

# The influence of person-job fit and person-organisation fit on employees job performance

**Khulida Kirana Yahya<sup>\*</sup>, Faizuniah Pangil, Tan Fee Yean,  
Siti Zubaidah Othman**

*School of Business Management, College of Business,  
Universiti Utara Malaysia, Kedah, Malaysia*

## Abstract

The objective of this study is to examine the relationship between person-job fit, person-organisation fit and job performance. The study was conducted on employees of MNC status organisations. Questionnaire was administered to 300 respondents, who were technical employees of the organisations. However, only 180 responses were received and used for analysis. Data were analysed using correlation and regression analysis. Findings indicate that person-job fit and person-organisation fit have a significant and positive influence on job performance. Lastly, this paper also provides suggestions for organisations on ways to increase job performance.

**Keywords:** Person-job fit, person-organisation fit, job performance

## 1.0 Introduction

Job performance concerns the knowledge, skills and attitudes that are required to enable an individual to perform the activities listed in the job description. This is because the competency profile that a human resource or similar professional may have developed through job analysis. Job performance has been studied by many researchers (e.g. Ziegler, Hagen, & Diehl, 2012; Hoobler, Hu & Wilson, 2010; Oh & Berry, 2009). The interest on job performance is mainly because it is decided that individual job performance will eventually translate into organisational performance and as such, higher job performance will lead to higher organisational performance. Thus, most of these studies revolve around the factors that contribute to job performance.

Studies on job performance have been carried out from various perspectives, mainly organisational, process and individual factors. There are many organisational factors that are significant contributors to job performance. Some of these factors include leadership (Bello, 2012; Peterson, Walumbwa, Avolio, & Hannah, 2012), organisational climate

---

\*Corresponding author: Tel: +604-928752 1

E-mail address: [khulida@uum.edu.my](mailto:khulida@uum.edu.my)

(Jen, Chou, Lin, & Tsai, 2012), and management practices (Atteya, 2012). There are studies that focus on process factors such as process fairness (Collins, Mossholder, & Taylor, 2012), and feedback process (Whitaker & Levy, 2012). However, there are **researchers that carried out studies on individual factors such as job satisfaction (Ziegler, Hagen, & Diehl, 2012), self efficacy (Khurshid, Qasmi, & Ashraf, 2012), attitude (Omolayo & Oluwafemi, 2012) and motivation (Abdulsalam & Mawoli, 2012).** In sum, there are many factors that have significant influence on job performance but very few have looked into the person-job fit and person-organisation fit.

Moreover, several studies reported low coefficient of determination value ( $R^2$ ) (e.g. Abdulsalam & Mawoli, 2012; Omolayo & Oluwafemi, 2012) on job performance. This reveals that there are other factors that are not included in the study that may have significant impacts on job performance. Therefore, this study aims to examine if person-job fit and person-organisation fit have significant influence on job performance.

## **20 Literature review**

### *2.1 Job performance*

Individual job performance is defined as the quantity and quality of work produced by an employee (Hoobler, Hu & Wilson, 2010). The definition depicts that job performance is a relatively common behavioural outcome attained by an employee compared with the determined standards. As indicated in Hoobler, Hu and Wilson s (2010) study, the level of job performance is a major factor to determine employees career outcomes (i.e. salary increment, promotions and satisfaction). The reason being, that the level of job performance is often the measurement used by not only management, but also the employees to determine their career achievement since such job performance affects their salary increments, promotional opportunities and finally influences their sense of success.

It is clearly depicted that job performance is largely composed of task completion, that are skills and attitudes required to enable an employee to effectively perform the job duties. Thus, job performance can be referred to as behaviour or attitude that can be measured through individual competency or contribution level to their job (Oh & Berry, 2009). Therefore, individual job performance includes behaviours focused on structuring work and getting tasks done based on the pre-determined performance standards. In other words, job performance is the ability of individual employee fulfilling their respective job expectation as well as attaining performance standards set by their organisation. Employees will only be considered as good performers if their job performance has achieved the standards. Hence, job performance should be quantifiable and measurable based on quantity and quality of work done by the employees.

## 2.2 *Person-job fit and job performance*

Person-job fit refers to the congruency between an individual's abilities with what is required to perform the job (Cable & DeRue, 2002). It concerns with the degree of compatibility between a person and a specific job. In another word, person-job fit is the match between an individuals knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSA) and demands of the job or the needs of an individual and what is provided by the job (Edwards, 1991; O'Reilly, Chatman, & Caldwell, 1991). Person-job fit is conceptualised as the match between the abilities or the desires of an employee and the demands or attributes of a job (Sekiguchi, 2004).

