

Person – Job Fit: Mediating Role of Job Satisfaction & Organizational Commitment

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This study attempts to understand the effect of Person-Job (P-J) fit on Job Satisfaction, Organizational Commitment and Turnover Intentions. The study further aims to see how Job Satisfaction and Organizational Commitment mediate in the relationship between P-J fit and Turnover Intentions. The sample consisted of 317 respondents working with select organizations in Delhi and National Capital Region. Pearson Correlation was applied to see the relationship between the variables. Further Sobel test was applied to study the mediation effect of Job Satisfaction and Organizational Commitment on the relationship between Person-Job fit and Turnover Intentions. The results show that Job Satisfaction and Organizational Commitment mediate the relationship between Person-Job fit and Turnover Intentions.

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Introduction

In this rapidly changing work environment, the accelerated development of high-technology has laid the ground for profound changes in the workplace and has taken the already severe competition to another level. Organizations are facing incredible pressures in multiple areas (economy, technology, structure, society in general) to adjust to the new, evolving demands of their constituencies and to become more efficient and competitive within their environments. These new demands will likely necessitate changes in planning and managing the careers of the employees in an organization. In particular, these situations require the individuals to develop better adaptability and flexibility to meet their job requirements (Pulakos, Arad, Donovan & Plamondon, 2000).

The concept of “fit” is a familiar one for most people working in the organizations. Person-job fit is defined as the fit between the individual characteristics (knowledge, skills, abilities and needs) and the demands of the job or the needs/ desires of a person and the attributes of the job (Edwards, 1991; O’Reilly,

Chatman & Caldwell, 1991). P–J fit consists of a large number of elements, and the role these elements play in employees' work-related attitudes has been an area of considerable research.

Previous research in the area has mainly focused on two elements of P–J fit: Demand – Ability (D – A) fit and Need – Supply (N – S) fit. The D–A fit has been defined as the extent to which a person's knowledge, skills, and abilities are congruent with the demands and requirements of their jobs (Edwards, 1996; Kristof, 1996; Werbel & Johnson, 2001). On the other hand, N–S fit measures whether the attributes of a job fulfill employees' personal desires, values and needs (Edwards, 1996; Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman & Johnson, 2005). It has been found that employees' subjective assessments of these different aspects of P–J fit make unique contributions in predicting their work-related attitudes and behaviors.

Further, fit can be evaluated subjectively or objectively (Kristof, 1996). Subjective P–J fit refers to individuals' perceptions regarding how well they fit with a particular job. For example, employees may be asked the degree to which they feel their job matches their preferences or needs. Objective P–J fit, on the other hand, pertains to how well individuals' reported preferences or characteristics correspond to job characteristics. For instance, job seekers' preferences may be compared with incumbent employees' evaluations of job characteristics.

Severe global recession since 2008 has forced many organizations to resort

to downsizing to survive. Such organizational downsizing often becomes inevitable during difficult economic situations and can be an effective strategy to reduce the company's total operating expenses in terms of employees' salaries and benefits (Mishra & Mishra, 1994). However, this strategy will in all probability lead to insecurity and disengagement of the workforce which remains with the organization. The construct of P–J fit has critical implications both during recession as well as boom scenarios. During recession, when organizations are looking to shed workforce, they are more likely to look at Demand-Ability aspects to see who is the fittest for the job. The objective way of looking at P–J fit will be preferred by the organizations. In a booming economy, where jobs are increasing, the employee's subjective perspective or the Need-Supply fit is likely to gain currency. In both the scenarios, having a satisfied and committed workforce is imperative, as a detached workforce will not be able to perform at an optimum level. Further, retaining this workforce is also a challenge. This study aims to see the impact of P–J fit on the satisfaction and commitment of the employees, which in turn is expected to have an effect on their intentions to leave.

Having a satisfied and committed workforce is imperative, as a detached workforce will not be able to perform at an optimum level.

