

EFFECTIVE EMPLOYEE REFERRAL IN TECHNICAL RECRUITMENTS**Zeeshan Mallick, Prof. Dr. Satyendra Patnaik**

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Abstract

Advertising, job portals, and word of mouth are just a few of the many ways that potential employees hear about available positions. One of the most studied facets of recruiting, efficacy of recruitment sources has so far been examined from the perspective of post-hire rather than pre-hire results. Employee referral programs incentivize current workers to find and bring in new talent from their personal and professional networks. To explain this phenomenon, we propose the concept of referral hire presence (RHP), which is defined as the period of time during which the employment terms of both the referrer and the referred employee overlap. We discovered that RHP had a positive correlation with work performance and a negative correlation with voluntary turnover among 200 referrers at an Indian IT firm. The purpose of this research was to determine if workers' recommendations to recommend or discourage others from applying with their company were motivated by altruism, self-interest, or something else. The data is analyzed with the help of the following statistical methods: The analysis of percentages, correlations, and frequencies. In sum, the findings of this study lend credence to the idea that businesses should craft a recruiting strategy that makes use of a wide variety of channels in order to attract qualified candidates from the target market. Additionally, compared to a control group without a referral program, the recommendation volume in the group that offered incentives was higher and the number of negative referrals was lower. Our research is the first to give empirical support for social enrichment's importance in the workplace and suggests that the widely held social enrichment viewpoint may need to be modified to fully grasp the effect of reference hiring.

Keywords: Technical, Recruitment, Employee, Referral, Effectiveness**Introduction**

Staffing needs in businesses are met via recruitment, which include finding, vetting, and ultimately selecting suitable candidates for open jobs. This is the HR department's main responsibility. Recruitment is the method used to find and hire qualified people for open positions. When hiring, it's important to think about candidates' backgrounds and experiences as well as their aptitudes and talents. What this means is finding, interviewing, and ultimately hiring new employees to fill positions that will help a business succeed. Both internal (from inside the company) and external (through the use of other organizations) recruitment processes are used. A company's internal determinants might include its size, its recruitment strategy, its public image, and the public's perception of the jobs available inside the company. The labor market, unemployment rate, employment rules, legal issues, and rivals are all examples of external variables. An effective hiring procedure creates a productive workplace and fosters positive relationships among workers [1].

Types of Recruitment

The company's employees are its greatest strength since their efforts make or break the business. Managers have a difficult time identifying and placing qualified workers. Employment recruiting aids in locating the most qualified individual for a position. Recruiting from inside the company and from the outside world are the two main ways to get new employees. When a company does internal recruiting, it hires people already working for them, but when it conducts external recruitment, it seeks candidates from outside the company. In-house resources have been outlined as follows [1].

- i. **Transfers:** When an employee is transferred, they are moved from their current position to one that is functionally equivalent. It does not affect compensation, status, or status symbols in any way. A lateral shift is "the movement of personnel from one job to another typically without any notable change in tasks, responsibilities, skills required, or salary," as defined by Yoder et al. (1958).
- ii. **Internal Advertisements:** To fill this position, we are now advertising internally. Current staff members are encouraged to submit applications for the open position. Thus, the company relies on its current staff to fill open positions.
- iii. **Promotions:** Promotions include elevating a person to a new level of responsibility and pay. This means that an internal promotion is the most likely option for filling the position.
- iv. **Recall from Long Leave:** The company may bring back a management who has been absent for an extended period of time. This occurs when the organization is facing a crisis that requires the expertise of a specialized management. When the issue has been fixed, he will be given further time off.

