

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

A REVIEW OF THE PERSON-JOB FIT THEORY

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**AN INDEPENDENT CONCEPTUAL STUDY PAPER SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL
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DECLARATION

I declare that this paper is my original work and has never been presented to any University for any award. Where other people's work was used, due acknowledgments have been made.



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This is to certify that this Independent Conceptual Study Paper has been submitted with my approval as a University Supervisor.



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LIST OF ACRYNOMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

PJF	:	Person-Job Fit
PPO	:	Person-Organisation
PE	:	Person-Environment
D-A	:	Demand-Abilities
N-S	:	Needs-Supplies
SC-J	:	Self Concept - Job
UMVT:		Unfolding Model of Voluntary Turnover (UMVT)
OCB	:	Organisation Citizenship Behavior
KSA	:	Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

This section is a review of literature on the person-job fit theory. The section demonstrate an understanding of the person-job fit theory by examining the source of the theory and reviewing the different understanding of the person-job fit theory, and how this theory has evolved. This section further explains the different dimensions and conceptualizations of the person-job fit theory namely the Needs-Supplies; Demands-Abilities, and Self-concept – job. In summary, the section sets the stage for an understanding and further review of the person-job fit theory.

Person-job fit theory is a concept that emanates from an understanding of the work environment and the organization. Without the environment and the organization, we would not comprehensively address the person-job fit theory. In understanding the environment, researchers refers to the person-environment fit (PE) in which it is conceptualized as the match between an individual and his or her job, group, organization, or vocation (Kristof, 1996). These different conceptualizations of fit have typically been studied independently, but researchers have called for studies that incorporate multiple types of fit in a single study, and some empirical evidence (Cable and DeRue, 2002; Lauver and Kristof-Brown, 2001) has emerged to support the conceptual distinctions among different types or sub components of fit. Empirical studies (Cable and DeRue, 2012; Kristof-Brown et al., 2002; Lauver and Kristof-Brown, 2001) have supported the conceptual distinction between types of fit such as person-organisation (P-O) fit that refers to the congruence between the characteristics of individuals (goals, skills, and values) and the characteristics of organizations (goals, values, resources and culture); and person-job fit (needs-supplies, demands-abilities, self-concept-job).

Among various forms of person-environment fit (PE), researchers have extensively studied person-job fit (person-job fit) and person-organization (PO) fit (Adkins et al., 1994; Cable and Judge, 1997; Dwards, 1991; Kristof, 1996; Kristof-Brown, 2000; Werbel and Gilliland, 1999). To this extent, person-environment fit serves as a basis and source of both person-job fit and person-organisation fit. Although research has typically focused on person-environment fit, the fit between individuals and their larger work environment may actually represent sub-environments in which fit occurs even though the overall person-environment fit is incongruent (Spokane et al, 2000). The interactions of personality type and environment are significant. Wampold et al (1999) experiment in which interactions among people in a work environment were examined to determine their nature and effects on individual decision making showed

that individuals select their environments and that other individuals react to the behaviors they suggest, including intentional efforts to manipulate the environment (Meir & Tzadok, 2000).

Further to this, well as person-job fit is concerned with the individual and how they fit with the job, person-organisation fit is concerned with how the individual fits with the organization as a whole. Person-organisation fit is defined as the compatibility between people and the entire organizations. Person-organisation fit refers to an employee's subjective beliefs about how well their personal values match the organization and its culture (Cable and De Rue, 2002; Cable and Parsons, 2001; Kristof, 1996). Kristof (1996) summarizes several conceptualizations of person-organisation fit, including supplementary person-organisation fit which is fit as similarity with other individuals in the environment; and complementary person-organisation fit which is fit between gaps in the environment and how these gaps are filled by the individual; demands and supplies (Adkins et al., 1994; Kristof-Brown, 2000; Werbel and Gilliland, 1999).

Researchers and practitioners contend that person-organisation fit is the key to maintaining a flexible and committed workforce, and that the notion of person-organisation fit takes different forms depending on the characteristics of the person and the organisation (Muchinsky and Monahan, 1987). Person-organisation fit describes the connection between individual and organisational goals; individual preferences or needs and organisational systems or structures; and individual personality and organisational climate (Kristof, 1996). Person-organisation fit is a sub-component of the broader concept of person-environment fit (Vilela et al., 2008). Several different dimensions to conceptualize person-environment fit have evolved, including person-organisation fit (Sekiguchi, 2004). Recent studies have shown that person-job fit and person-organisation fit perceptions have a significant impact on job related attitudes and outcomes (Chatman, 1991; Lauver and Kristof-Brown, 2001; O'Reilly et al., 1991; Saks and Ashforth, 1997; Cable and DeRue, 2002).

It is important to note however that in as much as person-job fit is an antecedent of person-environment fit, and is related to the person-organisation fit, person-job fit has been extensively studied with little attention to the underpinnings of person-job fit despite the need to understand the relationship between the individual employee and the job itself (Inceoglu et al, 2010; Omaswa, 2009)

1.1 Evolving Definitions and antecedents of Person-Job Fit

In organisations, the costs of a failure of fit between employees and their jobs has had substantial consequences in the form of feelings of incompetence, discomfort, and failure to perform resulting in poor service delivery, low commitment and satisfaction, low morale and eventually quitting (Inceoglu et al, 2010; Morell et al., 2008; Hill, 2007; Kivimaki et al., 2007; Omaswa, 2009). In reality, there appears to be a failure in congruence between employees' needs and abilities on one hand, and their work on the other hand (Schneider et al, 2013). The increasing disparities in a person's characteristics and those of the job such as working conditions, work load, wages and career opportunities are an impetus to several positive or negative work attitudes and outcomes (Omaswa, 2008); this disparity is generally summarized in the person – job fit (PJF) theory.

Among various forms of fit, researchers have extensively studied person-job fit (Inceoglu et al, 2010; Adkins et al., 2005; Cable and Judge, 1997; Edwards, 1991; Kristof, 1996; Kristof-Brown, 2000). Person-job fit is defined as the compatibility between a person's characteristics and those of the job or tasks that are performed at work. Edwards (1991) in his ground breaking research, mentions that person-job fit has both a demands-abilities relationship (demands of the job and the abilities of the person); a needs-supplies relationship (needs of the person and supplies from the job); and a self-concept job relationship (Hecht and Allen, 2005; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; Lopez and Babin, 2009). As such, the notion of person-job fit is conceptualized as the match between an individual and the requirements of a specific job (Barber, 2008; Chhabra, 2015). Person-job fit is further conceptualized as the match between individual knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSA) and demands of the job on one hand; and or the needs or desires of an individual and what is provided by the job on other hand (Chhabra, 2015; Edwards, 1991; O'Reilly, Chatman, & Caldwell, 1991). Person-job fit involves matching the person and the requirements that are directly associated with a specific job (Newton and Jimmieson, 2009).

Literature on realistic job previews (Wanous, 1977, 1980, 1992) suggests that accurate and realistic job information enables prospective job holders to assess the degree of congruence between their KSA and the job requirements (Breaugh & Starke, 2000; Tschantz et al, 2016). Unfortunately, in today's business environment, managers have not taken enough time to

realistically review jobs for prospective job holders (Tschantz, 2016). In addition, more attention has been geared towards understanding the organisation and its needs, and less on understanding how the individual fits with and interrelates with the job and the organisation to enable performance (Omaswa, 2008). Kristof-Brown, 2001; Cable and DeRue, 2002; Sekiguchi, 2004; Hoffman and Woehr, 2006; Nelson and Billsberry, 2007) revealed that achieving congruence with all dimensions of person-job fit leads to positive work outcomes for both employees and organizations. Therefore, employees who fit on all or various dimensions may experience positive work outcomes than employees experiencing misfit. Thus, it is assumed that both individuals and organizations will be more effective when the values of the person and the job are congruent (Shin and Holland, 2004; Tschantz, 2016).

