# Modeling Corporate Social Performance and Job Pursuit Intention: Mediating Mechanisms of Corporate Reputation and Job Advancement Prospects

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**Abstract** An important issue for successful recruitment is to increase the pursuit intention of job seekers. This study discusses such issue by proposing a research model based on the signaling theory and the expectancy theory. In the model, this study hypothesizes that the perceived corporate social performance of job seekers positively affects their job pursuit intention and recommendation intention indirectly via the mediation of corporate reputation and job advancement prospects. The proposed hypotheses of this research are empirically tested using the data from people seeking a job. The empirical findings of this study complement previous literature by discussing how corporate social performance benefits business organizations from a perspective of human resources and recruitment. Last, managerial implications for business leaders and managers are provided.

**Keywords** Corporate social performance · Corporate reputation · Job advancement prospects · Ethical citizenship · Discretionary citizenship

# Introduction

Corporate social performance—recognized as corporate citizenship, corporate social responsibility (CSR), sustainable responsible business, responsible business, and corporate social performance—encompasses a firm's self-regulation standards, morals, and norms that are integrated

into business and organizational models (Lin 2010; Lin et al. 2012). A growing interest for corporate citizenship (i.e., corporate social performance) appears in both practice and academics, arguing how business organizations incorporate social demands into their daily business operations and what benefits the organizations may anticipate by practicing corporate citizenship (Lin et al. 2012; Maignan and Ferrell 2001). Examples of substantial benefits from corporate citizenship include the enhanced capabilities to achieve corporate financial success (Johnson and Greening 1994), to boost customer purchase intention (Lin et al. 2012; Vandermerwe and Oliff 1990), to increase employees' organizational commitment, to strengthen employees' work engagement, to encourage organizational citizenship behavior, to enhance job productivity, or to enlarge business performance (e.g., Carmeli et al. 2007; Lin 2010; Lin et al. 2010, 2012; Maignan and Ferrell 2001). Nevertheless, previous research has rarely explored how different dimensions of corporate citizenship benefit a firm in its recruitment.

Recruiting quality human resources provides business organizations with a sustained competitive advantage (Wright et al. 1995). Recruitment is one of the key elements of human resource management, because it dominates applicant pool characteristics and defines the set of potential individuals who will work for a particular organization (Turban and Cable 2003). A critical step in recruitment is to increase job seekers' pursuit intention (i.e., the intention to apply for a job) (Williamson et al. 2003). Organizations attracting more superior job applicants will have a larger number of qualified applicants to select from, resulting in greater utilities for firm recruitment activities and stronger organizational competitive advantages in the future (Williamson et al. 2003).

Previous literature has called for more studies to explore the predictors and mediators that influence job seekers'

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intention during the applicant generation phase of recruitment (Rynes 1991; Williamson et al. 2003). Specifically, job seekers' perceptions about a firm's reputation (Behrend et al. 2009) and their future job advancement prospects in the firm (Greenhaus et al. 1990; Larsen and Phillips 2001) can be important drivers in the job-seeking process (Behrend et al. 2009; Williamson et al. 2003). Such drivers can be examined and justified from, respectively, two theories below.

First, based on the signaling theory, corporate citizenship is one of the most critical attributes that attract potential job applicants by serving as a signal of a firm's working conditions, business standards, values and norms (Turban and Greening 1996). Job seekers are likely attracted to a firm they view as having standards, values and norms they deem crucial (Chatman 1989). As a firm's corporate citizenship often shows ethical values and norms, it is highly probable that such citizenship improves job seekers' perceived reputation of the firm, consequently driving their intention to pursue a job provided by the firm.

Second, according to the expectancy theory, job advancement prospects (i.e., future development expectations) possessed by the job seekers are a key factor that relates to corporate citizenship. Since corporate citizenship represents organizational activities and status associated with the organization's obligations of its society and stakeholders (Luo and Bhattacharya 2006), job seekers (i.e., an important part of stakeholders) are likely to think of their future job advancement prospects based on perceived corporate citizenship of the firm, eventually facilitating their job pursuit intention (Rynes and Lawler 1983; Rynes 1991; Wanous et al. 1983).

Collectively, while some knowledge regarding the importance of corporate citizenship (e.g., for customers and employees) has been well developed, little is known about how such corporate citizenship is actually interpreted by job seekers (e.g., Albinger and Freeman 2000; Turban and Greening 1996). To answer such unknown issue, the signaling theory and the expectancy theory can be jointly useful for understanding the formation of job pursuit intention among job seekers, which are applied to build this study's research model.

This research differs from previous studies in some important ways. First, although prior research has tried to investigate how a firm's reputation affects job pursuit intention (Turban and Cable 2003), no research has looked into whether such job pursuit intention driven can be motivated indirectly by perceived corporate citizenship via the reputation, which is a focus of this research herein.