The following are examples of the outside information: [1]

- a. **Field Trips:** An interview panel travels to places and towns that are likely to have qualified applicants. Dates of arrival as well as the time and place of the interview are announced in advance.
- b. **Educational Institutions:** Educators and administrators in charge of campus placement often provide recommendations to recruiters when they are assigned to schools. In order to find new staff, several businesses may send representatives to various conferences and events.
- c. **Labour Contractors:** Recruiting workers is sometimes outsourced to contractors, who are oftentimes full-fledged employees of the companies they serve.
- d. **Employment Exchanges:** Employers and job-seeking men may find each other rapidly via employment exchanges, which are government-run offices. In order to help the jobless, find work, employment exchanges keep records of their names, contact information, skills, and other relevant information.

The Role of Employee Referrals in the Hiring Process

For positions in the Information Technology (IT) and technological fields, technical recruiters seek for qualified candidates. The recruiter's familiarity with common technical terms and fundamental abilities are usually prerequisites. To find qualified people to fill positions that do not need technical expertise, recruiters engage in "non-technical" activities. Yet, these recruiters should also have a fundamental familiarity with the positions for which they are looking. As competition for top talent increases, businesses are exploring new approaches to finding qualified candidates. Candidates in today's employment market have more leeway to choose and select occupations that best fit their skills and career goals. Recruiting in today's talent-driven economy has to evolve, becoming more individualized and strategic over time. Recruiters may always use more assistance in their quest to find the most qualified candidates for an open position. Using employee recommendations is a great approach to get current staff involved in the search for new, high-caliber staff members. One of the most effective sourcing strategies, employee recommendations have been shown to be effective for several reasons.

Related Works

The unqualified recommendation(s) of trusted members of the organization is/are the basis for the referral. This may be enough to justify hiring the top pick(s). Candidates who have been suggested to you are presumed to have shown the requisite competencies for the position and successfully completed any associated examinations. The workforce is where a business may get the competitive advantage it needs to succeed in its field. In order to keep up with the rapidly evolving market, organizations must attract a highly skilled and culturally diverse staff. This refers to a practice in which current workers are given the authority to recommend other competent individuals for available positions. The responsibility of the trust is to endorse the applicant who best fits the position. Research shows that referrals have an effect on organizational success due to their complimentary responsibilities. The research of Van and Breugh [2,3] showed that companies benefited when existing workers were involved in the hiring process. Yet experts warn that bad word-of-mouth may seriously hamper productivity in any enterprise. Employees should be encouraged to apply for open positions by encouraging them to tell their friends and colleagues about the opportunities. Studies have also shown that individuals hired by word-of-mouth are more committed to their jobs, more proficient in their roles, and less likely to leave their positions. There is a consensus that this less formal manner of hiring is preferable to more traditional approaches like job ads. Also, pre-hire outcomes including organizational attractiveness, application decisions, and quality candidate numbers are affected differently depending on the recruiting source [2, 4].

It is estimated that between 30-50% of a company's job vacancies are filled via reference hiring, which is the process of leveraging suggestions from an existing employee (referrer) to locate and recruit a new employee (referral hire). Moreover, studies have shown that individuals recruited by word of mouth perform and stay with a company for longer than those acquired through other means (e.g., newspaper ads, employment agencies). It was also discovered by Burks, Cowgill, Hoffman, and Housman [5] that recommended employees generate 21%-39% more profit than non-referred personnel. Referral hiring is a smart strategy since it benefits the company in numerous ways. Since they are already familiar with the company and its culture, employees can serve as effective and efficient recruiters [6]. They may help level the

playing field throughout the recruiting process by providing applicants with information regarding the job (such as hours and compensation) and the firm (such as working environment and culture) while also giving employers insight into candidates' human capital and person-organization fit. The referrer's impact on the new employee's first days on the job, as well as later stages like socializing [7], is significant. An example of a role that referrers may play is as mentors who provide informal guidance and instruction to new recruits, they've brought in.