In the aggregate, empirical studies provide convincing evidence that person-job fit is an important determinant of both short and long-term consequences relating to work outcomes and job attitudes (Huang, 2005; Sekiguchi, 2004). Extensive empirical research supports the links between the types of person-job fit and important work attitudes and behaviors (Edwards and Shipp, 2007; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). Person-job fit is one of the important contributors to organizational success and it is a simple but important concept that involves matching the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) of people with the characteristics of jobs (Mathis & Jackson, 2003). Following this approach, if employees do not have values that are consistent with those of their jobs, and therefore lack proper fit, they experience feelings of incompetence and anxiety (Vianen Van, 2000; Zoghbi-Manrique de Lara, 2008) resulting into work tension, absenteeism, and burnout, bringing out emotions of low self-esteem and lack of trust, minimizing motivation in the work environment and a decrease in organizational commitment and job satisfaction, ultimately resulting into actual quitting (McConnell, 2003; Silverthorne, 2004; Papavero, 2007).

Person-job fit theory therefore has a significant impact on job related outcomes (Tschantz, 2016; Schneider et al, 2013; Boon et al, 2011; Lauer and Kristof-Brown, 2005). A research by Cable and DeRue (2002) with employed individuals suggests that it is important to examine all types of person-job fit as they may be associated with different outcomes (Kristof-Brown et al, 2005). The relationship between worker needs and what the job supplies (Cennamo, 2008; Brkich et al, 2002); the demands of the job and abilities required to perform the job (Bolino & Fieldman, 2000; Higgins & Judge, 2004; Kristof-Brown, 2000; Lauer, 2001); and worker self-concept and the job (Tinsley, 2000) therefore need further examination.

1.2 Dimensions of Person-Job Fit

Edwards (1991) outlined two basic conceptualizations of the person-job fit theory. The first is the demands-abilities fit, in which employees' knowledge, skills, and abilities are congruent with what the job requires. The second form of person-job fit occurs when employees' needs, desires, or preferences are met by the jobs that they perform. This type of fit, often labeled needs-supplies or supplies-values fit has been the emphasis of various theories of adjustment, well-being, and satisfaction (Cable et al, 2002). Further to this, Scroggins (2003) proposes Self Concept-Job fit in addition to Demand-Abilities and Needs-Supplies fit. The three dimensions of fit indicate the nature of fit perceptions adopted by researches on person-job fit (Kristof, 2005). Livingstone, Nelson, and Barr (1997) found demand-abilities, needs - supply fit and self-concept job fit to be differentially related to employee work outcomes and job attitudes.

1.2.1 Demand-Abilities

Demand-abilities (D-A) fit involves the extent to which a person's abilities are congruent with the demands of the job (Cable et al, 2002; Werbel & Johnson, 2001; Edwards, 1996). Emphasis is placed on fitting the knowledge, skills, and abilities of the individual with the demands and requirements of the job (Kristof-Brown, Livingstone et al., 1997; Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005). Kristof (1996) defined this type of fit as the fit between the abilities of the person and the demands or requirements of the job.

According to Brikich et al, (2002), Demand-Abilities dimension can be reflected in the need to satisfy some people at work coupled by an ability to upset others; ability to handle multiple tasks and work much more than the usual; employee's possession of the right knowledge, skills and abilities for the job; and the ability to solve problems presented by the job, among others.

1.2.2 Needs-Supplies

Needs-Supplies (N-S) fit exists to the extent that the motives or needs of the person fit or match the supplies of the job for those motives or needs (Cable et al, 2002; Edwards, 1996). It involves the individual's evaluation of the job based on personal needs or values (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; Livingstone et al., 1997; Van Vianen, 2000). Kristof (1996) conceptualized and described this type of fit as a needs-supplies match in which the desires of the employee match the attributes of the job (Liu et al, 2015).

According to Brikich et al, (2002), Needs-Supplies dimension can be reflected in the employee having enough time to do what is expected of them on the job; the availability of necessary resources to do the job; the ability of the job to meet the personal needs of the employee; and the comfort of the employee with the supplies that their current job offers, among others.

1.2.3 Self-concept – Job

Self-Concept/job (SC-J) fit proposed by Scroggins (2003) is another facet of person-job fit. A similar conceptualization of this type of perceptual fit was investigated by May, Gilson & Harter (2004). Scroggins defined self-concept-job fit as the congruence between the individual's self-concept and the nature of the work that the individual performs. This facet of fit occurs when the performance of job tasks produces perceptions and feelings congruent with individuals' perceptions of who they are (actual self) or the kind of person they desire to be (ideal self). The performance of job tasks provides an individual with self-confirming or validating information regarding the actual or ideal self. Therefore, the individual perceives the knowledge, skills, abilities, and behaviors involved in task performance, as well as job outcomes resulting from performance to be consistent with his or her self-declarative knowledge, confirming the characteristics, beliefs, values, and roles the individual perceives to be characteristic of the self.

According to Brikich et al, (2002), Self-concept – job dimension can be reflected in an employee's perceptions of clarity and the clarity of job responsibilities; how the employee's job schedules interferes with both personal and family life of the employee; feelings of emotions and frustrations arising from the job; feelings and perceptions of control when on the job, including the ability to change many things on the job; perceptions of the employee having good qualities to be a success on the job; and perceptions of doing things better than or as well as others on the job, among others.

SECTION TWO: THE EMERGING THEORIES/ CONCEPTS RELATED TO PERSON-JOB FIT

This section is a review of literature on other theories that emerge from and relate with the person-job fit.

In understanding the person-job fit theory and the resulting work related outcomes of the theory, several theories are investigated and inferences made on how these theories relate and overlap with the person-job fit theory. In addition, the limitations of these theories in understanding fit perceptions and employee behavior are analyzed. The theories reviewed in this section include, the theory of the psychological contract, the self – verification theory, the situation occurrence theory, the theory of perceived job mobility, the unfolding theory of voluntary turnover, and the social exchange theory.

2.1 Theory of Psychological Contracts

Psychological contracts are defined as an individual belief in mutual obligations between a person and another party such as an employer (Robinson, 2000; Rousseau, 1995). Researchers commonly differentiate between transactional and relational psychological contracts (Hulin and Glomb, 1999; McLean Parks et al., 1998; Rousseau, 1989). In transactional psychological contracts, job requirements and expectations are clear and specified in advance, which allows individuals to assess personal costs and benefits associated with the exchange and calibrate their contributions accordingly in regards to a job. In relational psychological contracts, the details of the exchange are unlikely to be specified in advance, and the monitoring of inducements and contributions is less relevant. Relational trust leads individuals into social exchange relationships (Rousseau et al., 1998). Psychological contracts provide a platform for defining expectations with regards to a job, and this has an impact on person-job fit as these expectation are either upheld or violated throughout the employee's lifetime (Hulin and Glomb, 1999).

As this review indicates, the theoretical assumptions that seem to transfuse the psychological contract literature are not without major deficiencies, which in turn pose serious questions around the continued sustainability of the construct as currently constituted (Cullinane, 2006). It is argued

that in its present form it suggests an ideologically influenced formulation intended for a precise managerialist understanding and explanation of modern work and employment (Rousseau, 2001). Guest (2004) articulates the view that workplaces have become increasingly fragmented because of newer and more flexible forms of employment which have made the psychological contract prone to violation. In context, there is confusion around the need to emphasize the significance of implicit obligations of employee and the employer; understand employees' expectations from employment; or focus on reciprocal mutuality as a core determinant of the psychological contract (Rosseau and Tijoriwala, 1998; Atkinson et al. 2003; Tekleab and Taylor, 2003). According to Guest (2004), for the psychological contract to be a suitable and effective tool for analysing the fit relationship, it needs to realise the employment relationship is a two-way exchange and not a managerialist tool, with the focus squarely upon the perceptions of reciprocal promises and obligations of both parties.