Second, previous studies linking corporate citizenship to its outcomes in job-seeking populations often consider corporate citizenship a single-dimension construct (e.g., Albinger and Freeman 2000). To complement the previous

studies, this research evaluates four different dimensions of perceived corporate citizenship regarding their effects in the formation of job pursuit intention. This is important because some studies have neglected to take the multidimensional nature of corporate citizenship into account from the psychological aspect of job seekers (e.g., De los Salmones et al. 2005). More specifically, based on previous literature (e.g., Carroll 1979; Lin 2010), this study discusses in more detail about corporate citizenship that consists of four dimensions in terms of employees as stakeholders: (1) economic citizenship, referring to the firm's responsibility to provide utilitarian benefits to its employees such as a quality workplace, good training, and job development; (2) legal citizenship, referring to the firm's responsibility to accomplish its business mission within the framework of legal and law requirements; (3) ethical citizenship, referring to the firm's responsibility to follow ethical rules of society's appropriate behavior; and (4) philanthropic citizenship, referring to the firm's responsibility to engage in social actions that are not mandated, neither required by laws nor expected of a business in a moral sense (Carroll 1979; Lin 2010).

Third, this study is a pioneer in empirically validating whether a firm's reputation and job advancement prospects can jointly mediate the relationship between perceived corporate citizenship and job pursuit intention. Previous studies have never assessed such mediating mechanisms. Fourth, while a majority of empirical studies rely on a one-time only survey for measuring job pursuit intention, this study takes primary survey data obtained at two different time points (i.e., the outcomes are measured at time 2, whereas their antecedents and mediators are surveyed at time 1) to test the formation of job pursuit intention. Based on the above critical advantages of our research study, a clear understanding of how perceived corporate citizenship is actually related to job pursuit intention can be effectively figured out.

## **Development of Hypotheses**

Researchers have emphasized that a firm's initial attraction to job seekers is based on their perception about the firm's reputation (Cable and Turban 2001), which is largely influenced by its corporate citizenship (e.g., McWilliams et al. 2006; Rynes 1991). Many large business companies, such as Dell, IBM, and Microsoft, send out positive messages to prospective applicants by promoting their companies' economic, environmental, and philanthropic practices, suggesting that many firms use CSR as a key recruitment tool (e.g., Poe and Courter 1995). Drawing on propositions from the signaling theory and expectancy theory (e.g., Rynes 1991), this study proposes that



perceived corporate citizenship increases a firm's reputation and job advancement prospects, thus fostering job pursuit intention and recommendation intention (i.e., to recommend others about the job). The proposed model of this study is presented in Fig. 1.

A firm's reputation, regarded as the public evaluation of a firm relative to other firms, can affect its success in attracting quality job applicants (Cable and Turban 2001). Besides, a firm's reputation facilitates job seekers' recommendation intention, which is defined as informal communications between them and their significant others (e.g., good friends or family relatives) about a potential employer's characteristics. Note that recommendation intention is as important as job pursuit intention for a firm's recruitment, because positive recommendation intention, with which job seekers share their assessment about the firm to their significant others (e.g., peers), can encourage more people to apply for a job at the firm in a long run.

Job seekers' intention to pursue a job from a particular firm counts heavily on their overall perception of a firm's reputation. A firm's reputation is valuable, because it represents a positive signal to a firm's stakeholders such as customers, investors, and job seekers (Cable and Graham 2000). The signaling theory offers rationales for why job seekers are attracted to apply for a job. The theory emphasizes that since job seekers are often unable to know a firm in depth, they recall their prior knowledge or experience about the firm's reputation as a signal to direct their job pursuit intention (e.g., Breaugh 1992; Cable and Turban 2003; Rynes 1991). A firm's reputation guides job pursuit intention, because it is difficult for job seekers to obtain overall evaluations for every aspect of a job prior to actually working at the firm (Rynes 1991). That is, job seekers have insufficient time to decide which jobs to apply for and which jobs to remove from consideration during the initial stage of recruitment. Hence, job seekers depend largely on a firm's perceived reputation as a job signal that guides their job pursuit intention.

A firm's perceived reputation is also a positive signal that encourages job seekers to share their knowledge about the firm with their significant others, suggesting the positive relationship between a firm's reputation and recommendation intention (e.g., Gieseking and Plawin 1994;

Schepp and Schepp 2010). People intend to provide others with their recommendation (i.e., recommendation intention) based on their personal evaluations of a firm's reputation (Kiecker and Cowles 2002; Sernovitz 2006). At any rate, the hypothesis can be stated as below.

**H1** A firm's reputation is positively related to (a) job pursuit intention; and (b) recommendation intention.

Job advancement prospects, regarded as the expected future development and accomplishments of employees in their work lives (e.g., Bozionelos 2006), can encourage the pursuit intention and recommendation intention of potential job seekers. The expectancy theory suggests a job-seeking process based on future expectation, such that job seekers are more likely to invest their limited time and resources into pursuing and talking about a job (i.e., job pursuit intention and recommendation intention) that shows the best job advancement prospects (e.g., Greenhaus et al. 1990; Rynes and Lawler 1983; Rynes 1991; Wanous et al. 1983). This study extends previous literature by examining whether people's job advancement prospects motivate their recommendation intention and job pursuit intention (e.g., Beenen and Rousseau 2010).

Experts argue that many firms have to find various ways of recruiting superior people, including providing realistic job previews, good employer orientation, and opportunities for career development and advancement (i.e., job advancement prospects) (Hiltrop 1999). Firms that project a good image for job seekers about desirable job attributes, and strong future opportunities for job career growth and success within the firms (Ramasamy et al. 2008) can induce their job pursuit intention and recommendation intention. Indeed. Gatewood et al. (1993) find that people's attractiveness ratings of corporate reputation and future job development (Dion et al. 1999) are significantly related to the reported probability of applying for a position with the firm (Casper and Buffardi 2004; Lin et al. 2012).