Similar results were found in another research [8] that compared internet agencies to conventional employment agencies, concluding that the former provide fewer quality candidates while the latter are superior in terms of delivering quality applicants and cost-effectiveness. The research also found that internet recruitment firms improve companies' public profiles and make it simpler for passive job searchers to find them. Equally important, research by [9] highlighted the fact that online recruiting tools save costs, increase the number of qualified candidates, boost efficiency, and standardize processes. Therefore, internet recruiting helps businesses attract more qualified candidates while cutting down on time and money spent [11]. This is understandable given that addressing a larger audience allows businesses to avoid wasting time on unqualified applicants and instead focus on active job searchers [8]. To rephrase, it is clear that the quality of the candidate experience has increased as a result of online recruiting, which in turn has boosted the employer brand [11]. Last but not least, significant research by [12] highlighted what motivates job seekers to submit applications via online recruiting. Considerations such as utility, confidence in one's own ability to utilize technology, pleasure, simplicity of use, and perspective toward websites are all included [13].

Research Methodology

Sample size

In the research, 200 participants were selected as a sample. Convenience sampling was used for the survey.

Data Collection

Data from both primary and secondary sources are used to draw conclusions. Using a well-designed questionnaire, we were able to gather the necessary primary data. We used the organization's archives to compile secondary data.

Statistical Tools

The data is analyzed using percentages, correlation, and frequency analyses.

Research Setting

The information used in our field investigation was collected from the massive database mentioned in [14]. From an IT firm in India, we gathered some longitudinal information. The employer provided access to hire/termination, salary, and job data as well as employee referrals recorded throughout the research period, however data pertaining to Section VII was not made available (e.g., age and race). The corporation disclosed information about referrers and the people they hired via referrals in 2020 and

2022. To ensure that we had a comprehensive record of each employee's referral hiring, we limited our research to hires made in 2020 or later. As pertinent information (i.e., employment dates of referral hires) for longer-tenured workers was missing, this permits us to properly account for all referral hires present for a referrer throughout our observation window.

Measures

- i. **Employee referrals:** Two scales evaluating the amount to which workers have referred their company as an employer, both positively and negatively, to others in the preceding six months were constructed using more general measures of positive and negative word-of-mouth. We used a 5-point scale (1 = never, 2 = rarely, 3 = sometimes, 4 = often, and 5 = very frequently) to evaluate four aspects of both positive and negative referrals.
- ii. **Motives for positive referrals:** Participants were asked to evaluate the degree to which four motivations contributed to good employee recommendations. Each item was given a rating between 1 (strongly disagree) and 5 (strongly agree) on a 5-point scale.
- iii. **Motives for negative referrals:** When participants evaluated the bad recommendations made by their coworkers, they were asked to rate the importance of three potential motivations.

Dependent Variables

- i. **Voluntary turnover:** The supervisor's opinion of whether or not the employee freely resigned was recorded in the employee's personnel file, which the company kept. For each week an employee willingly departed the company, we counted as 1, and for each week they were present, we counted as 0.
- ii. **Performance:** We tracked how many calls each employee could take in an hour on average throughout a workweek. We figured it out by averaging the time each handle took (AHT). The multivariate outliers in our performance model were discovered with the use of Cook's D impact statistic.

Independent Variables

- **Referral Hire Presence (RHP):** We recorded RHP as 1 for each week that a referred employee was working for the company, and as 0 for each week that none were.
- **Referrer-referral hire job similarity:** Similarity in roles between referrer and referred employee was determined by whether or not both parties had previously worked for the same client program. Given that job similarity is RHP-dependent (that is, it cannot be determined in the absence of a reference hire), we dichotomized the RHP condition into job-similar RHP and job-dissimilar RHP dummy variables.

Analytical Strategies

Voluntary turnover likelihood. In order to calculate the time-varying likelihood of voluntary turnover, we performed survival analysis. Since survival analysis relies on between-individual variation, which in our situation necessitates turnover variance in the referrer group (which may have a RHP) and in the non-referrer group, we used the whole data set of 2,000 workers, including 166 referrers and 1,834 non-referrers (which cannot have an RHP).