When person-job fit is assessed as the match between what an employee wants and receives from performing jobs, it is correlated with improved job satisfaction, adjustment, and organisational commitment, as well as reduced intentions to quit. Additional benefits for performance have also been demonstrated when the definition of person-job fit is expanded to include the match between abilities and their job demands (Edwards, 1991). Similar findings were also found in studies conducted by Cable and Judge (1996), Kristof (1996) and Saks and Ashforth (2002) where individuals who have higher perceptions of fit have been found to have more positive job attitudes, increase in job performance, organisational commitment, lower intentions to quit and turnover, and fewer stress-related symptoms.

Accurate job information offered by the organisation enables employees to determine the level of congruence between their competencies and the job demands. This occurs if employees perceive a match between their competencies and the job demands are probable to present positive performance. According to Chung and Chia (2010), employees who experience fit with their job would become more committed and perform their job effectively, which in turn influence job performance.

In another study, Saks and Ashforth (1997) found that job applicants' perceptions of fit with a job impacted their choices of organisations. Person-job fit has also been found related to turnover intentions (Cable & Judge, 1996). Apart from that, a study conducted by Kristof-Brown, Jansen and Colbert (2002) showed that person-job fit was positively related to job satisfaction and job performance and was negatively related to intentions to quit for both office employees and truck drivers.

## 2.3 *Person-organisation fit and job performance*

Person-organisation fit (P-O fit) is defined as the congruence of the direct attributes of a person with the direct attributes of the particular situation, job or organisation (Chatman, 1991). Similarly, Kristof (1996) defined this concept as the compatibility between people and organisations that occurs when (a) at least one entity provides the

other needs, (b) they share similar fundamental characteristics, or (c) both. However, there are scholars who discussed P-O fit in terms of person-environment fit. In such cases, discussions focus directly on work environment, whereby it is defined as the compatibility that occurs when individual and work environment characteristics are well matched (Rousseau & Parks, 1992). Regardless of the slight differences between the definitions of the concept, it is agreed that there should be compatibility between an individual and the organisation where he or she works.

The match or fit between individuals and organisations could be in various forms. However, most literatures have discussed fit in terms of culture and values (e.g. Del Campo, 2006; Silverthorne, 2004). In essence, the work values of an individual must be able to fit into the work culture of the organisation. Hence, to maintain a productive organisation, DelCampo (2006) insisted that managers must strive to create an environment or organisational culture that is agreeable to a bulk of the individuals within the organisation. This is in fact a psychological contract that exists between the individual and the organisation.

Psychological contract comprised of the implicit and explicit promises that have been shaped by the organisation in terms of the exchange agreement between individuals and the organisation (Rousseau, 2001). In terms of person-organisation fit, when an individual is accepted (employed) by an organisation, the organisation believes that the individual will be able to fit into the organisation's work environment, or the organisation is willing to provide whatever that is needed by the individual to succeed. In return, when the individual accepts an organisations offer, this indicates that the individual can fit into the work environment and is willing to make necessary adjustment in order to be successful. In support of that, Schneider (2001) indicated that individuals are attracted to and seek employment with organisations that exhibit characteristics similar to their own and organisations in turn tend to select individuals who are most similar to the organisation.

Moreover, previous literatures have persistently claimed that P-O fit is beneficial to organisations. Studies have shown that it has a positive impact on employees job-related attitude and behaviour. In relation to job-related attitude, studies have found that P-O fit is one of the significant predictors of employee organisational commitment (Ambrose, Arnaud, & Schminke, 2008; Boon, Hartog, Boselie, & Paauwe, 2011; Da Silva, Hutcheson, & Wahl, 2010; Vigoda-Gadot & Meiri, 2008), job satisfaction (Ambrose, Arnaud, & Schminke, 2008; Boon et al., 2011; Vigoda-Gadot & Meiri, 2008), intention to stay (Da Silva, Hutcheson, & Wahl, 2010), and turnover intention (Ambrose, Arnaud, & Schminke, 2008). Besides that, P-O fit is also significantly and positively related to various job behaviours such as organisational citizenship behaviours (Yaniv, Lavi, & Siti, 2010), and job performance (Bright, 2007; Mosley, 2002; Wang, Yan, Sun, & Zhang, 2010). In short, P-O fit is a strong predictor of job performance, and hence it is highly beneficial for organisations.