Central to the theoretical assumptions behind the psychological contract, is the notion of the subjective interchange between employer and employee having a "contractual" status; and whether the psychological contract can be constituted as a 'contract'. Guest (2004) and Purcell et al (2003) argue that this fundamentally compromises the central frame of the psychological contract theory. Indeed this problem is even more pertinent if the contract is viewed as some form of on-going process (Rubery et al, 2004). This on-going process means that the dimensions of reciprocity are unspecified and implicit, and therefore always difficult to quantify, and yet the theory assumes that measurable indicators are available (Guest, 2006). This is consistent with the fact that jobs are always evolving and as such, congruence or fit varies over time.

2.2 Self-Verification Theory

Swann (1983; 1990) in his founding research, provides a theoretical argument for the relationship between Self Concept-Job fit and work related attitudes. The theory states that individuals will be motivated to seek out and place themselves in situations that provide them with self-confirming or verifying information. If the job provides such self-confirming information, the individual will value it and may develop a greater sense fit (Kristof, 1996; Scroggins, 2003). Therefore the self-

verification theory provides an avenue for confirming the person-job fit theory, and its relevance in understanding fit perceptions and the consequences thereof.

However, the self-verification theory's most provocative prediction is that people should prefer self-confirming evaluations even if the self-view in question is negative. This in particular is a limitation to the theory. Contrary to other theories, the self-verification theory predicts that those who see themselves as a misfit on the job should prefer evidence that others also perceive them as such. As such, in cases where there are no relationships, or other's perceptions, there will not be self-verification. This means that when people want the relationship to survive, feedback may be avoided not only when it threatens the desire for self-verification, but also when it threatens the future of the relationship. The general principle, then, is that people will seek self-verification only insofar as doing so does not put them at risk of being abandoned, for abandonment would frustrate their motive and fit perceptions (Vohs et al, 2006).

2.3 The Situation Occurrence Theory

The situation occurrence theory posits that job related attitudes are a function of situational occurrences and job characteristics such as pay, recognition and advancement in career which may result in positive or negative outcomes (Quarstein et al., 2002). For many employees, this explains the need to hinge on a good relationship with the job and adequacy of resources (Williams et al., 2003); especially with institutional resource constraints (Rondeau and Francescutti, 2005). As such, organizational and institutional resources (supplies of the job) are relevant in determining person-job fit through the analysis of Needs-Supplies dimension of person-job fit.

The common denominator for understanding resourcing in institutions is that of "institutions matter" (Kaufman, 2013). An underlying assumption in the study of institutions is that organizations are deeply embedded in the wider institutional context (Powell et al, 2011). Therefore, organizational practices such as the structures and jobs are either a direct reflection of, or response to, rules and structures built into their larger environment (Paauwe & Boselie, 2003). This institutional environment is the source of legitimization, supplies, demands, rewards or

incentives for, as well as constraints or sanctions on, organizational jobs (Meyer & Rowan, 2013). As such, job parameters are highly guided by the resources at institutional and organisational levels.

2.4 Theory of Perceived Job Mobility

Wheeler et al. (2005); Lee and Mitchell's (1994) posits that a multidimensional theory of fit supports the finding that job related attitudes could indeed be positive or negative; in which case result in employees leaving the jobs as a result of misfit. Wheeler et al. (2005) suggested that the combination of job related attitudes and person-job misfit would lead to negative consequences in so far as the individual perceives viable job alternatives. That is, person-job misfit might indeed lead to negative attitudes; but unless a poor-fitting, dissatisfied individual believes that other work opportunities exist, that individual will not leave his or her current job.

Person-job fit research assumes a linear relationship between person-job fit and work related attitudes or outcomes. (Wheeler et al., 2005); however, empirical studies show a weak relationship between the two constructs (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; Verquer et al., 2003). Indeed, the weak relationship suggests that more employees may exhibit relatively positive work outcomes despite the lack of person-job fit. Wheeler et al. (2005) proposed a model of multidimensional fit that included possible explanations of how employees will behave in the event of misfit and Wheeler et al.'s model suggests that there are many behavioral manifestations that may show, however perceived job mobility, which is defined as an individual's perception of available alternative job opportunities, is a key moderating variable between causes of misfit and the work related attitude/outcomes. From a theoretical perspective, the role played by perceived alternative job opportunities in the study of person-job fit is notable. In addition, meta-analyses of person-job fit demonstrate interesting results related to the predictive validity of person-job fit on work related attitudes or outcomes (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; Verquer et al., 2003) as moderated by other variables.

2.5 The Unfolding Model of Voluntary Turnover (UMVT)

Lee and Mitchell (1994) proposed a theory called the unfolding model of voluntary turnover (UMVT). Historically, job attitudes researchers viewed perceived job alternatives as key to

understanding why employees voluntarily leave jobs (Hulin et al., 1985). Mobley (1977) proposed that person-job misfit leads to a linear series of cognitive evaluations, starting with initial thoughts of leaving the job followed by the comparison between the current job and possible job alternatives, and ending with intentions to leave the job. Lee and Mitchell (1994) argued that while this linear decision-making process intuitively appeals to many researchers, the ambiguous empirical support for these types of models suggests that voluntarily quitting a job is more complex than previously thought because demand-abilities, needs-supplies, and self-concept – job variables are specific with respect to the individual and their context (Morell, 2008; Trevor, 2001).

The UMVT suggests that work related outcomes occur in four distinct paths, in which an employee engages in decision making based on their fit with the job and the organization (Donnelly & Quirin, 2006). In path one, employees carry out an extant plan to disengage with the job and they do not search for or evaluate alternatives, or consider likely offers, but take action regardless of fit. In paths 2 and 3, job and organisational shocks prompt dissonance or perceptions of misfit between the job and the employee which if severe, leads to immediate negative work related outcomes. Alternatively, this perceived misfit may lead to negative work related outcomes, which systematically result in disengagement as an afterthought, based on available job alternatives (path 3). In path 4, misfit is experienced gradually overtime as the job holder appreciates the increasing lack of fit between themselves and the job (Morell et al, 2008).

Person-job fit research assumes a linear relationship between person-job fit and job related outcomes (Wheeler et al., 2005); however, empirical studies indicate that more employees remain in the job despite the lack of person-job fit (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; Verquer et al., 2003). The question becomes, then, why do poor-fitting and dissatisfied employees remain with the organization? Consistent with both traditional sequential models such as Mobley (1977) and the UMVT, Wheeler et al. (2005) proposed a model of multidimensional fit that included possible explanations of how employees will behave in the event of misfit. Wheeler et al.'s model (UMVT) proposes that there are many options available for employees experiencing person-job misfit. Specifically, Wheeler et al. (2005) include perceived job mobility. In their analysis, person-job fit researchers do not have a suitable theoretical framework to study the combined effects of person-job fit and work related outcomes; and second, because of these theoretical shortcomings, person-

job fit researchers test person-job fit and work related outcomes as independent effects. The UMVT provides that theoretical grounding; moreover, the results confirm that person-job fit acts to predict work related outcomes (Trevor, 2001).