Human beings are linked to each other by a social network, and this network's job seekers often communicate with each other through mutual recommendations (Calvó-Armengol and Zenou 2005; Marsden 1998). Job seekers are likely to discuss with good friends or family relatives about a firm and its employment opportunities (Calvó-

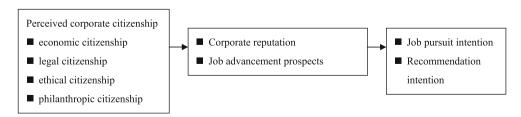


Fig. 1 Conceptual model



Armengol and Zenou 2005; Marsden 1988) based on their future job advancement prospects. Consequently, the next hypothesis is derived as below.

**H2** Job advancement prospects are positively related to (a) job pursuit intention; and (b) recommendation intention.

Corporate citizenship consists of four dimensions in terms of employees as stakeholders. Each dimension of corporate citizenship is considered a key job-seeking clue (i.e., a signal) that positively increases a firm's reputation (Backhaus et al. 2002), because potential applicants assess positive outcomes about their future job from being employed by a firm that engages in more socially responsible actions (Turban and Greening 1996). Job seekers use various clues associated with the firm to draw conclusions about the firm's actions (Srivastava and Lurie 2001). Clues about certain corporate citizenship draw job seekers' close attention to potential employers (Backhaus et al. 2002; Lin et al. 2012), suggesting a positive relationship between corporate citizenship and a firm's reputation (e.g., Lin et al. 2012). The rationale for such positive relationship is further justified in detail as follows.

The foremost and necessary social responsibility of a firm is economic in nature given that a firm is a basic economic unit in society (Carroll 1979) and it should takes care of its employees or other stakeholders (Lin et al. 2012; Maxfield 2008; Turker 2009). As such, it has a responsibility to provide good working conditions, training, education, payoff, job advancement (i.e., forms of economic corporate citizenship) while producing goods (or services) and selling them at a profit (Cable and Judge 1994; Lin et al. 2012; Weyzig 2009). Supportive workplace relationships between employees and their firm (e.g., training, education, compensation, and job advancement) signify that the firm is the one worth working for (Aiman-Smith et al. 2001), thus boosting the firm's reputation for potential job seekers and their job advancement prospects. Thus, the hypothesis is developed as below.

**H3** A firm's reputation mediates the indirect effect of perceived economic citizenship on (a) job pursuit intention, and (b) recommendation intention.

People of society expect a firm to fulfill its mission within the framework of law and legal requirements (Carroll 1979; Lin et al. 2012). When job seekers perceive, for instance, serious illegal conducts by a firm (e.g., pollution emissions, workplace discriminations), they will doubt if they could fall victim to such organizational unethical transgressions, thus devaluating the firm's reputation (e.g., Lin et al. 2012). Previous evidence supports the theoretical rationales described above based on the signaling theory, such that job seekers indicate that they are more attracted to pursuing jobs at a firm that has a better

reputation in obeying legal systems (Belt and Paolillo 1992; Gatewood et al. 1993; Lefkowitz 2006). Therefore, the hypothesis can be described as follows:

**H4** A firm's reputation mediates the indirect effect of perceived legal citizenship on (a) job pursuit intention, and (b) recommendation intention.

An important way for linking a firm's ethical citizenship and a firm's reputation is through inferences drawn from how the firm ethically treats people (e.g., Lin et al. 2012). People's perceptions about a firm's reputation are heavily influenced by how fair they consider the firm's actions to be ethical (Cropanzano et al. 2001). People looking for a job count on ethical fairness to justify whether a firm is reputable, non-biased, and will treat them as legitimate members of the firm (Rupp et al. 2006). When a firm treats various stakeholders (including its employees and job seekers) ethically, the job seekers are more likely attracted to seek a long-term employment relationship with the firm (Schwepker 2001), suggesting a positive relationship between perceived ethical citizenship and a firm's reputation. Therefore, the hypothesis is stated as below.

**H5** A firm's reputation mediates the indirect effect of perceived ethical citizenship on (a) job pursuit intention, and (b) recommendation intention.

An investigation reveals that more than half of UK working professionals strongly care about the social and environmental responsibilities of their firm (Dawkins 2004; Lin et al. 2012). A firm's formal social policies (e.g., philanthropic programs) toward stakeholders and its focus on social welfare issues can serve as an critical signal of good reputation that significantly attracts potential job seekers (Greening and Turban 2000; Lin et al. 2012). People are more likely to apply for a job provided by a firm when the firm has a more favorable corporate reputation of dedicating itself to social welfare and public benefits (Lin et al. 2012). Firms with stronger corporate social performance in philanthropic scopes are perceived as being more reputable employers than other firms with lower corporate social performance (Bauer and Aiman-Smith 1996; Lin et al. 2012; Turban and Greening 1997). Large firms, such as GM, Oracle, Starbucks, Toyota, and Mary Kay Inc., present a reputable image about philanthropic and environmental programs during their recruitment processes, supporting that these firms use positive philanthropic citizenship as a recruitment strategy (e.g., Highhouse et al. 2003; Lin et al. 2012) to improve their reputation. Hence, the next hypothesis can be developed as below.