## 30 Research framework

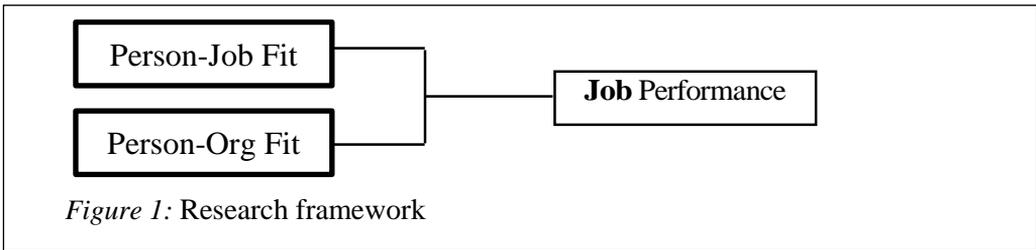


Figure 1: Research framework

Figure 1 depicts the proposed research framework to be examined in this study. The framework contains three constructs, namely person-job fit, person-organisation fit and job performance. The proposed framework predicts that person-job fit and person-organisation fit will influence job performance.

## 40 Research method

### 4.1 Population and sample

The population for this study includes all technical staffs from MNC status companies located in the Northern states of Peninsular Malaysia (specifically in Kedah and Penang as both states have the most MNC status companies). There are 50 MNC status companies located in the states of Kedah and Penang. Out of these 50 companies, only 10 companies agreed to participate. Since the exact number of technical employees from each of the companies under study was not known, a disproportionate sampling technique was used by dividing equally the number of questionnaires that is 30 set for each of the 10 participating companies. Thus, a total of 300 set of questionnaires were distributed. Out of 300 questionnaires distributed, only 180 questionnaires were returned and used for further analysis, which comprises of 60% response rate.

113 male and 67 female respondents participated in this study. The average age of the respondents was 32 years old. Malays constitute 62.2% of the survey respondents, followed by 24.4% Malaysian Chinese, 11.7% Malaysian Indians and 1.7% other ethnic groups. Out of 180 respondents, 55% were married. Majority of the respondents (97.2%) had higher academic qualifications of either tertiary or diploma, bachelor degree or masters degree and above. 19.4% of the respondents had earnings between RM3001 and RM4000 per month, and 22.8% had basic salary increment between RM201 and RM400. On average, the respondents had been in their position for 2.5 years and had served their organisations for 2.5 years. Engineers made up 53.3% of the total respondents. The rest consisted of executive, manager and technical workers.

## 50 Measurements

Measures for job performance utilised the 10-item scale developed by Maimunah Ismail and Asma Ahmad (1996). In this study, job performance refers to the attitude or behaviour related to organisational goal and can be measured through individual competency or contribution to the organisation.

Items for person-job fit were adopted from two sources, Lauver and Kristof-Brown (2001) and Cable and DeRue (2002). Lauver and Kristof-Brown (2001) have developed five items to measure person-job fit. However, this study only adopted three of the items as the other two items measured the individual personality which is not included in this study. In addition to that, the three items adopted from Lauver and Kristof-Brown (2001) only measured the level of employees' skills and abilities that fit the requirement of the job. But, the conceptualisation of person-job fit includes employees' competencies that consist of employees knowledge, skills, and abilities that are required for job implementation. Therefore, to capture the element of employees knowledge which was not included in Lauver and Kristof-Brown s (2001) instrument, this study adopted another three items developed by Cable and DeRue (2002). In Cable and DeRue s (2002) study, the element of education required for job implementation was developed in relation to education and training.

For measures of person-organisation fit, two items previously used by Hutcheson (1999) that was originally developed by Cable and Judge (1996) were adopted. The original scale developed by Cable and Judge (1996) was to measure person-organisation supplementary fit. However, Hutcheson (1999) has made some modification to the original version to measure person-organisation complementary demands-abilities fit. Another two items were adopted from Sekiguchi (2004) to measure person-organisation demands-abilities fit. All measures use a 1 to 5 scale, whereby 1 was used to represent 'strongly disagree' and 5 was used to represent 'strongly agree'.

## 60 Findings

Table 1 presents the internal consistency reliabilities (Cronbach s Alpha), means, standard deviations, and Pearson correlations of variables for the 180 participants. As shown in Table 1, the Cronbach s Alpha for the two variables has satisfactory reliability values ranging from .81 to .89. Table 1 also reveals a significant positive relationship between job performance and person-organisation fit ( $r = 0.57, p < 0.01$ ) and person-job fit ( $r = 0.56, p < 0.01$ ). This result implies that participants with higher person-job fit and person-organisation fit have higher job performance.