Job applicants choose between organizations on the basis of their perceived fit with jobs and organizations (Judge &

Cable, 1997; Saks & Ashforth, 1997), recruiters make hiring decisions on the basis of their perceptions of applicants' fit (Cable & Judge, 1997; Kristof-Brown, 2000), and employees' fit perceptions affect their turnover intentions (Cable & Judge, 1996). Thus, people develop and use perceptions of fit as they maneuver through their professional careers. Studies have shown that perceptions of fit are better predictors of people's choices than the actual congruence between people and environments, since these perceptions are the better determinants of behavior (Cable & Judge, 1997; Endler & Magnusson, 1976; Kristof, 1996).

A fast-growing number of studies have demonstrated that affective work outcomes, such as job satisfaction and commitment to the organization, are determined to a certain extent by the interaction or fit between an employee's personal characteristics and features of his or her job, work team or the organization as a whole (Kristof, 1996). The more an employee matches his or her job or work environment the greater the chance that he or she will be well socialized satisfied and committed. This is because the congruence between individuals' characteristics and their surrounding environments gives rise to positive emotions, attitudes, and behaviors (e.g. Lewin, 1951; Pervin, 1989). As a consequence, the probability that this employee will develop an intention to leave the organization for reasons of discontent is small.

The fit of person and job is a dominant force in employee selection and in explaining individuals' career satisfaction.

There is a general recognition that person-job fit has important implications for individual behaviors and work outcomes. Among job applicants in the United States, perceived P-J fit has been found to be related to career choice, perceived organizational attractiveness, and subsequent choices of organizations for employment (Holland, 1985; Saks & Ashforth, 1997; Schein, 1978). Among employees working in organizations, both D-A fit and N-S fit were found to be related to job satisfaction (Amah, 2009; Cable & DeRue, 2002; Edwards, 1996; Livingstone, Nelson & Barr, 1997), organizational commitment (Saks & Ashforth, 2002), the quality of work life (Edwards, 1996; Rice, McFarlin, Hunt, & Near, 1985), intent to leave (Edwards & Cooper, 1990; Saks & Ashforth, 2002) and positive adjustment in new organizations (Spokane, 1985). In sum, there exists extensive theoretical and empirical evidence supporting both D-A fit and N-S fit as distinctive predictors for positive work-related attitudes. Studies have found that decreases in person-job fit, which led to decreases in job satisfaction, were more likely to result in increases in intent to turnover if the individual also perceived alternative job opportunities (Caldwell & O'Reilly, 1990; Griffeth, Hom & Gaertner, 2000; Saks & Ashforth, 1997; Lauver & Kristof-Brown, 2001; Cable & DeRue, 2002; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman and Johnson (2005) concluded that person-job fit correlates positively with job satisfaction and organizational commitment, and negatively with intent to quit. It also has a moderate positive relationship with co-worker

satisfaction, supervisor satisfaction, and organizational identification.

The significance of these findings is related to the practical implications for managers. Misfit between the individual and the job translates into serious implications for the organization. The study of P-J fit is particularly useful since some have observed that individuals' commitment to organizations has diminished over recent years. Evidence shows that poor person-job fit is associated (directly and/or indirectly) to job dissatisfaction and greater turnover intentions. Job dissatisfaction may lead to lower levels of customer satisfaction and organizational performance, and higher levels of absenteeism and turnover (Cable & Parsons, 2001). Absenteeism and turnover can be costly to organizations due to decreased productivity, and additional recruitment, selection, and training costs (Lee & Mitchell, 1994; Björkman & Lu, 1999).

As discussed, P-J fit has been seen to have a positive impact on employee attitudes like job satisfaction and organizational commitment and negative impact on turnover intentions. However, the strength of these relationships has varied from weak to strong across different studies. Many models of employee turnover stress the importance of the role of job satisfaction and organizational commitment in the turnover process (Allen, Shore & Griffeth, 2003; Hom & Griffeth, 1995). In order to argue that meaningful work is an important attitude for employee retention, it will be helpful to show that this atti-

tude is as strongly related to withdrawal as the variables of job satisfaction and organizational commitment that are included in many turnover models. It is argued that Self-Verification Theory (Swann 1983, 1990) and the Attraction Selection-Attrition Model (Schneider, 1987) provide support for the hypothesis that meaningful work is more strongly correlated with intention to quit than job satisfaction and organizational commitment. The rationale is that meaningful experiences provide the employee with self-verifying information and make the job and organization attractive to the individual. The other job attitudes do not necessarily involve self-verification and will have lesser impact on attraction, making it more likely that the employee will form an intention to leave.