**H6** A firm's reputation mediates the indirect effect of perceived philanthropic citizenship on (a) job pursuit intention, and (b) recommendation intention.



Similar to the preceding rationales about the positive effects of corporate citizenship on a firm's reputation, four corporate citizenship dimensions are also hypothesized to have positive and indirect effects on job pursuit intention and recommendation intention through job advancement prospects. As suggested by Rynes (1989), the expectancy theory indicates that job seekers are more likely to pursue job alternatives when the job is perceived to bring positive job (high valence) expectation (e.g., Lin et al. 2012; Turban and Cable 2003). By contrary, job seekers may be discouraged to apply for a job provided by a firm if they expect the difficulty in having job advancement in the firm (Lin et al. 2012). The rationales for the positive relationship between the four dimensions of corporate citizenship and job advancement prospects are further discussed in detail as follows.

Previous research emphasizes that job development and training (i.e., economic citizenship) represent the promised relational obligations for employees' job career (Lin et al. 2012; Robinson and Morrison 1995), strengthening their prospects about their job advancement. The existence of perceived economic citizenship that governs internal job mobility and systems in the organization help foster people's job prospects regarding, for instance, their expected job potential to top management (Lin et al. 2012; Sheridan et al. 1990). Previous research on job development (Holzer and Martinson 2005; Lent et al. 1994) highlights the importance of on-the-job training, learning and opportunities for promotions (i.e., economic citizenship) in elevating anticipations of job advancement and success (Holzer and Reaser 2000; Lin et al. 2012; Sosik et al. 2004). Consequently, the hypothesis is derived as below.

**H7** Job advancement prospects mediate the indirect effect of perceived economic citizenship on (a) job pursuit intention, and (b) recommendation intention.

Given that job advancement refers to a perception of mastery and control over one's future job development, if employees are reluctantly pushed by their firm to work under illegitimate environments or situations, then they are unlikely to have future job advancement—in other words, people would like to pursuit a job in which they expect to obtain job advancement in the legal boundary (e.g., Callanan 2003; Lin et al. 2012). A firm that skirts the law delivers a clue to potential job seekers concerning their potential high risk of pursuing such a job in the firm (Lin et al. 2012), thus damaging their job advancement prospects. For that reason, the hypothesis is developed as below.

**H8** Job advancement prospects mediate the indirect effect of perceived legal citizenship on (a) job pursuit intention, and (b) recommendation intention.

Ethics is a fundamental part of a social performance culture in a successful firm (Lin et al. 2012; O'Donohue and Nelson 2009), and thus applicants' prospects about their job advancement can be enhanced if they work in a firm with strong ethical citizenship. By contrary, job seekers cannot not expect job advancement in case of their working for a firm that treats people unethically (Grover 1993), suggesting a positive relationship between perceived ethical citizenship and job advancement prospects. Job advancement prospects will be attenuated if the firm presents the work environment that reveals the questionable likelihood of job career development (Lin et al. 2012), such as fraud and dishonest business practices (i.e., unethical citizenship). Accordingly, the hypothesis is developed as below.

**H9** Job advancement prospects mediate the indirect effect of perceived ethical citizenship on (a) job pursuit intention, and (b) recommendation intention.

The effect of philanthropic citizenship on job advancement prospects is positive, because philanthropic citizenship adds value to a job, improves perceived job meaning (e.g., Schein 1984), and thus job advancement is more developed. Job structure of every society evolves to fulfill the functions needed in that society (Schein 1984). When job seekers observe that a firm practices philanthropic citizenship (e.g., charities) that thus increases an intrinsic desire for the job seekers, their expectation about the job is positively fostered (e.g., Lin et al. 2012). For example, when philanthropic actions (e.g., protecting the natural environment and saving energy) are taken by a firm, they perceive the increased credit and reliability of the firm (Lin 2010), in turn strengthening job seekers' prospects, because the job seekers can anticipate that they are likely to have a good opportunity of having job advancement in such a reliable firm. Thus, the hypothesis is derived as below.

**H10** Job advancement prospects mediate the indirect effect of perceived philanthropic citizenship on (a) job pursuit intention, and (b) recommendation intention.

# Methods

Subjects and Procedures

The hypotheses proposed in this study were empirically tested using a survey of graduating MBA students from five large national universities in Taiwan during their last semester before graduation. These MBA students had been looking for a job before our survey. Subjects were invited to fill out the surveys twice anonymously, linked by a four-digit identifier (the last four digits of their cell phone or



home number) in both surveys. Two sets of questionnaires were distributed at two different time points to the same subjects, set apart by 1 month. Surveying the same sample subjects twice in two different points of time substantially helps reduce the threat of common method variances (CMVs), because CMVs are often caused due to the one-time survey in a study (Lin and Bhattacherjee 2008, 2009).