However, the UMVT does not nullify the traditional models of misfit as much as it incorporates and expands these models (Lee et al, 1996). Interpreting the two major meta-analyses of person-job fit using the UMVT, the strength of the person-job fit becomes clearer, and the assessment of which strongly predicts positive work outcomes or attitudes (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). But because the job and organizational shocks leading to the assessment of person-job fit are organizationally bound, a weaker meta-analytic relationship between person-job fit and work related outcomes is guided by the intermediary role of other variables (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; Verquer et al., 2003). In his empirical study, Wheeler et al (2005) incorporates the assessment of fit related organizational shocks found in path 3 of the UMVT and the key component of job fit in paths 3 and 4 of the UMVT; moreover, Wheeler et al. include the traditional misfit variable of job mobility as moderating the relationship between person-job fit and work related attitudes where they argue that should an employee experience PJ misfit, either through an organizationally induced causes, or through gradual affective decreases, the likelihood of an employee quitting the job depends on that employee's perceptions of available job alternatives. In path 3 of the UMVT, PJ misfit leads to negative work related attitudes such as job dissatisfaction, which causes individuals to scan the environment for possible job alternatives. If no suitable job alternatives exist, the individual will remain with the organization. Not only is this consistent with path 3 of the UMVT, the most frequently engaged work related outcome decision-making path, but is also consistent with Path 4 of the UMVT (Morell, 2008).

In their empirical study (Morell et al, 2008), in contrast to the findings of Lee et al. (1999), the model fails to classify a substantial number of job related outcomes, and specific hypotheses derived from the model received only partial support. Classification failures were investigated using both quantitative and qualitative data in which work related outcomes were motivated by other factors beyond a voluntary need (Donnelly & Quirin, 2006). In addition, the model relies too heavily on dichotomous measures to tap a construct, rather than a scalar one which means that there are fewer data points along which respondents' scores may lie. The danger here is that there may be a failure to capture or reflect construct complexity, and classification can become a matter

of fitting the phenomenon to the model, rather than seeing whether the model fits the phenomenon by testing its assumptions critically (Morell et al, 2008).

2.6 The Social Exchange Theory

The social exchange theory asserts that employees seek to maintain a balance between the inputs that they bring to a relation and the consequences they derive from the exchange that takes place within this relation. This investment-outcomes exchange is highly dependent on the person-job fit theory to the extent that employees who do not experience congruence between their abilities, needs, desires, and effort and what the job supplies and offers will be affected (Molm and Cook, 2005). Individuals who perceive themselves as unbalanced in an exchange relation will experience distress (Adams, 1965). In addition, equity, as conceived by social exchange theory, primarily refers to a process of social or interpersonal comparison in which one's own ratio of inputs and outcomes is compared to that of others, and as Pritchard (2001) indicates, job holders also use internal (individual) standards, thus excluding the comparison (Adams, 1965; Schaufeli, 2006).

In line with Pritchard's interpretation, the theory conceives equity as the balance between perceived own job investments such as abilities, needs, and self-concept; and own job returns such as demands, supplies, and the job itself, relative to the employee's own internal standards (Molm and Cook, 2005). If an employee perceives certain job demands as stressful or highly demanding, the employee will often cope by investing additional effort (Hockey, 2007), in order to attain fit. When this coping is effective and the job demands are met, the expected returns will occur, the balance between investments and outcomes is restored, and equity is achieved, allowing for person-job fit. However, when coping is unsuccessful and the demands are not met, insufficient returns are achieved and inequity is experienced, causing person-job misfit (Walster et al., 1978). According to Hobfoll (2002); when employees feel that the effort invested to master the job demands they are facing is balanced by the outcomes or available job resources, they will experience an affective-motivational state resulting in person-job fit and positive work attitudes (Inceoglu et al, 2010).

The core ideas that comprise the social exchange theory however have yet to be adequately articulated and integrated. As a consequence, tests of the model, as well as its applications, tend to be using an incompletely specified set of frames or ideas. For example, exchanges affect relations, and relationships may affect exchanges. This predicament creates at least two problems in which constructs have not been fully identified as many tests of the model leave out critical theoretical variables; and some formulations of the model are ambiguous, lending themselves to multiple interpretations. As a result, the presence of any vagueness renders the model difficult to test (Cropanzano et al, 2005).

SECTION THREE: PERSON-JOB FIT THEORY AND EMPLOYEE OUTCOMES

This section is an extension of section two. It reviews literature on the possible employee work related outcomes or attitudes that emanate from the person-job fit theory. In this review, the researcher examines the possible outcomes of person-job fit and how other emerging theories interplay to predict employee outcomes. The researcher specifically noted that person-job misfit may not directly lead to negative work related outcomes, and as such is moderated by other variables which are linked to person-job fit. The employee outcomes examined in this section include; organizational commitment, job satisfaction, employee engagement and job involvement, organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), and turnover/ intention to leave.

3.1 Organisational Commitment

Research shows that person-job fit is an antecedent of organisational commitment and organisational commitment is important for employee and job performance (Yousef, 2000). According to Porter et al, (2001), organisational commitment is a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization's goals and values; a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organisation; and a strong desire to remain in the organization by the employee. It is an attachment, emotionally and functionally to the organisation (Elizur and Kolowsky, 2001). Stallworth (2003), demonstrates that affective, continuance and normative commitment are three components of commitment considered to be psychological states which employees experience to different degrees. To be affective is to have emotional attachment to, identification with and involvement in the organisation. The continuance component of commitment refers to costs the employee associates with leaving the organisation, and normative commitment occurs when the employee has feelings of obligation to remain with the organisation (Allen and Meyer, 1990; Behery, 2009).

Allen and Meyer (1990) argue that affective commitment is determined by work experiences relating to the job of the person and structural characteristics, continuance commitment is determined by the magnitude and number of investments that have been made in the current organization and the number of perceived alternatives, and normative commitment is determined by an individual's experiences prior to entry and during employment in the organization in terms of familial, cultural and organizational socialization. In recent research, person-job fit has become

an important facet of organisational commitment in many organisations (Kristof, 2011). Edwards (1991) outlined two basic conceptualizations of the person-job fit relative to organizational commitment. The first is the demands-abilities fit, in which employees' knowledge, skills, and abilities are commensurate with what the job requires. The second form of person-job fit occurs when employees' needs, desires, or preferences are met by the jobs that they perform. This type of fit, often labeled needs-supplies or supplies-values fit has been the emphasis of various theories of adjustment, well-being, and satisfaction (Caplan, 1983; French, Caplan, & Harrison, 1974; Harrison, 1978; Locke, 1969; Porter, 1961, 1962). Scroggins (2003) proposes Self Concept-Job fit in addition to Demand-Abilities and Needs-Supplies fit.

The above three forms of fit indicate the nature of fit perceptions adopted by researchers on person-job fit (Kristof, 2005). Livingstone, Nelson, and Barr (1997) found demand-abilities, needs - supply fit and self-concept job fit to be differentially related to organizational commitment. Research supports the relationships between Needs-Supplies, Demand-Abilities fit and organizational commitment (Boxx et al., 1991; Chatman, 1991; Kristof, 1996; Livingstone et al., 1997). In addition, the Self-verification theory (Swann, 1983, 1990) also provides a theoretical argument for the relationship between self-concept - job fit and organizational commitment. The theory states that individuals will be motivated to seek out and place themselves in situations that provide them with self-confirming information. If the job provides such self-confirming information, the individual will value it and may develop a greater sense of commitment and attachment to the job and organization (Kristof, 1996). Most of this research has focused on distinguishing the relationship between the different types of person-job fit and organisational commitment in general (Scroggins, 2003).