Experimental Results and Discussion

Employee Referral's Effectiveness as a Recruiting Source

- **Frequency Analysis**

Table 1: Number of candidates referred by the employees

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage (%)
0-2	16	8.0
2-5	84	42.0
5-7	65	32
7 & above	35	18
Total	200	100.0

Eight percent of respondents recommended no candidates, forty-two percent recommended between two and five, thirty-two percent recommended between seven and nine, and eighteen percent recommended ten or more.

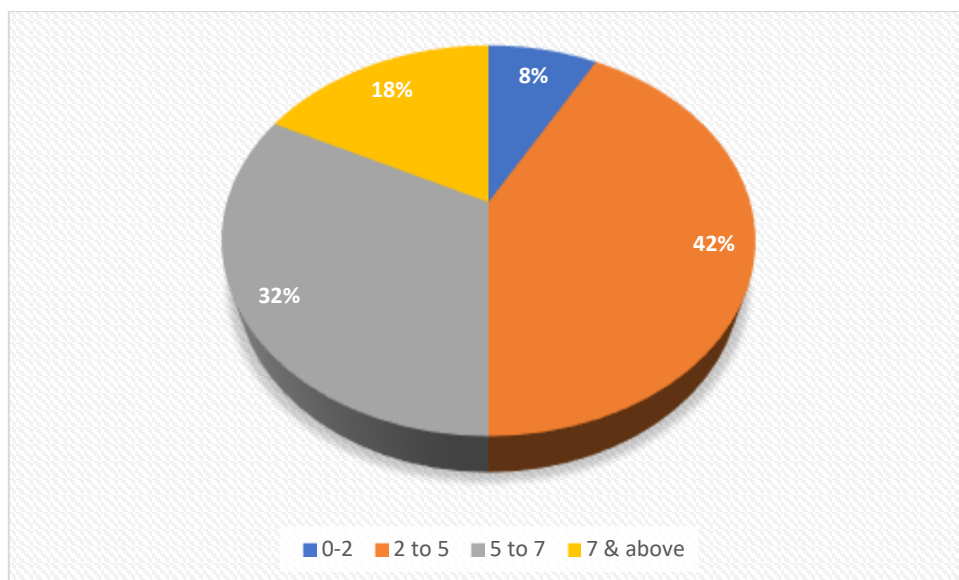


Figure 1: Number of candidates referred by the employees

Table 2: Table for overall satisfaction with employee referral program

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Highly satisfied	32	16
satisfied	81	40.0
Dissatisfied	81	41.0
Highly dissatisfied	6	3.0
Total	200	100.0

With respect to the employee referral program, 16% were very happy, 40% were satisfied, 41% were dissatisfied, and 3% were very disappointed.