In the beginning of the survey, 30 names of well-known Taiwanese companies across high-tech, servicing, transportation, and banking and insurance industries were provided to research subjects for reference. The subjects were first asked to select one of the companies they are familiar with as a target company in our survey and then filled out our questionnaire. Of the 900 questionnaires distributed to the subjects, 606 usable matched pairs were returned in both time periods, for a response rate of 67.33 %. In our sample, 279 participants are male (46.04 %) and 327 participants are female (53.96 %). Note that these graduating MBA students are appropriate research subjects for the topic of job pursuit intention, because many firms in Taiwan strive to attract such highly educated students from national universities as important human resources. Job pursuit is the first key issue these graduating students have to face right before their graduation and thus they are very concerned about the job market and employers during such time periods of our survey. By contrary, it would be inappropriate if the employees from industries were surveyed by this research, because many working professionals may have gotten used to their job, reluctantly taken a risk of pursuing a new job, and have no job pursuit intention whatsoever.

#### Measures

The research constructs herein were measured using 5-point Likert scales directly drawn or modified from prior literature (see Appendix A). Three steps were employed to compile our measurement items. First, the original items in the English language from prior research were first translated to Chinese language and then modified (or dropped in case of their inappropriateness in Chinese language) by a focus group of seven persons familiar with organizational behavior research, including six graduate students and one professor. Second, following the questionnaire design, this study conducted two pilot tests (prior to the actual survey) to improve our questionnaire's readability and to assess the quality of our measurement items. Inappropriate items were repeatedly reworded or removed from our survey questionnaire due to their poor loadings in our exploratory factor analysis. A high degree of correspondence between the two questionnaires (evaluated by an outside scholar) assured this research that the translation process did not introduce substantial translation biases in our questionnaire design.

For the two surveys of this study, we planned out three critical measures to reduce and detect the potential threat of CMV. First, our data collection from the same subjects, twice at two different time points, effectively reduces the threat of common method bias. It is important to note that this survey strategy (i.e., two surveys on the same subjects) is the most critical than any post hoc statistical methods for detecting or reducing CMV. Second, this study used anonymous questionnaires for our respondents in order to substantially prevent their suspicion or hesitation to answer our questionnaires. Respondents were assured of complete anonymity in the cover letter, confirming that neither their personal names nor the names of their universities would be disclosed. Finally, Harman's single factor test was performed (Podsakoff and Organ 1986), confirming that no single factor accounting for a majority of the variances was found. Based on the above three measures, CMV is unlikely a threat in our data sample.

#### Data Analysis

The actual survey data were analyzed with a two-step structural equation modeling (SEM). In the CFA analysis (see Table 1), the figures of CFI, NFI, and NNFI were all larger than or equal to 0.9, while the figure of GFI is slightly lower than 0.9. The normalized Chi-square (Chi-square/degrees of freedom) of the CFA model was smaller than the recommended value of 3.0, the RMR was smaller than 0.05, and the RMSEA was smaller than 0.08. To sum up, these figures suggest that the proposed model of this study fits the survey data well.

Convergent validity was verified based on three criteria (Fornell and Larcker 1981; Lin et al. 2012). To begin with, Cronbach's alphas of the constructs were all larger than 0.70 (see Table 1), confirming high reliability of the research instruments herein. Moreover, all factor loadings in Table 1 were significant at p < 0.001, supporting the acceptable convergent validity of the research constructs of this study. Finally, the average variance extracted (AVE) for all the constructs exceeded 0.50, presenting that the overall measurement items capture substantial variance in the underlying construct than that attributable to measurement error (Fornell and Larcker 1981; Lin et al. 2012). In summary, the survey data of this research met all three criteria required to assure convergent validity (Fornell and Larcker 1981; Lin et al. 2012).

This study used Chi-square difference tests to confirm discriminant validity. By controlling for the experiment-wise error rate at the overall significance level of 0.01, this study shows that Chi-square difference statistics for all pairs of constructs in Table 2 exceeded the critical value of



Table 1	Standardized loadings			
and reliabilities				

Table 1 Standardized loadings           and reliabilities	Construct	Indicators	Standardized loading	AVE	Cronbach's α
	Job pursuit intention (T2)	JP1	$0.87 \ (t = 26.74)$	0.78	0.93
		JP2	0.88 (t = 26.98)		
		JP3	0.91 (t = 28.71)		
		JP4	0.89 (t = 27.47)		
	Recommendation intention (T2)	RI1	0.88 (t = 27.31)	0.75	0.93
		RI2	$0.88 \ (t = 27.16)$		
		RI3	$0.83 \ (t = 24.89)$		
		RI4	$0.88 \ (t = 27.01)$		
		RI5	0.86 (t = 26.12)		
	Corporate reputation (T1)	CR1	0.79 (t = 22.03)	0.61	0.82
		CR2	0.77 (t = 21.14)		
		CR3	0.79 (t = 21.91)		
	Job advancement prospects (T1)	JAP1	0.74 (t = 20.05)	0.64	0.84
		JAP2	$0.88 \ (t = 25.37)$		
		JAP3	0.79 (t = 21.60)		
	Perceived economic citizenship (T1)	ET1	0.78 (t = 22.33)	0.56	0.86
		ET2	0.79 (t = 22.80)		
		ET3	0.77 (t = 21.61)		
		ET4	$0.60 \ (t = 15.60)$		
		ET5	0.80 (t = 22.97)		
	Perceived legal citizenship (T1)	PH1	$0.88 \ (t = 26.77)$	0.65	0.90
		PH1	0.79 (t = 22.78)		
		PH2	$0.83 \ (t = 24.51)$		
		PH3	0.78 (t = 22.16)		
		PH4	0.76 (t = 21.59)		
	Perceived ethical citizenship (T1)	EC1	0.78 (t = 22.30)	0.61	0.89
		EC2	$0.78 \ (t = 22.28)$		
		EC3	0.80 (t = 23.14)		
		EC4	0.80 (t = 22.95)		
		EC5	0.78 (t = 22.09)		
Condense of 6t indiana	Perceived philanthropic citizenship (T1)	LE1	$0.83 \ (t = 24.44)$	0.66	0.90
Goodness-of-fit indices $(N = 606)$ : $\chi^2_{532} = 1360.13$ $(p \text{ value } < 0.001)$ ;		LE2	0.82 (t = 23.91)		
		LE3	0.86 (t = 25.84)		
NNFI = 0.94; NFI = 0.92;		LE4	$0.83 \ (t = 24.50)$		
CFI = 0.95; $GFI = 0.88$ ; RMR = 0.02; $RMSEA = 0.05$		LE5	0.74 (t = 20.71)		