There are however gaps and question that need to be addressed such as the relationship between the different types of person-job fit and the different forms of organisational commitment. Less research has been made on the variance in the different types of organisational commitment as a result of fit perceptions. The different types of perceived fit could account for different facets of attachment or reasons as to why attachment to work organizations develops in employees. For example, commitment might result from perceived Needs-Supplies fit and Self Concept-Job fit because an employee perceives that the job is supplying desirable job outcomes that lead to the satisfaction of needs, or the job is experienced as meaningful (Rothbart et al., 2000). Commitment

is strengthened when the same employee also perceives high person-job fit and perceives compatibility between self and coworkers or between person-job fit values and organizational values (Stallworth, 2003; 2004). Therefore, it is possible that the different types of fit could account for a unique variance in organizational commitment because the types of fit are related to different aspects of commitment and the reasons why individuals become committed to organizations.

3.2 Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is defined as a negative or positive judgment regarding one's level of job situation (Weiss and Cropanzano, 2006). Job satisfaction is a general attitude that the employee has towards their job and is directly tied to the nature of fit between an employee and their job (Ostroff, 1992; Kristof, 1996). While job satisfaction is immensely critical in any organisational setting, more focus is argued to be geared towards the facets that define job satisfaction (Brown and Peterson, 1993). Churchill et al, (2008) defines job satisfaction as all characteristics of the job itself and the work environment which employees find rewarding, fulfilling and satisfying or frustrating and unsatisfying. Job satisfaction has been understood as a function of perceived relationship between what one expects from a job and what one perceives that that job offers (Lund, 2003). Employee needs, expectations and values such as the job itself, co-workers, supervision, pay and advancements are generally considered as antecedents of job satisfaction (Purani, 2008). Additionally, Spector (1997) argues that job satisfaction is as an attitudinal variable that reflects the degree to which people like their jobs, and is positively related to person-job fit. For many employees, job satisfaction hinges on a good relationship with the job and the adequacy of resources (Williams et al., 2003); especially with institutional resource constraints (Rondeau and Francescutti, 2005). Quarstein et al. (2002) posit the situational occurrence theory which contends that job satisfaction is determined by two factors as does Herzberg's theory.

The maintenance of a good fit between the person and the job is essential for maintaining job satisfaction (Silverthorne, 2004). There is extensive theory and empirical evidence supporting the relationships between both needs-supplies fit and job satisfaction (Boxx et al., 1991; Chatman, 1991; Cable & Derue, 2002; Kristof, 1996; Livingstone et al., 1997; Scroggins 2003). Livingstone et al., (2000) also reported a relationship between a demand-abilities version of fit and job

satisfaction. In addition, Scroggins found strong correlations between measures of self-concept - job fit and job satisfaction. Job satisfaction has been conceptualized and measured as a multifaceted construct (Spector, 1997; 2001). In total, all the forms of person-job fit have been found to be surrogate indicators of job satisfaction. Following the framework proposed by Spector (1997; 2001) and Kristof (1996), it is proposed that the different types of fit may account for unique variance in job satisfaction because they are related to different facets of job satisfaction. For example, needs-supplies fit may account for satisfaction with pay or benefits, or other distributive outcomes that the employee values, while the self-concept - job fit may account for satisfaction with the nature of the work itself. While research consistently supports the beneficial outcomes associated with increased person-job fit and job satisfaction, it is assumed that person-job misfit necessarily leads to decreased job satisfaction (Kristof, 1996) thus creating the maxim that person-job fit and job satisfaction share a strong positive relationship (Wheeler et al., 2005). The greater the degree to which an individual's values and job demands overlap, (Value-Goal congruence, Chatman, 1991), the more satisfied the employee will be in his or her job (Kristof, 1996).

3.3 Employee engagement and job involvement

Kahn (1990; 1992) defines employee engagement as the binding and harnessing of the individual with their job roles. In engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during job performances. Engagement means to be psychologically present when occupying and performing a job. In addition, Rothbard (2001) defines engagement as psychological presence which involves two critical components namely attention and absorption. Attention refers to cognitive availability and the amount of time one spends thinking about a role while absorption refers to the intensity of one's focus on a role. On the other hand, job involvement is the result of a cognitive judgment about the need satisfying abilities of the job and it is tied to one's self-image (May et al., 2004). This definition directly relates to the person-job fit dimensions of needs-supplies; and self-concept - job in the theory of person-job fit.

Kahn (1990) found that there were three psychological conditions associated with engagement namely; meaningfulness, safety, and availability. Khan specifically noted that when employees are offered more psychological meaningfulness and psychological safety, and when they were more psychologically available; they will be engaged. On this basis, all the three person-job fit

dimensions namely demands abilities, self-concept-job, and needs-supplies which predict an employees' psychological state while on the job, confirm Kahn's (1990) and May et al. (2004) models that meaningfulness, safety, and availability are significantly related to engagement. Khan (1990) and May et al. (2004) also found that job enrichment and job fit were positive predictors of meaningfulness. And that job characteristics such as skills variety, task significance, task identity, autonomy and feedback predict employee engagement and job involvement (Kahn, 1990; May et al., 2004).

3.4 Organization Citizenship Behavior (OCB)

OCB refers to the discretionary behaviors namely altruism, sportsmanship, civic virtue, conscientiousness, courtesy, and helpful behavior of employees, which are not directly related to their jobs and their productivity (Mackenzie, Podsakoff, & Ahearne, 2008). Even though OCB is not part of an employee's assigned duties, these extra-role behaviors are still beneficial to organizations, members, and employees themselves (Bettencourt & Brown, 1997; Kelley & Hoffman, 1997; MacKenzie, Podsakoff, & Fetter, 1993; MacKenzie, Podsakoff, & Ahearne, 1998; Netemeyer et al., 1997; Piercy et al., 2006; Podsakoff & MacKenzie, 1994). Organ (1988) defines OCB as work-related behaviours that are discretionary and not related to the formal organisational reward system, and, in aggregate, promote the effective functioning of the organisation. Moreover, OCB reflects those actions performed by employees that surpass the minimum role requirements expected by the organisation and that promote the welfare of co-workers, work groups, and the greater organization (Lovell et al., 1999; Jehad et al., 2011).

OCB is observed as an important individual outcome and a behavioural variable that promotes effectiveness in organisations (LePine et al., 2002; Organ, 1988). Organisational literature argues that person-job fit has an impact on OCB through job satisfaction (Van Dyne et al., 1994); as such, employees that are not satisfied may not necessarily exhibit and engage in extra-role behaviors. It has been noted that other mediating factors besides job satisfaction could exist (Netemeyer et al., 1997; Podsakoff et al., 1990). Another variable that researchers have underlined as a potential mediator of this relationship is organizational commitment (Mackenzie et al., 1998; Menguc, 2000). As such, OCB is a form of employee behaviour that is affected by person-job fit (Posner, 1992; Tziner, 1987; Vilela et al., 2008). It is noted that the relationship between person-job fit and OCB is qualified by other moderating effects such as job satisfaction and organizational

commitment, among others proposed because high levels of person-job fit do not directly lead to OCB (Farzaneh, Farashah, & Kazemi, 2014). Job satisfaction and organizational commitment have thus been identified as moderating variables that influence the relationship between person-job fit and OCB relationship (Farzaneh, Farashah, & Kazemi, 2014). The person-job fit theory suggests that congruence between the individual and the job leads to job satisfaction and organizational commitment for the person and favorable outcomes when it comes to achieving organizational goals (Chatman, 1991); thus demonstrating extra role behaviors.