Meaningful experiences provide the employee with self-verifying information and make the job and organization attractive to the individual.

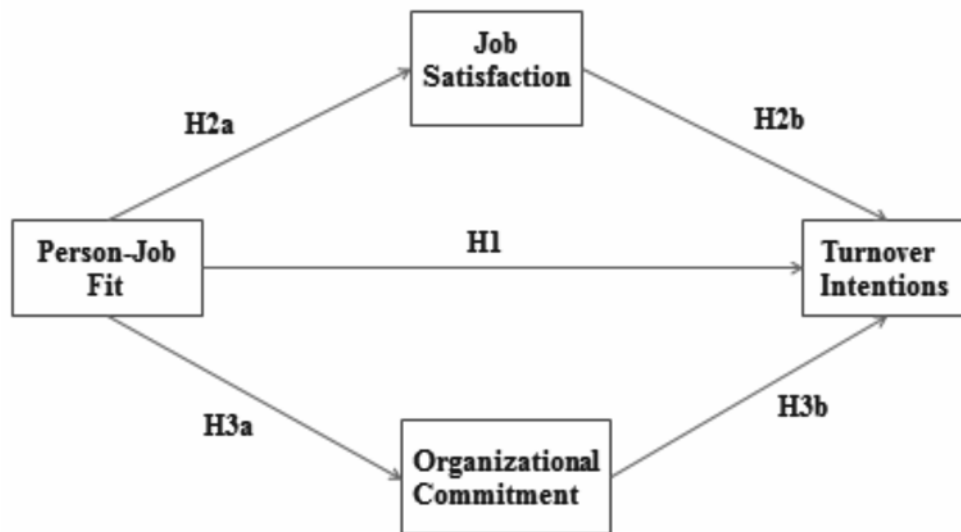
Although P-J fit has been established as an important predictor of work related attitudes, these studies were mainly conducted in Western cultures (e.g., United States and Europe). The present research aims to study the impact of P-J fit on job satisfaction, organizational commitment and turnover intentions in a sample of Indian working population. Further, the study aims to examine the mediating role of job satisfaction and organizational commitment in the relationship between P-J fit and turnover intentions.

Theoretical Model

As discussed, Person-Job misfit leads to negative consequences for both employee and employers. To further our understanding of the effects of Person-

Job fit on various job related attitudes, a theoretical model is proposed in which job satisfaction and organizational commitment act as mediating variables in the relationship between P-J fit and turnover intentions as shown in fig 1.

Fig. 1 Proposed Theoretical Model



Based on our review of literature, the following hypotheses can be drawn:

H1: There exists a negative relationship between P-J fit and turnover intentions.

H2a: There exists a positive relationship between P-J fit and job satisfaction.

H2b: Job satisfaction is negatively related to turnover intentions.

H3a: There exists a positive relationship between P-J fit and organizational commitment.

H3b: Organizational commitment is negatively related to turnover intentions.

H4: The relationship between P-J fit and turnover intentions is mediated by job satisfaction.

H5: The relationship between P-J fit and turnover intentions is mediated by organizational commitment.

Sample & The Procedure

Purposeful (maximum variation) sampling was employed (Patton, 1990). A diverse range of organizations were approached to enable investigations of patterns relating P-J fit, job satisfaction, organizational commitment and turnover intentions. To adduce the findings with empirical data, the survey was conducted

using a structured questionnaire. The sample consisted of 317 participants from the select organizations in the metropolitan city of Delhi and National Capital

Region (NCR). The information about their gender, marital status, qualification, income, and tenure with the organization is presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Demographic Variables

		Percentage
Gender	Male	80.2
	Female	19.8
Age	Less than 30 years	72.3
	30 - 45 years	20.8
	Over 45 years	6.9
Marital Status	Married	40
	Single	60
Educational Qualification	Graduate	36.9
	Post-Graduate	63.1
	Others	0
Income (per annum)	Below Rs. 3,00,000	13.1
	Rs. 3,00,000-6,00,000	33.8
	Rs. 6,00,000-10,00,000	28.5
	Above Rs. 10,00,000	24.6
Organizational tenure	0-2 years	28.5
	2-4 years	22.3
	4-6 years	28.5
	6-8 years	10
	8-10 years	1.5
	More than 10 years	9.2

The employees of the various organizations were contacted and were asked to fill in the questionnaire. They were appraised regarding the academic purpose of the study and confidentiality of their responses.