Table 1

*Descriptive statistics, reliability statistics and correlations*

Variables	N	Mean	S.D.	1	2	3
1. Person-organisation fit	180	3.94	.50	(.81)		
2. Person-job fit	180	3.90	.58	.76**	(.89)	
3. Job performance	180	3.92	.44	.57**	.56**	(.81)

Note: Coefficient alpha reliability estimates are in parentheses on the diagonal of the correlation table \*p < 0.05; \*\*p < 0.01

## 70 Regression analysis

To test the relationship between person-job fit, person-organisation fit and job performance, regression analysis was conducted. All four assumptions of multivariate analysis for this regression were met. Examining the coefficient table, it is apparent that the Tolerance value was below 1.0 and VIFs were between 1.42 and 2.47, hence multicollinearity was not suspected. The analysis of the residuals scatterplot indicated that indeed the overall equation is linear, and the assumption of homoscedasticity is not violated. In addition, the Durbin-Watson index was 1.94 indicating that autocorrelation was not a problem and the probability plot of the regression standardized residuals indicated that the data was normally distributed.

Table 2

*Regression results of the relationship between person-job fit, person-organisation fit and job performance*

	Std $\beta$
Person-Job Fit	.306*
Person-Organisation Fit	.339**
$R_2$	.365
Adjusted $R^2$	.358
F-value	50.904

Note: \*p < 0.05, \*\*p < 0.01,

As shown in Table 2, the two variables are found to be significant and positive predictors of job performance, whereby person-organisation fit has the most influence on job performance ( $\beta=0.339$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), followed by person-job fit ( $\beta=0.306$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). All these variables explained 36.5 percent of the variance in job performance.

## **80 Discussion and conclusion**

The present result reveals that person-job fit and person-organisation fit are significant predictors of job performance. Specifically, the study showed that person-organisation fit has the strongest relationship with job performance compared to person-job fit.

There is a significant relationship between person-job fit and job performance. As indicated earlier, person-job fit is the compatibility between the abilities of a person and the demands of the job, and therefore this finding suggested that perceived fit between individuals knowledge, skills and abilities and their job demands are important for job performance. In other words, individuals would have greater job performance if they are fit to their job.

The finding is similar to the study by Lauver and Kristof-Brown (2002) who also found that person-job fit to be positively related to job performance. This fit or compatibility between the individuals knowledge, skills and abilities and their jobs are important for performance. This is because without compatibility, it would be difficult for these employees to perform their jobs effectively. Indeed, previous literatures have consistently argued that knowledge, skills and abilities are crucial for job performance. However, knowledge, skills and abilities are innate to individuals. Hence, the compatibility of the individual who possess the knowledge, skills and abilities and the job is particularly essential.

In relation to person-organisation fit, previous studies have shown that person-organisation fit is significantly and positively related to various job behaviours such as organisational citizenship behaviours (Yaniv, Lavi, & Siti, 2010), and job performance (Bright, 2007; Mosley, 2002; Wang, Yan, Sun, & Zhang , 2010). The current findings concur with these previous findings. Basically, it can be concluded that individuals' job performance is strongly related to how much they feel that they fit into the organisations' culture and environment. If employees perceive that they are fit or are comfortable with the culture and environment of the organisations, they are able to perform better.

Many studies have shown that the right organisational culture or environment could elicit higher job performance among employees. However, different organisations inculcate different organisational culture and create different kinds of organisational environment or climate that they believe would help in producing high productivity.

Most importantly, employees must understand the type of environment that can induce them to perform higher. Once they are able to figure this out, and they can find and work for the organisations that are able to provide the type of environment that they need, they should be able to perform their jobs better. Therefore, the higher the perception of person-organisation fit that these engineers and technical employees have, the higher is their job performance.

In conclusion, the study reveals that person-job fit and person-organisation fit have significant influence on job performance. Based on these findings, for higher employee job performance, it is suggested that organisations must be more diligent in future hiring process, and make sure that these factors are taken into consideration during selection and placement decisions. It is recommended that when matching a certain individual with a certain job, organisations need to make sure that besides academic qualifications, individuals' interest and other abilities are also considered. This is because academic qualifications sometimes do not reflect the true capability and interest of the individual. In addition to that, organisations also need to ensure that the expectations of the individuals hired can be met by the organisation. This is to make certain that person-organisation fit exist. This is to allow the individual to feel comfortable working for the organisation, and as a result organisations will be able to retain this employee longer. Finally, it is also suggested that organisations hire individuals with other criteria because such individuals will always find new ways to perform their job better.