From a theoretical perspective, the gap which needs further examination is the effects of fit on behaviour itself, rather than attitude towards behaviour (Werbel and Gilliland, 1999). Although meta-analytical research supports a robust relationship between subjective person-job fit and attitudes (Verquer et al., 2003; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005), different patterns of relationships between person-job fit and non-attitudinal variables are expected (Hoffman and Woehr, 2006; Friedkin, 2010). Organizational behavior literature supports the positive effect that person-job fit has on job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005; Kristof, 1996). With only a few exceptions (Podsakoff et al., 1990), empirical evidence confirms that job satisfaction and organizational commitment have a positive effect on extra-role behaviors. In this context, job satisfaction and organizational commitment have been proposed and empirically tested (MacKenzie, Podsakoff, & Ahearne, 1998; Netemeyer et al., 1997) as antecedents of OCB (MacKenzie, Podsakoff, & Fetter, 1993; Podsakoff et al., 1990).

3.5 Turnover/ Intention to Leave

Intention to leave characterizes a situation where employees think about quitting and generally lack continuity (Mellor et al, 2004). While actual turnover is the focus of many employers (Moore, 2002); intention to leave is argued to be a strong surrogate indicator of actually leaving (Ajzen and Fishbein, 2006; Igbaria and Greenhaus, 1992). From a research perspective, there is practical merit that once people have actually left the organisation, there is little likelihood to understand their prior situation (Sager, 1991; Kalliath and Beck, 2001; Saks, 1996). Krammer et al. (1995) investigated the antecedents of intention to leave but found little consistency in their findings. Among the variables consistently found to relate to intention to quit, was person-job misfit normally displayed by frequency of thought of leaving a job, an acute awareness of job

opportunities elsewhere, alternative career choices, and actual or active job search (Leong et al., 1996; Lum et al., 1998; Rahim and Psenicka, 2004).

Person-job fit is related to many positive individual outcomes and should be considered in understanding employee ITL (Hoffman and Woehr, 2006; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; Verquer et al., 2003). In the aggregate, empirical studies provide convincing evidence that person-job fit is an important determinant of turnover and, or intention to leave (Huang, 2005; O'Reilly and Chatman, 1986; Sekiguchi, 2004; Edwards, 1991; Edwards and Shipp, 2007; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). In contrast, Armstrong-Stassen et al, (1994), Igbaria and Greenhaus, (2002), Koesk and Koesk, (1993), and Tinker and Moore, (2003) have found a weak effect of person – job related variables on intention to leave, but rather indirect effects through the experience of job related variables and work attitudes such as job satisfaction and organisational commitment (Igbaria and Greenhaus, 2002; Labatmediene, Endiulaitiene & Gustainiene, 2007), therefore suggesting that there is an indirect relationship between person-job fit and ITL (Wunder et al, 2002).

SECTION FOUR: SHORTCOMINGS OF THE PERSON-JOB FIT (PJF) THEORY

This section is a summary of the shortcomings and knowledge gaps of the person-job fit theory based on this review of literature. The section demonstrates the need for further research on the theory, and also gives guidelines on the future of the person-job fit theory. The section focuses shortcomings of the person-job fit theory in understanding how the three person-job fit dimensions account for variations in organizational commitment given affective, normative and continuance commitment; understanding how the fit dimensions account for variations in job satisfaction. In addition, the theory does not account for the fact that employment today is more fragmented than ever, and that forms of employment are not static but always changing. Further to this, self-concept assumes the need for self –confirming information based on relationships, which may not exist in some jobs. The section further questions the predictive validity of the person-job fit on employee outcomes and actual behavior because there appear to be several other variables (moderators) that account for resultant behavior. It is also examined that the theory does not take account of individual differences, and that the measures for subjective fit are not clear.

Kristof et al, (2005) found demand–abilities, needs - supply fit and self-concept job fit to be differentially related to organizational commitment. The relationship between the different types of person-job fit and the different forms of organisational commitment is one area that remains lacking and very few attempts have been made on the variance in the different types of organisational commitment as a result of the different fit perceptions. The different types of perceived fit could account for different facets of attachment or reasons as to why attachment to work organizations develops in employees (Rothbart et al., 2000; Stallworth, 2003; 2004). Therefore, it is possible that the different types of fit could account for a unique variance in organizational commitment because the types of fit are related to different aspects of commitment and the reasons why individuals become committed to organizations.

In addition, following the framework proposed by Spector (1997; 2001) and Kristof (1996), it is proposed that the different types of fit may account for unique variance in job satisfaction because they are related to different facets of job satisfaction. For example, needs-supplies fit may account for satisfaction with pay or benefits, or other distributive outcomes that the employee values, while

the self-concept - job fit may account for satisfaction with the nature of the work itself. There is a need to further investigate how the different types of fit account for variances in job satisfaction.

In understanding person-job fit and resultant behavior, much focus has been emphasized on attitudinal variables and less on actual behavior itself (Werbel and Gilliland, 1999). Research indicates that different patterns of relationships between person-job fit and non-attitudinal variables are expected (Hoffman and Woehr, 2006; Friedkin, 2010). Further to this, the constructs as currently constituted for the person-job fit theory and the theoretical assumptions that seem to transfuse the psychological contract literature are not without major deficiencies (Cullinane, 2006). It is generally believed that the person-job relationship suggests an ideologically influenced formulation intended for a precise managerialist understanding and explanation of modern work and employment (Rousseau, 2001). Guest (2004) articulates the view that jobs have become increasingly fragmented because of newer and more flexible forms of employment which have made the psychological contract prone to violation. In context, there is confusion around the need to emphasize the significance of implicit obligations of employee and the employer; understand employees' expectations from employment; or focus on reciprocal mutuality as a core determinant of the psychological contract (Rosseau and Tijoriwala, 1998; Atkinson et al. 2003; Tekleab and Taylor, 2003). In addition, the notion of the subjective interchange between employer and employee having a "contractual" status; and whether the psychological contract can be constituted as a 'contract' fundamentally compromises the central frame of the psychological contract theory (Guest, 2004; Purcell et al, 2003). Additionally, this relationship is viewed as some form of on-going process (Rubery et al, 2004). This on-going process means that the dimensions of person-job fit may vary over time and are therefore difficult to quantify, and yet the theory assumes that measurable indicators are available (Guest, 2006).

In reviewing the self-concept-job fit dimension of person-job fit, the self-verification theory's most provocative prediction is that people should prefer self-confirming evaluations even if the self-view in question is negative. Employees who see themselves as a misfit on the job should prefer evidence that others also perceive them as such. As such, in cases where there are no relationships, or other's perceptions, there will not be self-verification, and self-perceptions. This also means that when people want the relationship to survive, feedback may be avoided not only when it threatens the desire for self-verification, but also when it threatens the future of the

relationship. The general principle, then, is that people will seek self-verification only insofar as doing so does not put them at risk of being abandoned (Vohs et al, 2006).

The person-job fit theory assumes a linear relationship between person-job fit and work related attitudes or outcomes. (Wheeler et al., 2005); however, empirical studies show a weak relationship between the two constructs (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; Verquer et al., 2003). Indeed, the weak relationship suggests that more employees may exhibit relatively positive work outcomes despite the lack of person-job fit (Wheeler et al., 2005). This has questioned the predictive validity of person-job fit on work related attitudes or outcomes (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; Verquer et al., 2003) as moderated by other variables. There is therefore a need to further investigate the moderating variables in the relationship between person-job fit and employee attitudes or outcomes. This will give a clear indication of the predictive validity of the person-job fit on employee attitudes or outcomes.