Research Instruments

Person-Job Fit was measured using a scale developed by Saks and Ashforth (1997). It uses four items to measure the level of fit between the per-

son and his/her current job. It is based on how well the individual perceives this fit. The sample item is: 'My knowledge, skills, and abilities match the requirements of my current job'. The scale ranges from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). This measure has a Cronbach's alpha of 0.85.

Job Satisfaction was measured using a scale developed by Schriesheim and Tsui (1980). It uses six items to form an index that describes overall job satisfac-

tion. The scale includes single questions to assess the degree of satisfaction with the work itself, supervision, co-workers, pay, promotion opportunities, and the job in general. The sample item is: 'I am satisfied with the nature of the work that I perform'. The scale ranges from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). This measure has a Cronbach's alpha of 0.79.

Organizational Commitment was developed by Meyer and Allen (1997). For the purpose of this study, six items measuring the Affective Commitment were used. This kind of commitment indicates an employee's emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization. The sample item is: 'I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this Organization'. The scale ranges from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). This measure has a Cronbach's alpha of 0.81.

A 3-item *Turnover Intention* scale originally developed by Vigoda and Kapun (2005) was used. The sample item is: 'I will probably not stay with this organization for much longer'. The scale ranges from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). A higher score meant higher intentions to leave the organization or department. This measure has a Cronbach's alpha of 0.81.

Control Variables

Control variables in this study included age, educational qualification, income (per annum) and organizational tenure. These variables were used in order

to minimize the influence of these factors on the focal variables in the study. Age was assessed using three categories: less than 30 years (1), 30-45 years (2), and over 45 years (3). Educational qualification was also assessed using three categories: graduate (1), post-graduate (2), and others (3). Income (per annum) was assessed using four categories: below Rs. 3,00,000 (1), Rs. 3,00,000 – 6,00,000 (2), Rs. 6,00,000 – 10,00,000 (3) and above Rs. 10,00,000 (4). Organizational tenure was assessed using six categories: 0-2 years (1), 2-4 years (2), 4-6 years (3), 6-8 years (4), 8-10 years (5), and more than 10 years (6). All these variables were controlled for all regression analysis in this study.

Results

Descriptive data (means and standard deviations), correlations, and Cronbach (1951) alpha coefficients are displayed in Table 2. As can be seen all scales demonstrated good internal consistency.

Results of the multiple regression analysis are given in Table 3. Considering P-J fit and turnover intentions, the results show a significant negative relationship ($\beta = -0.130$; $p < .01$), which confirms Hypothesis 1, explaining 9.7 % of variance. There is a positive relationship between P-J fit and job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.407$; $p = .000$; $R^2 = 0.279$) and a significant negative relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intentions ($\beta = -0.148$; $p = .000$; $R^2 = 0.161$). These results confirm Hypotheses 2a and 2b, respectively. The results also indicate a P-J fit and organi-

Table 2 Descriptive Statistics & Correlations for Focal Variables

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1.Age Group	1.35	0.6								
2.Educational Qualification	1.63	0.48	0.12							
3.Income (per Annum)	2.65	0.99	0.56**	0.05						
4.Organizational Tenure	2.62	1.49	0.57**	-0.05	0.52**					
5P-J Fit	3.47	0.93	0.15	0.09	0.22**	0.25**	(0.85)			
6Job Satisfaction	3.15	0.98	0.09	-0.16	0.35**	0.02	0.32**	(0.79)		
7Organizational commitment	3.02	0.97	0.03	-0.09	0.27**	0.08	0.33**	0.4**	(0.81)	
8Turnover Intentions	2.95	1.1	0.05	0.05	-0.04	0.11	-0.23**	-0.38**	-0.36**	(0.87)

Note: Cronbach's (1951) alpha reliability coefficients appear in the diagonal. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

zational commitment ($\beta = 0.433$; $p = .000$) which confirms hypothesis 3a, explaining 19% of variance, and a significant negative relationship between organizational commitment and turnover intentions ($\beta = -0.126$; $p = .000$; $R^2 = 0.150$), which confirms hypothesis 3b.