12.74 (p < 0.01), the discriminant validity of the data in this study was successfully obtained.

## Structural Model

After the above CFA model was verified, this study performed the analysis of structural model testing by simultaneously including gender, age, and job efficacy as control variables to confirm the hypothesized relationships of this study. As gender and age are important variables that may affect people's motivation related to their job

(e.g., Lin et al. 2009; Ng and Feldman 2010), these variables are thus controlled herein. While most of the sample subjects (i.e., MBA students) have a similar age, some of the subjects are much older than their peers. Therefore, it is necessary to control the variable of age during our empirical analysis. Meanwhile, it is important to control job efficacy because social cognitive theory (Bandura 1997) gives prominence to the concept of job efficacy, which may affect individuals' job outcome expectation (e.g., job advancement prospects) (e.g., Wang and Lin 2012; Tsai et al. 2009). Figure 2 presents the empirical results of this analysis.



Table 2 Chi-square difference tests for examining discriminate validity

Construct pair	$\chi^2_{532} = 1360.13$ (unconstrained model)				
	$\chi^2_{533}$ (constrained model)	$\chi^2$ difference			
(F1, F2)	2258.62***	898.49			
(F1, F3)	1752.92***	392.79			
(F1, F4)	1923.61***	563.48			
(F1, F5)	2281.03***	920.90			
(F1, F6)	2712.24***	1352.11			
(F1, F7)	2566.39***	1206.26			
(F1, F8)	2845.27***	1485.14			
(F2, F3)	1621.13***	261.00			
(F2, F4)	1971.03***	610.90			
(F2, F5)	2064.21***	704.08			
(F2, F6)	2648.09***	1287.96			
(F2, F7)	2323.92***	963.79			
(F2, F8)	2648.29***	1288.16			
(F3, F4)	1888.23***	528.10			
(F3, F5)	1671.71***	311.58			
(F3, F6)	1782.66***	422.53			
(F3, F7)	1661.74***	301.61			
(F3, F8)	1742.84***	382.71			
(F4, F5)	1917.83***	557.70			
(F4, F6)	2002.67***	642.54			
(F4, F7)	2041.13***	681.00			
(F4, F8)	2005.25***	645.12			
(F5, F6)	2024.09***	663.96			
(F5, F7)	1967.65***	607.52			
(F5, F8)	1744.82***	384.69			
(F6, F7)	2355.61***	995.48			
(F6, F8)	2413.30***	1053.17			
(F7, F8)	2352.70***	992.57			

F1 Job pursuit intention, F2 recommendation intention, F3 corporate reputation, F4 job advancement prospects, F5 perceived economic citizenship, F6 perceived legal citizenship, F7 perceived ethical citizenship, F8 perceived philanthropic citizenship

\*\*\* Significant at the 0.001 overall significance level by using the Bonferroni method

The empirical results reveal that eight out of our ten hypotheses are empirically supported. First, a firm's reputation is positively related to job pursuit intention and recommendation intention, respectively (H1 is supported). Second, job advancement prospects are positively related to job pursuit intention and recommendation intention, respectively (H2 is supported). Third, a firm's reputation completely mediates the indirect effects of corporate citizenship on job pursuit intention and recommendation intention (H3–H6 are supported), while job advancement prospects only mediates the indirect effects of two

corporate citizenship dimensions (i.e., economic and legal citizenship) on job pursuit intention and recommendation intention (H7 and H8 are supported while H9 and H10 are not).

The empirical results for two unsupported mediation paths are surprising and suggest that four dimensions of corporate citizenship have distinct influences on job pursuit intention and recommendation intention indirectly through different mediating paths. Such a phenomenon suggests that different dimensions of corporate citizenship may have different weights and meanings to potential job seekers. For example, the insignificant effects of perceived ethical citizenship and perceived philanthropic citizenship on job advancement prospects may suggest that such prospects are only driven by extrinsic factors (i.e., economic and legal citizenship) rather than intrinsic factors (i.e., ethical and philanthropic citizenship). Nevertheless, the unexpected results for the two insignificant model paths warrant further research, so that the real causes behind the unsupported relationships between research constructs are misinterpreted.