In understanding person-job fit, the theory further assumes that a lack of fit results in disengagement between the employee and the job. As such, employees go through a series of processes to understand misfit before quitting. However, Lee and Mitchell (1994) argue that while this linear decision-making process intuitively appeals to many researchers, the ambiguous empirical support for these types of models suggests that voluntarily quitting a job is more complex than previously thought because demand-abilities, needs-supplies, and self-concept – job variables are specific with respect to the individual and their context (Morell, 2008; Trevor, 2001). Therefore, there is a need to further understand the underlying person-job fit variables that are specific to individuals in their decision making process. In addition, this suggests that the model has ignored the notion of individual differences across employees. In addition, Wheeler et al., 2005; indicate that more employees remain in the job despite the lack of person-job fit (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; Verquer et al., 2003). The question becomes, then, why do poor-fitting and dissatisfied employees remain with the organization? In their analysis, person-job fit researchers do not have a suitable theoretical framework to study the combined effects of person-job fit and work related outcomes; and second, because of these theoretical shortcomings, person-job fit researchers test person-job fit and work related outcomes as independent effects. There is thus a need to study person-job fit and work related outcomes as a combined effect (Trevor, 2001).

Finally, most scholars argue that fit is measured by the direct assessment of compatibility (Kristof, 2005). Person-job fit in itself is measured by assessing needs – supplies (Edwards, 1991; Kristof, 2005; French et al., 1982), demand – abilities (Caplan, 1983; French, Caplan, & Harrison, 1974; Harrison, 1978; Locke, 1969; Porter, 1961, 1962), and self-concept job (Scroggins, 2003; Verquer et al., 2003). In person-job fit, we refer to subjective fit of an individuals' perceptions regarding how well they fit with a particular job. On the other hand, objective fit pertains to how well individuals' reported preferences or characteristics correspond to a job's characteristics. As noted by Judge et al. (1997), the lack of research on subjective fit has contributed to substantial gaps in establishing the nomological network around the construct of person-job fit, leaving some constructs vague (Ehrhart, 2006).

SECTION FIVE: MEASURES OF PERSON-JOB FIT

Most scholars argue that fit is measured by the direct assessment of compatibility (Kristof, 2005). Person-job fit in itself is measured by assessing needs – supplies (Edwards, 1991; Kristof, 2005; French et al., 1982), demand – abilities (Caplan, 1983; French, Caplan, & Harrison, 1974; Harrison, 1978; Locke, 1969; Porter, 1961, 1962), and self-concept job (Scroggins, 2003; Verquer et al., 2003). In person-job fit, we refer to subjective fit of an 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 person-job fit, on the other hand, pertains to how well individuals' reported preferences or characteristics correspond to a job's characteristics. For instance, an employee's preferences may be compared with incumbent employees' evaluations of job characteristics. As noted by Judge et al. (1997), the lack of research on subjective fit has contributed to substantial gaps in establishing the nomological network around the construct of person-job fit (Ehrhart, 2006). In this context, person-job fit has mainly been measured by using Brkich et al. (2002) measurement tool.

In their study, Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, and Johnson (2005) suggest that fit is either perceived or actual. In addition, they contend that most scholars agree that perceived fit is defined by a direct assessment of compatibility (French et al., 1974; Kristof, 1996). Kristof (1996) distinguished this from actual fit which is used to describe measures in which researchers indirectly assess fit through clear comparisons of separately rated person-job fit variables. French et al. (1974) in his earlier ground breaking research further differentiated such explicit comparisons into subjective fit, defined as the match between the person and the job as perceived and reported by the person, and objective fit as the match between the person as he or she really is and the job as it exists independently of the person's perception of it (French et al., 1974).

Over the years, the terms perceived and subjective fit have often been used interchangeably (Cable & DeRue, 2002; Judge & Cable, 1997; Kristof, 1996). However, because the cognitive processes underlying each may differ, it is believed that it is important to distinguish between these types of fit, and therefore perceived fit is used to refer to when an individual makes a direct assessment of the compatibility between the person and the job; subjective fit is used

when fit is assessed indirectly through the comparison of the person and the job variables reported by the same person; and objective fit when fit is calculated indirectly through the comparison of the person and the job variables as reported by different sources (Cable & DeRue, 2002). Cable and DeRue (2002) further observe that of all types of fit, perceived fit allows the greatest level of thought manipulation because the assessment is all done in the head of the respondents, allowing them to apply their own weighting scheme to various aspects of the job.

In a study by Judge et al (2001), items from the three perceived fit scales were presented in surveys in random order and spread with deceptive items about goals and personality. Following past research that has defined person–organization fit as values congruence (Cable & Judge, 1996, 1997; Chatman, 1989; Lauver & Kristof-Brown, 2001), Judge et al measured person–job fit with three items namely; “The things that I value in life are very similar to the things that my job offers and values,” “My personal values match my job,” and “My job provides a good fit with the things that I value in life.” The reliability of the scale was = .91 across all samples. Whereas past empirical research on perceived fit has not measured needs–supplies fit, Kristof (1996) and Edwards (1991) created items based on their conceptualizations of fit. The items created “There is a good fit between what my job offers me and what I am looking for in a job,” “The attributes that I look for in a job are fulfilled very well by my present job,” and “The job that I currently hold gives me just about everything that I want from a job.” The reliability of the scale was = .89 and = .93 by the respective researchers. In addition, research by Cable and Judge (1996) measured demands–abilities fit using items including “The match is very good between the demands of my job and my personal skills,” “My abilities and training are a good fit with the requirements of my job,” and “My personal abilities and education provide a good match with the demands that my job places on me.” The reliability of the scale was = .89.

Lauver and Kristof-Brown (2001) developed a new measure with five items assessing person–job fit because an established measure of perceived person–job fit could not be identified. These items included “My abilities fit the demands of this job,” “I have the right skills and abilities for doing this job,” and “There is a good match between the requirements of this job and my skills” (Edwards, 1991; O’Reilly, 1977). Interests of the individual were not included in this measure because they have been most strongly associated with person–vocation fit (Kristof, 1996), which was not assessed in this study. Respondents indicated their level of agreement

with each statement on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree with an alpha reliability of the scale at = .79. In contrast, following the five item scale by Robinson and Rousseau (1994), Behery (2009) suggests that researchers use job holders' knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) and job holders' values, goals, and personality traits to assess person-job fit at a reliability of these measures being = .79

In conclusion, several empirical studies have been done in past research in which measures of person-job fit has been developed. The reliability of these measures has also been tested and retested. However, as research advances and person-job fit is further understood in detail, these measures are further developed and adjusted for the new discoveries underlying person-job fit.

SECTION SIX: CONCLUSION AND SHORTCOMINGS FROM PREVIOUS STUDIES

The increasing disparities in a job holder's characteristics and the job are an impetus to several positive work outcomes; and yet more attention has been driven towards the work setting compared to the employee (Omaswa, 2008). Person-job fit theory presents an opportunity for researchers to understand and assess the extent of congruence between a person's characteristics and those of the job or tasks that are performed at work (Adkins et al., 1994; Cable and Judge, 1997; Edwards, 1991; Kristof, 1996; Kristof-Brown, 2000; Werbel and Gilliland, 1999). In aggregate, empirical studies provide convincing evidence that person-job fit is an important determinant of both short and long-term consequences relating to job attitudes (Huang, 2005; O'Reilly and Chatman, 1986; Sekiguchi, 2004; Edwards, 1991; Edwards and Shipp, 2007; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). It is however important to note that previous studies are not without any gaps that need to be addressed.