The mediating effect of organizational commitment on the relationship between job satisfaction and various dimensions of OCB was examined in four stages as suggested by Baron and Kenny (1986). According to them, the positive test of mediation requires three conditions to be fulfilled. First, the independent variable must be related to the dependent variable. Second, the independent variable must be related to the mediator. Third, the mediator must be related to the dependent variable. All of these relationships should be significant to have a mediation effect. Further, the relation between the predictor and criterion should be reduced after controlling the relationship between the mediator and criterion variables.

Results of the mediation analysis show that the direct effect between P-J fit and turnover intentions significantly decreases from $\beta = -0.13$ to $\beta = -0.078$ when job satisfaction relationship is added to the equation ($\Delta R^2 = 0.152$). These results partially confirm hypothesis 4; the relationship between P-J fit and turnover intentions is partially mediated by job satisfaction relationship. When organizational commitment is also added to the equation, the results show that the relationship between P-J fit and turnover intentions further decreases $\beta = -0.051$ ($\Delta R^2 = 0.198$). These results partially support hypothesis 5; the relationship between P-J fit and turnover intentions is partially mediated by organizational commitment.

The relationship between P-J fit and turnover intentions is partially mediated by organizational commitment.

Table 3 Regression Results for Mediation Effects of Job Satisfaction & Organizational Commitment

	H1	H2a	H2b	H3a	H3b	H4	H5
DV'!	Turnover Intentions	Job Satisfaction	Turnover Intentions	Organizational Commitment	Turnover Intentions	Turnover Intentions	Turnover Intentions
IV'!	β	B	B	B	β	β	B
Step I : Control Variables							
Age Group	0.041	-0.196	0.034	-0.986	-0.06	0.016	-0.064
Educational Qualification	0.239	-1.749**	-0.06	-0.05	0.063	0.017	-0.033
Income (per Annum)	-0.181	1.85**	0.064	1.465**	-0.028	0.054	0.137
Organizational Tenure	0.239*	-0.757**	0.095	-0.286	0.169	0.143	0.136
ΔR^2	0.031	0.19**	0.031	0.102**	0.031	0.031	0.031
Step 2: Predictor and mediator							
P-J Fit	-0.13**	0.407**		0.433**		-0.078	-0.051
Job Satisfaction			-0.148**			-0.127**	-0.104**
Organizational Commitment					-0.126**		-0.085**
R^2	0.097	0.279	0.161	0.19	0.15	0.183	0.229
ΔR^2	0.066**	0.089**	0.13**	0.089**	0.119**	0.152**	0.198**
Adjusted R^2	0.061	0.25	0.128	0.158	0.116	0.143	0.185
F	2.677*	9.597**	4.774**	5.829**	4.393**	4.587**	5.185**

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Considering the relationship between P-J fit and turnover intentions, the results also show that the partial mediation effect of job satisfaction ($\beta = -0.104$) is larger than that of organizational commitment ($\beta = -0.085$). When examining the indirect relationship between P-J fit and turnover intentions, results show that the mediated relationship through job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.407^* - 0.127 = -0.052$; Sobel's test = -2.526 ; $p = 0.011$) is significantly smaller than the direct relationship ($\beta = -0.078$). Similar results are seen when examining the indirect relationship of P-J fit and turnover intentions through organizational commitment ($\beta = 0.433^* - 0.085 = -0.037$; Sobel's test = -2.737 ; $p = 0.006$), which is also significantly

smaller than the direct relationship between P-J fit and turnover intentions ($\beta = -0.051$).

Discussion

The purpose of the present study was to examine the impact of person-job fit, job satisfaction and organizational commitment on turnover intentions. The study also aimed to see the mediation effect of job satisfaction and organizational commitment on the relationship between P-J fit and turnover intentions. The findings, based on the diverse sample of employees from a variety of organizations, show that P-J fit is positively related to job satisfaction and organizational commitment,

proving H2a and H3a. P-J fit, job satisfaction and organizational commitment, however, were seen to be negatively related to turnover intentions, hence proving H1, H2b and H3b. The results also confirm that in addition to a link between person-job fit and turnover intentions, the relationship is also partially mediated by job satisfaction and organizational commitment. These results are in line with H4 and H5.