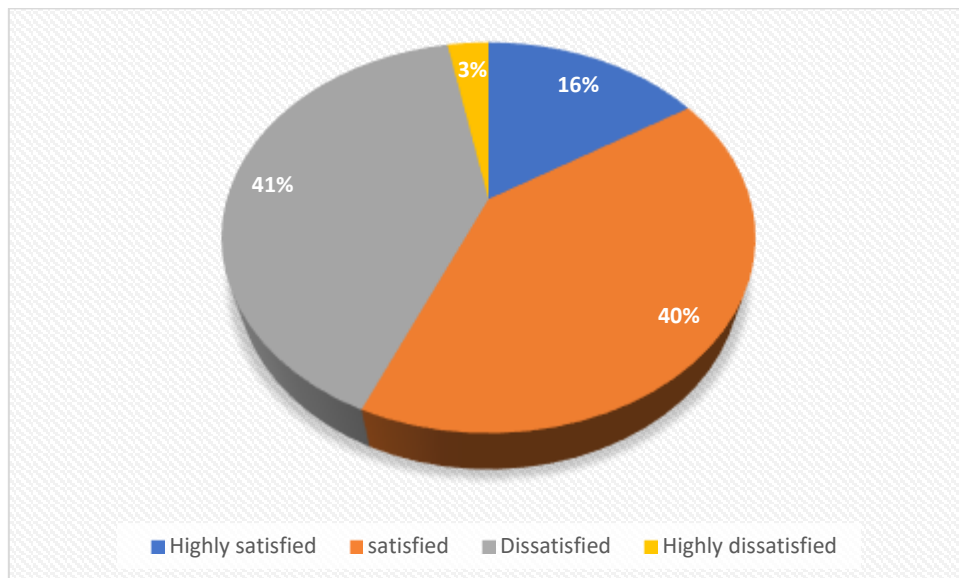


Figure 2: Table for overall satisfaction with employee referral program

- **Correlation between awareness and number of candidates referred**

Table 3: Relationship between awareness of employee referral program and number of candidates referred

		Awareness	No. of Candidate referred
Awareness	P		
	correlation	1	.947(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000

No of Candidate referred	Pearson Correlation	.947(**)	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	200	200

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2- tailed).

There is a substantial positive association between employee referral program knowledge and the number of applicants suggested by workers, as shown by the high positive value of r (0.947).

Effects of Referral Hire Presence on Referrer Turnover and Job Performance

Table 4 displays the whole sample's mean and standard deviation, broken down by referrers and non-referrers. Correlations (at the person-week level) between turnover and performance analyses are shown in Tables 5 and 6. Among the total workforce, 34% were male; the average length of employment was 31 weeks; the median wage was \$8.62 per hour; the median number of hours worked per week was 36.75; and 36% were self-identified as non-white. Among these 166 referrers (13% of workers), 113 (43% of the total) were recommended to their current position, and 103 (39% of the total) had at least one reference hire leave. There was a mean of 1.28 hires per referrer, with 51 of 166 referrers seeing at least one reference result in a hiring.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Full Sample (N = 2,000)	Non-referrers (n = 1,834)	Referrers (n = 166)
Dependent variable			
Voluntary turnover	51% (0.50)	53% (0.50)	37% (0.48)
Performance	7.33 (6.87)	7.15 (7.11)	8.39 (5.27)
Predictor variables			
Call volume	121.79 (56.49)	118.12 (57.17)	142.31 (47.72)
Male	34% (0.47)	34% (0.48)	30% (0.46)
Total tenure	31.07 (32.15)	27.77 (30.15)	53.17 (36.23)
Pay rate	8.62 (0.90)	8.60 (0.92)	8.76 (0.82)
Hours per week	36.75 (4.40)	36.63 (4.54)	37.58 (3.22)

Recruitment source	34% (0.47)	33% (0.47)	43% (0.50)
\$15 bonus plan	66% (0.43)	66% (0.44)	63% (0.38)
New client	48% (0.46)	49% (0.47)	40% (0.38)
Referrer	13% (0.34)	0%	100%
Job similar referral-hire		N/A	24% (0.43)
Referral termination hire-		N/A	39% (0.49)

Note: Means are reported with standard deviations in parentheses.

Table 5: Correlations for Analysis of Voluntary Turnover

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Voluntary turnover												
Control variables												
2. Male	.01											
3. Tenure	-.22	-.02										
4. Pay rate	-.08	.17	.45									
5. Hours per week	-.13	.00	-.04	-.06								
6. Recruitment source	-.05	.08	-.02	-.03	.01							
7. \$15 bonus plan	-.33	-.01	.19	-.02	.06	.02						
8. New client	-.31	-.01	.09	-.04	.11	.00	.57					
Independent variables												
9. pre-RHP	.06	.04	-.20	-.10	.01	-.06	-.07	-.04				
10. RHP	-.05	-.03	.10	.05	-.01	.04	.03	.02	-.83			

11. post-RHP	-.03	-.02	.21	.10	.01	.04	.09	.03	-.50	-.07		
12. Job-dissimilar RHP	-.05	-.06	.10	.04	.00	.05	.03	.01	-.73	.87	-.06	
13. Job-similar RHP	.00	.05	.02	.04	-.02	.00	.01	.04	-.38	.45	-.03	-.04

Note: N individuals = 2,000 (166 referrers and 1,834 non-referrers) and N week-observations = 54,643. Correlations are based on N week-observations. Correlations whose absolute values are greater than .01 are statistically significant at $p < .01$. RHP = referral hire presence.