Cable and DeRue (2002) study on whether employees develop perceptions about three different types of fit (person-organization fit, needs-supplies fit, and demands-abilities fit), a confirmatory factor analysis of data from two different samples strongly suggested that employees differentiate between the three types of fit. Furthermore, results from a longitudinal design of 187 managers supported both the convergent and discriminant validity of the different types of fit perceptions. Specifically, person-organization fit perceptions were related to organization-focused outcomes such as organizational identification, organisational citizenship behaviours, and intention to leave/ turnover; whereas needs-supplies fit perceptions were related to job-focused outcomes such as job satisfaction, organisational commitment, and employee engagement. Although demands-abilities fit perceptions emerged as a distinct construct, they were not related to hypothesized outcomes of fit. In contrast, Cable and Judge (1996) used one-item scales to measure person-job and person-organisation fit for job seekers and newcomers. Their study revealed that the correlations between person-organization fit and person-job fit were relatively low for job seekers at $r = .35$ and were even lower for new entrants at $r = .16$). This indicates that fit is more pronounced among actual employees rather than among potential employees and new joiners. Results also showed that compared with person-job fit, person-organization fit perceptions were better predictors of several outcomes such as job choice intentions, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction. There is thus a need to

further demonstrate the case for conceptual distinction of the different types of fit, and employee outcomes and attitudes across different environments.

Saks and Ashforth (1997) also examined job seekers' perceived fit with the organization and the job, revealing a somewhat more substantial correlation of $r = .56$. However, their study measured person–organization fit and person–job fit with single-item scales that did not specifically ask respondents about fit and that might have measured simple attraction. For example “To what extent does your new job measure up to the kind of job you were seeking?” Although results revealed that both person–organization and person–job fit perceptions were related to outcomes such as job satisfaction and intentions to quit, this research reported only the change in R^2 when both types of fit were entered into the regression at once. Thus, it was not possible to examine the differential prediction of the two types of fit perceptions. Following this finding, researchers need to create a model that allows for differential prediction of different types of fit.

Further to this, Kristof-Brown (2000) examined the formation of distinguishable perceptions of person–job fit and person-organisation fit. As with the other studies, person–job fit was measured as demands–abilities fit. Although results revealed that the two types of fit were highly correlated at $r = .72$, a confirmatory factor analysis showed that a two-factor solution provided a significantly better fit with the data than did a one-factor solution. Therefore in as much as we should advance the need for a conceptual distinction and testing of the different types of fit, research indicates that a combined effect of all fit perceptions provides a significantly better fit with data. However, Kristof-Brown demonstrated that person-job fit was a better predictor of job related recommendations than person–organization fit. It is also noted that in cases where the three types of fit perceptions have not been integrated in past research, it is useful to explore the structure of employees' fit perceptions by examining several alternative conceptualizations (Kristof, 1996). Thus, as recommended by Medsker et al. (1994) and Hayduk (1987), hypothesized models should be evaluated relative to alternative models. First, in a more restrictive test of the three-factor model, it is important to specify a model with no relationships between the three fit constructs, leaving all other aspects of the original hypothesized model unchanged. A second possibility is that rather than forming three separate judgments of fit, all fit items are loaded onto one single factor for employees form just one overall fit judgment that combines all the different elements of fit (values, needs, and abilities). Third, Muchinsky and Monahan (2007) indicate that it is possible that employees simply

distinguish between supplementary and complementary fit. In their study, person–organization fit is supplementary because an employee’s values supplement, or are similar to, an organization’s cultural values. In contrast, person-job fit dimensions are complementary, such that the combination of person and situation complement one another (Kristof, 1996; Muchinsky & Monahan, 2007).

It is interesting however that demands–abilities fit perceptions did not predict any of the outcomes that were hypothesized, including occupational commitment, job performance, and pay raises. This result is consistent with Lauver and Kristof-Brown (2001) null findings with regard to the relationship between fit perceptions and job performance, and other findings also extending past research by examining other theory-based outcomes of demands–abilities fit. Although it is difficult to interpret null effects, it is possible that demands–abilities fit perceptions are not predictive due to range restriction or ceiling effects because demands–abilities fit perceptions are competence-related, and the hypothesized outcomes are influenced by many other external factors and are therefore difficult to predict. It is also possible that demand-abilities fit perception has a greater implication for self-esteem than the other types of fit, and as a result employees may be motivated to skew demands–abilities fit perceptions upward. Some evidence for this possibility is gleaned from the fact that demands–abilities fit perceptions had a higher mean and a lower standard deviation than the other fit perceptions based on the empirical studies of Lauver and Kristof-Brown (2001).

In a further analysis, the conceptualizations of perceived fit that appear in the literature, do not distinguish between the directionality of individuals’ misfit. For example, an individual may experience low demands–abilities fit because he does not have the skills to perform the job effectively or because he is over-educated for the job. It would be interesting and useful for future research to focus on this issue by maintaining the direction of the misfit in the measurement and by examining outcomes that are unique to people who are under-matched versus those who are over-matched. In addition, it is also possible that the wording of fit questions has caused respondents to conceptualize fit differently than they actually hold the constructs in their minds. There have been attempts to obviate these concerns by randomly mixing the order of the fit items in the survey to avoid response sets, altering the order of the items between samples, and interspersing decoy items for the multiple samples. Nevertheless, it should be noted that the items pertaining to needs–supplies and demands–abilities fit use the term job whereas person–organization fit used the word organization. Although this phrasing

follows the accepted theoretical conceptualizations of fit and mirrors how the terms have been used in past empirical research, the terms job and organization may signal different meanings to employees.

On the other hand, results clearly indicate that respondents differentiate between the needs–supplies fit concept and the demands–abilities fit concept, even though the questions for both these types of fit use job terminology. Although it appears that preparing based on specific wording or order effects was not a significant problem in this research, future studies could use open response formats and content analysis to examine this issue. In addition, DeRue (2009) indicates that self-reporting questionnaires and likert scales create bias resulting in the threat to validity known as mono-method bias. The problem with collecting much of the data using the same method and/or type of scale is that the findings can then be attributed to individuals' tendencies to respond to similar types of measures in similar ways. Furthermore, despite the acknowledgement that multiple conceptualisations of fit exist, there has been surprisingly little research focused on validating multidimensional approaches. To move to this direction however, more focus must be paid to underexplored areas of fit and the exploration of how various types of fit influence each other over time. A second area requiring attention is fit as a dependant variable and specifically what it means to achieve fit over a long period of time and the mechanisms that stimulate fit.

To summarize past research in this area, it is currently unclear how employees conceptualize fit. Although research generally suggests that employees hold person–organization fit and person-job fit as two separate cognitions, and the three dimension of person job-fit as three separate conditions, no studies have examined person-job fit, and the dimensions therein relate to other forms of perceived fit. In addition, most past research has focused on organizational entry such as job seekers, newcomers, interviewees, but less on existing employees Kristof-Brown (2006). It should be noted that in as much as research focuses on the differential outcomes of fit perceptions such employee engagement, job satisfaction, and organisational commitment, important validity information also could be gathered by studying the antecedents of fit perceptions. This will close the gap that currently exists in examining the linkages between actual fit, perceived fit, and outcomes (Cable & Judge, 1996; Judge & Cable, 2007).

Person-job fit is one of important contributors to organizational success and it is a simple but important concept that involves matching the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) of people with the characteristics of jobs (Mathis and Jackson, 2003). As such, these studies are avenues for researchers and modern day managers to carefully structure jobs and job requirements on one hand; and manage the most suitable employees while developing employee skills on the other hand. In addition, more than 120 empirical studies of the fit hypothesis have been conducted since its formalization in 1959 (Spokane et al., 2000). In many of these studies, fit is related to many variables predicting important work outcomes with correlations ranging from .20 to .51 at the 95% confidence interval (Assouline & Meir, 2001). Generally, future research in person-job fit within theory contributes to continued improvement and innovation in research methodology, more direct tests of the interactive propositions of the theory, and a more appropriate balance between correlational and experimental designs (Smart, 2007). It is believed that a continuous study of the concept will close some of the gaps identified above.

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