The employees whose personalities do not match with the characteristics of the job are more likely to look for alternate job prospects.

In summary, these results show that the employees whose personalities do not match with the characteristics of the job are more likely to look for alternate job prospects and have higher intentions of leaving the organization than the employees who have a better person-job fit. Person-Job fit leads to more satisfaction with the job, which in turn results in lower turnover intentions. In addition to job satisfaction, P-J fit also leads to more commitment with the organizations and hence, low intentions to leave the organization.

Lack of person-job fit leads to reduced job satisfaction and organizational commitment, which in turn leads to increased turnover intentions. These findings are in line with previous research (Caldwell & O'Reilly, 1990; Saks & Ashforth, 1997; Lauver & Kristof-Brown, 2001; Cable & DeRue, 2002; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005) which

showed that decrease in person-job fit led to decrease in job satisfaction and resulted in increased intent to turnover, if the individual also perceived alternative job opportunities.

Implications

Previous findings on the relations between P-J fit and work-related attitudes have been established mainly among the employees from Western cultures (e.g., United States, Europe); this study provides significant findings from Indian culture, which suggest universality of the importance of self-confirming motives for these key job outcomes.

The study has important implications for individuals and organizations. For individuals, achieving fit is a critical reason for increasing job satisfaction, reducing job stress, improving work effectiveness, and enhancing personal growth throughout one's career. For organizations, fit is critical for attracting and retaining talented employees, utilizing employee skills appropriately and efficiently, and in general achieving the best use of critical human resources. Given that the measures of fit perceptions predicted many important employee attitudes and behaviors, managers should use the P-J fit scales to assess and monitor employees' fit perceptions. It would be valuable for managers to assess their employees' fit perceptions across time, resulting in their organizational "fit" standards. Thus, managers can examine the effects of various organizational changes on the employee fit perceptions and could benchmark their levels of applicant and

workforce fit relative to other organizations. This can result in a standardized, common matrix to compare applicants across different dimensions of fit, during the process of recruitment and selection. Thus, the managers can measure and manage the fit, both during anticipatory socialization (recruitment and selection) and after organizational entry (training and socialization).

Limitations & Future Research

The current study was conducted on a sample of 317 respondents from select organizations in Delhi and NCR. The results of the study cannot be generalized for the entire population. Moreover, while these kinds of studies need to be replicated in different industries and sectors, the practical implications for organizations to focus more on person-job fit during the process of recruitment and selection in order to increase job satisfaction, organization commitment and finally to reduce attrition, are clearly indicated.

This study was limited by the use of the self-report technique, while collecting data. With self-report measures, social desirability biases become a cause of concern. Future studies can also employ qualitative techniques to identify emergent themes in this area.

The study used the cross-sectional design from which it becomes difficult to draw conclusions about the causal relationships among variables. Future research could address this question by using other methods, such as longitudinal and experimental designs.

Findings from this study suggest that practitioners and organizational leaders cannot overlook the personal attributes of their employees. Employees whose personality is incongruent with the kind of job they are doing are less likely to be satisfied in their positions and may be more likely to leave their organizations. This suggests that the organizations must be careful to hire employees with the right personality attributes required to perform that job. Once employed, organizational leaders must provide opportunities for workers to fulfill their unique values and interests in ways that align with organizational interests. Doing so may increase the overall employee fit and job satisfaction and offset negative outcomes, such as employee turnover.

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations for future research are offered. First, some effort should be made to validate the results of this study among other samples and populations. Second, while the theoretical model tested in this study has found evidence of an association between person-job fit, job satisfaction, organizational commitment and turnover intentions, it is likely many other organizational variables are also affected by this fit or the lack of it. Future studies should consider a wider range of factors plausibly associated with the fit concept. Finally, the fit studies would be deeply benefited by employing other research methodologies.

Despite these recommendations, results clearly suggest that the theoretical model tested in this study adds substantial value to the employee recruitment and selection process.

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