To further confirm our hypothesized indirect effects of corporate citizenship on its outcomes, we conducted post hoc analyses by adding eight direct paths between corporate citizenship and the outcomes (i.e., job pursuit intention and recommendation intention) (see Appendix B). The empirical results reveal that all the direct paths are insignificant, empirically supporting our hypothesized indirect effects of corporate citizenship on its outcomes.

#### Discussion

This study is a pioneer to examine how different corporate citizenship dimensions indirectly affect job pursuit intention and recommendation intention. While previous studies directly link corporate citizenship to its outcomes such as profits or financial performance (e.g., Becker-Olsen et al. 2006) without exploring its mediators (Lin 2010), this study establishes a critical bridge between corporate citizenship and job pursuit intention and between corporate citizenship and recommendation intention by including a firm's reputation and job advancement prospects as key mediators.

The significant and direct effects of the two proposed mediators on job pursuit intention and recommendation intention in this study suggest a dual-track approach to attract potential job seekers by simultaneously signaling a firm's features (e.g., establishing positive corporate reputation) and weaving future visions of job advancement (e.g., providing fair opportunities for promotions). In a global economy where obtaining highly quality employees continues to become critical to a firm's competitive



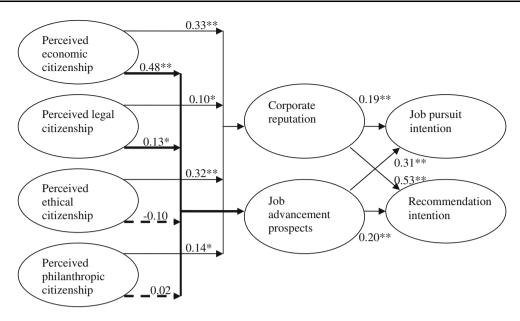


Fig. 2 Empirical results. Control variables: gender, age, job efficacy. \*p < 0.05; \*\*p < 0.01

advantages, the implication of these findings is significant. Most job seekers are influenced not only by a firm's reputation, but also their own future expectation about job advancement in the firm, and the latter factor is not discussed in any previous research. It would be a mistake to consider a firm's reputation as the only predictor to affect people's job pursuit intention. While a firm communicates with potential job seekers by showing its corporate citizenship history during its recruitment activities, such activities may become less effective if it fails to create future pictures of job advancement for the job seekers.

Both mediators in this study are directly affected by perceived economic and legal citizenship, suggesting that these two kinds of corporate citizenship are the most powerful factors to stimulate job pursuit intention and recommendation intention. Management should always keep polishing economic and legal citizenship by, for example, providing up-to-date trainings (i.e., improved economic citizenship), observing discipline and obeying the law (i.e., improved legal citizenship). Future internal customers (i.e., potential employees in the future) can be convinced to apply for a job when the firm provides, for example, complete job development planning for them. The key role of perceived economic and legal citizenship is theoretically and practically justifiable, because job seekers' recommendation intention and job pursuit intention will be unlikely improved if they experience low incentives (i.e., poor economic citizenship) and high risks (i.e., poor legal citizenship) of a firm (e.g., King and Bu 2005). Managers should promote business codes based on law or beyond it to clarify any confusion during recruitment activities so as to avoid job seekers' misunderstanding of legal citizenship issues. It is necessary for a firm to eliminate illegal opportunistic behavior that hazards business legitimacy (Lin 2010), because such behavior actually results in the firm's disreputableness, low job prospects, and eventually weakening job pursuit and recommendation intention. Future action plans that could continuously improve economic and legal citizenship should be always embedded into the firm's business strategies (e.g., attractive pension plans for employees).

Ethical and philanthropic citizenship, having significant effects only on a firm's reputation rather than job advancement prospects, suggest that these two intrinsic factors with non-utilitarian traits are unlikely linked to people's expected advancement in their job career. In other words, good ethical and philanthropic citizenship may not be helpful in developing job seekers' advancement prospects, because these two kinds of citizenship are often implicit and less noticed by general public. Nevertheless, those firms that effectively manage these two kinds of citizenship will still have a better chance to strengthen their firm's reputation in large, consequently boosting job seekers' pursuit intention and recommendation intention.

This study brings about interesting findings regarding the importance (or weight) of each corporate citizenship dimension. Specifically, it is important to note that economic and ethical citizenships are the most relevant ones to explain corporate reputation, while legal citizenship may be a critical one in terms of job advancement prospects.



Taking into account that the reputation affects outcome variables, the role of the ethical dimension of corporate citizenship should not be underestimated.

All in all, the empirical findings of this study reveal that job pursuit intention and recommendation intention are indirectly improved by strengthened corporate citizenship, suggesting that striving for corporate citizenship is of great worth to a firm. Job seekers' intention cannot be arbitrarily strengthened or constrained by immediate recruitment campaigns, but rather it can be improved in a long term after the job seekers in society sense their target firm's social actions from social performance perspectives. The viewpoint of multiple social performance influencers (i.e., four dimensions of corporate citizenship) is quite different from that of the traditional literature solely focusing on firm structures or rewards (e.g., payrolls, rewards, and bonuses) in attracting job applicants. The given definitions of the four dimensions of corporate citizenship are closely interrelated with the different concepts and values of potential job seekers that may be hired by the firm in the future (Turker 2009). By understanding the dimensions in depth, management can learn to tailor a variety of firm policies and strategies to increase job seekers' interests in order to boost their job pursuit intention and recommendation intention.