Table 6: Correlations for Analysis of Performance

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1. Performance (calls per hour)													
Control variables													
2. Call volume	.46												
3. Tenure	.12	-.10											
4. Male	-.02	-.03	-.14										
5. Pay rate	.13	-.06	.44	.13									
6. Hours per week	-.03	.12	-.01	.01	-.05								
7. Recruitment source	-.04	-.05	-.09	.09	-.04	-.03							
8. \$15 bonus plan	.00	-.07	.38	-.01	.05	.03	-.01						
9. New client	-.15	-.21	.38	-.04	.01	.11	.03	.48					
Independent variables													
10. pre-RHP	-.09	.07	-.36	-.08	-.15	.05	.00	-.32	-.32				

11. RHP	.03	-.04	.11	.05	.04	-.07	.00	.16	.18	-.74			
12. post-RHP	.09	-.04	.35	.04	.16	.04	.00	.24	.20	-.39	-.33		
13. Job-dissimilar RHP	.10	-.01	.10	-.08	-.01	-.03	.00	.14	.14	-.63	.85	-.28	
14. Job-similar RHP	-.12	-.07	.01	.26	.08	-.08	-.01	.03	.08	-.25	.33	-.11	-.18

Note: N referrers = 2000 and N week-observations = 54,643. Correlations are based on N week-observations. Correlations whose absolute values are greater than .01 are statistically significant at $p < .01$. RHP = referral hire presence.

We looked at how RHP affected the possibility of a referrer leaving voluntarily and how well they did in their position. We used the social enrichment viewpoint [15] to describe how RHP may change a referrer's social environment at work for the better, leading to higher productivity and greater job satisfaction for the referrer. To explain when RHP is more likely to have an impact on these outcomes, we also identified and tested two boundary conditions: exposure (i.e., referrer-referral hire job similarity) and loss aversion (i.e., the impact of the referral hire's leaving relative to the impact of the referral hire joining the firm).

Employee Referrals Based on Employee Motives for Hiring

Table 7 displays the averages, variances, and relationships between all of the variables. It was shown that workers were more likely to provide favorable recommendations than negative ones. Those with four-year degrees were less likely to recommend their coworkers positively and were more likely to recommend them negatively than those with just a high school diploma. Also, compared to workers at companies without bonuses, those at bonus-paying businesses referred both more favorable and less negative clients and customers. Positive employee referrals were associated to work satisfaction, the desire to help job seekers find suitable employment, the desire to assist the business in identifying suitable personnel, and the promise of financial gain for the referring employee.

Table 7: Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations Between Study Variables

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Demographic variables															
1. Gender ^a	.65	.48	-												
2. Age	38.25	9.46	.37*	-											

3. Education ^b	.84	.37	-.10	-	-												
4. Work experience	11.44	10.66	.33*	.77*	-.27*	-	-										
5. Organization ^c Motives positive referrals	.42	.49	-.42*	.31*	.06	-.48*	-										
6. Job satisfaction	4.27	.71	.01	.04	-.13	.06	.14*	-									
7. Helping job seekers (good fit)	3.46	.86	-.05	-.01	-.06	.01	.19*	.30*	-								
8. Helping organization (good fit)	3.36	1.12	.11	.10	-.11	.08	.08	.11	.48*	-							
9. Rewards Motives negative referrals	2.34	1.47	-.26*	.21*	.00	-.38*	.82*	.11	.18*	.12	-						
10. Job dissatisfaction	1.69	.85	-.05	-.17*	.16*	-.18*	.05	-.76*	-.23*	-.09	.03	-					
11. Helping job seekers (bad fit)	2.09	.92	.17*	.00	-.02	.03	-.06	-.27*	.16*	.18*	-.07	.27*	-				
12. Helping organization (bad fit) Employee referrals	2.45	1.05	.05	-.02	.04	.02	.05	-.13	-.16*	-.20*	.05	.14	.60**	-			
13. Positive	3.05	.86	.02	-.05	-.19*	-.10	.24*	.35*	.51*	.35*	.23*	-.33*	-.18	-.12	-		

