verify the robustness and applicability of these results across diverse settings.

Another limitation concerns the measurement of LTO. The study found no significant moderating effect of LTO, which raises questions about the robustness of this construct, particularly within the construction industry. The removal of one item from the LTO scale due to low factor loading highlights a potential issue in fully capturing this construct. Future research should explore alternative or expanded scales that better encompass the complexity of long-term career intentions, especially in industries with high variability like construction. Additionally, researchers might consider using qualitative feedback from participants to validate these constructs.

Exploring other potential moderators, such as cultural factors or industry-specific attributes, could also provide deeper insights into the job-seeking process. These factors may influence how job seekers perceive organisational attractiveness and attributes, and their role should be investigated further. Longitudinal studies could also offer valuable perspectives by examining how job seekers' perceptions and priorities evolve over time and in response to changing economic conditions.

In summary, addressing these limitations and pursuing these future research directions could lead to a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics between organizational attractiveness, perceived attributes and individual differences in various employment contexts.

6.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, this study illuminates the significant yet differential roles that urgency to find a job and organisational attractiveness play in shaping job seeker perceptions. By understanding these dynamics, organisations can better strategize their recruitment approaches to attract and retain the most suitable talent for their needs, thereby enhancing both organisational and employee outcomes. The findings underscore the importance of considering job seekers' immediate needs and long-term aspirations in designing effective recruitment strategies. This nuanced understanding can guide more effective human resource practices, ultimately contributing to better alignment between job seekers' preferences and organisational offerings.

This study's findings are specific to the construction sector in Central Anatolia, and caution should be exercised when generalising to other regions or industries. The unique characteristics of this sector, including its cyclical nature and specific employment patterns, may influence the observed relationships, and further research is needed to determine whether these findings hold in different contexts.

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Conflicts of interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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