## Limitations of the Study and Future Research

This study has four limitations associated with the interpretations of the empirical results. The first limitation is its generalizability, due to the highly delimited nature of the subject sample across universities in a single country setting. The inferences drawn from such a sample may not be fully generalizable to job seekers from countries with different national cultures. Second, although the sample subjects selected one of the companies they were familiar with as a target company in order to fill out the research questionnaire of this study, their familiarity about the target company was not measured and controlled by this study. It may be better to include such variable of familiarity in future research. Third, due to its scope concentrating on perceived corporate citizenship across job seekers, this study did not address institutional variables, such as firm ownership, firm structure, firm profitability, stock prices, etc. Fourth, although surveying the same subjects twice at two different points of time helps reduce the threat of CMVs, such survey could, however, have a side-effect in this study. For example, if some sample subjects have stronger or weaker pursuit intention and recommendation intention 1 month later due to more information about the company obtained by the subjects, then the empirical results might be somewhat biased. Future scholars may try to improve these drawbacks by including more control variables (e.g., self-esteem), surveying more samples across various countries, and observing research subjects several times over a few seasons so that the genuine influences of perceived corporate citizenship on job pursuit intention and recommendation intention can be further explored in more depth. Besides job pursuit intention, some outcomes such as future job attachment, organizational citizenship behavior, and identification may be assessed in future studies (e.g., Lin 2010).

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### **Appendix A: Measurement Items**

Job pursuit intention (Source: Chu and Lu 2007; Dodds et al. 1991)

JP1. The likelihood that I would apply for the firm's job is high.

JP2. My willingness to apply for the firm's job is very high.

JP3. In the near future, I would consider applying for the firm's job.

JP4: I consider this firm as one of my best choices to apply for a job.

Recommendation intention (Source: Chou and Lu 2009)

RI1. I would recommend this firm to friends.

RI2. I would recommend this firm to others who seek my advice.

RI3. I would say positive things about this firm to those who look for a job.

RI4. I encourage others to apply for this firm's job.

RI5. I would highly recommend this firm to my friends and family for job-seeking.

Corporate reputation (Source: Behrend et al. 2009; Lin et al. 2012)

CR1. This is a reputable firm to work for.

CR2. This firm is famed for being an excellent employer.

CR3. Many people want to work at this company due to its good reputation.

Job advancement prospects (Source: Greenhaus et al. 1990; Lin et al. 2012)

JAP1. I expect to achieve my job success in case I get a job in this firm.

JAP2. I expect to obtain my goals of job advancement in case I get a job in this firm.

JAP3. I expect brightening prospects in case I get a job in this firm.



Perceived economic citizenship (Source: Lin 2010)

EC1. This firm supports employees who want to acquire additional education.

EC2. This firm provides a good work environment and life quality for employees.

EC3. This firm provides important job training for employees.

EC4. This firm provides a quality and safe working environment for employees.

EC5: This firm encourages the employees to develop their skills continually.

Perceived legal citizenship (Source: Lin 2010)

LE1. The managers of this firm comply with the law.

LE2. This firm follows the law to prevent discrimination in workplaces.

LE3. This firm always fulfills its obligations of contracts.

LE4. This firm always seeks to respect all laws regulating its activities.

LE5: This firm always pays its taxes on a regular and continuing basis.

Perceived ethical citizenship (Source: Lin 2010)

ET1. This firm has a comprehensive code of conduct in ethics.

ET2. Fairness toward co-workers and business partners is an integral part of the employee evaluation process in this firm.

ET3. This firm provides accurate information to its business partners.

ET4. This firm is recognized as a company with good business ethics.

ET5. A confidential procedure is in place in the firm for employees to report any misconduct at work.

Perceived philanthropic citizenship (Source: Lin 2010)

PH1. This firm gives adequate contributions to charities.

PH2. This firm sponsors partnerships with local schools or institutions.

PH3. This firm is concerned about respecting and protecting the natural environment.

PH4. This firm is concerned about the improvement of the public well-being of society.

PH5: This firm encourages its employees to participate in volunteer activities.

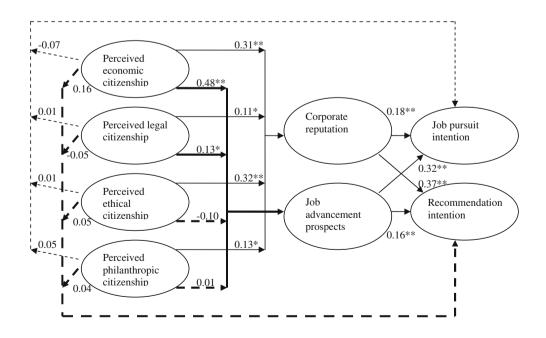
Job efficacy (Source: Mosley et al. 2008)

JE1. I am confident in meeting the quality demands of the job in this firm.

JE2. I am confident in maintaining job performance in this firm.

JE3. I am confident in keeping up with the operational pace of thus firm.

#### **Appendix B: Post Hoc Analyses**





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