referrals					*							*	*		
14. Negative referrals	1.52	.56	.08	-.07	.14*	.03	-.23*	-.34*	-.22*	-.14*	-.21*	.42*	.32**	.20*	-.25*

Note. N = 200 for Variables 10-12. N ranges from 223 to 232 for all other variables. ^a0 = female, 1 = male. ^b0 = high school, 1 = college. ^c0 = no bonus organization, 1 = bonus organization. * p < .05. ** p < .01.

Table 8 shows that higher levels of education are not a good predictor of positive referrals in the first stage. Workers with a four-year degree were less likely to provide good references than those with a high school diploma or less. The second-step inclusion of the motivations accounted for 33.6% more variation (F(4, 215) = 28.38, p < .001).

Table 8: Regression of Positive Employee Referrals on Motives

Predictor	β		Relative weights	
	Step 1	Step 2	Raw	% R ²
Control variable				
Education ^a	-.17*	-.10	.02	6.7
Motives				
Job satisfaction		.23**	.08	21.5
Helping job seekers (good fit)		.37**	.16	46.3
Helping organization (good fit)		.14*	.06	17.1
Rewards		.12*	.03	8.4
R ²	.028*	.364**		
Adjusted R ²	.024*	.349**		
ΔR ²	.028*	.336**		

Note. N = 200. ^a0 = high school, 1 = college. * p < .05. ** p < .01.

Each predictor's relative weight is calculated as the ratio of its individual contribution to the predictable variance (R²) to its combined contribution with the other predictor variables. The raw relative weights may alternatively be given as a percentage of R² for clarity.

Conclusions and future work

The purpose of this study was to investigate the efficacy of different recruitment strategies, with a focus on the Employee Referral program. With the greatest conversion rate, offer rate, and offer acceptance rate, Employee Referral was shown to be the top source of recruiting in the studied firm. Our research differs significantly from previous studies that have focused exclusively on the behavioral results of reference recruits because it reveals a new channel via which referral hiring affects businesses. Supporting the loss aversion theory and the endowment effect that extends to "owning" the existence of a social connection, our results demonstrate that referrers are at a higher risk of departing after they have "lost" their recommendation hire. We also conducted studies, which are not shown here, to determine if a referral was more likely to depart in job-similar or job-dissimilar RHP situations. Our study is the first to show that referrals have a significant impact on important outcomes for both the referrer and the person they referred to work for you. We give a boundary condition analysis that hints at the subtleties of these advantages, and we also identify referrer retention and job performance increases as additional benefits of referral hiring. The ability to recruit and retain the most skilled employees is critical to an organization's success and survival, and employee recommendations have shown to be an efficient approach to do just that. The purpose of this research was to investigate the factors that motivate workers to either recommend or criticize their company. Organizations may encourage employee referrals by appealing to workers' intrinsic, altruistic, and extrinsic motivations, according to the results.

Referral incentive programs (RHP) have not been studied extensively in relation to its impact on referrer outcomes in non-traditional workplace contexts. Researchers may also examine the potential for a "chain" of referrers [14], whereby one worker suggests another, and so on. Whether and how turnover contagion [16] spreads down the supply chain is an intriguing subject to investigate. Research on the unintended consequences of employee referral programs is an interesting avenue to explore. If, for example, job searchers see workers as having a self-interest in promoting the company, they may be less likely to trust recommendations made by employees who have been financially rewarded for doing so.

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