## References

- Abdulsalam, D., & Mawoli, M. A. (2012). Motivation and job performance of academic staff of State Universities in Nigeria: The case of Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida University, Lapai, Niger State. *International Journal of Business & Management*, 7(14), 142-148.
- Ambrose, M. L., Arnaud, A., & Schminke, M. (2008). Individual moral development and ethical climate: The influence of person-organization fit on job attitudes. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 77, 323-333.
- Atteya, N. M. (2012). Testing the impact of the human resource management practices on job performance: An empirical study in the Egyptian joint venture petroleum companies. *International Journal of Business & Social Science*, 3(9), 105-119.
- Baba, V. V., Tourigny, L., Wang, X. Y., & Liu, W. M. (2009). Proactive personality and work performance in China: The moderating effects of emotional exhaustion and perceived safety climate. *Canadian Journal of Administrative Sciences*, 26, 23-37.

- Bateman, T.S., & Crant, J.M. (1993). The proactive component of organizational behavior. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 14, 103-118.
- Bello, S. M. (2012). Impact of ethical leadership on employee job performance. *International Journal of Business & Social Science*, 3(11), 228-236.
- Boon, C., Hartog, D. N., Boselie, P., & Paauwe, J. (2011). The relationship between perceptions of HR practices and employee outcomes: Examining the role of person-organization and person-job fit. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 22(1), 138-162.
- Bright, L. (2007). Does person-organization fit mediate the relationship between public service motivation and the job performance of public employees? *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, 27(4), 361.
- Cable, D.M., & DeRue, D.S. (2002). The convergent and discriminate validity of subjective fit perceptions, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 87(5), 2002, 875-884
- Chatman, J. (1991). Matching people and organizations: Selection and socialization in public accounting firms. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 36, 459-484.
- Collins, B. J., Mossholder, K. W., & Taylor, S. (2012). Does process fairness affect job performance? It only matters if they plan to stay. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 33(7), 1007-1026.
- Crant, J.M. (2000). Proactive behavior in organizations. *Journal of Management*, 26, 435-462.
- Da Silva, N., Hutcheson, J., & Wahl, G. D. (2010). Organizational strategy and employee outcomes: A person-organization fit perspective. *The Journal of Psychology*, 144(2), 145-161.
- DelCampo, R. G. (2006). The influence of culture strength and person-organization fit and turnover. *International Journal of Management*, 23(3), 465-469.
- Edwards, J.R. (1991). Person-job fit: A conceptual integration, literature review, and methodological critique. In C. L. Cooper & I. T. Robertson (Eds). *International Review of Industrial and Organizational Psychology* (pp. 283-357). New York: Wiley.
- Fuller, J. B., Jr., Hester, K., & Cox, S. S. (2010). Proactive personality and job performance: Exploring job autonomy as a moderator. *Journal of Managerial Issues*, 12 (1), 35-51.

- Hoobler, J. M., Hu, J., & Wilson, M. (2010). Do workers who experience conflict between the work and family domains hit a glass ceiling: A meta-analytic examination. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 77*, 481-494.
- Jen, C.-K., Chou, L.-F., Lin, C.-Y., & Tsai, M.-C. (2012). The influence of the perception of a familial climate on job performance: Mediation of loyalty to supervisors and moderation of filial behaviour. *International Journal of Psychology, 47*(3), 169-178.
- Khurshid, F., Qasmi, F. N., & Ashraf, N. (2012). The relationship between teachers self efficacy and their perceived job performance. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Contemporary Research in Business, 3*(10), 204-223.
- Kristof-Brown, A.L., Jansen, K.J., & Colbert, A.E. (2002). A policy-capturing study of the simultaneous effects of fit with jobs, groups, and organizations. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 87*, 985-993.
- Kristof, A. L. (1996). Person-organization fit: An integrative review of its conceptualizations, measurement and implications. *Personnel Psychology, 49*, 1-49.
- Lauver, K. J., & Kristof-Brown, A. K. (2001). Distinguishing between employees perceptions of person-job and person-organization fit. *Journal of Vocational behavior, 59*, 454-470.
- Maimunah Ismail & Asma Ahmad (1996). Iklim organisasi dan perkaitannya dengan prestasi kerja pegawai perundangan perbadanan produktiviti negara. *Dinamika Sosial. 1*(1), 23-33
- Mosley, D. C. (2002). *The influence of person-job fit, person-organization fit, and self-efficacy perceptions on work attitudes, job performance, and turnover*. Mississippi: Mississippi State University.
- Nikolaou, I. (2003). Fitting the person to the organization: Examining the personality-job performance relationship from a new perspective. *Journal of Managerial Psychology, 18*(7), 639-648.
- Oh, I. S., & Berry, C. M. (2009). The five-factor model of personality and managerial performance: Validity gains through the use of 360 degree performance ratings. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 94*(6), 1498-1513.
- O Reilly, C. A., Chatman, J., & Caldwell, D. F. (1991). People and organizational culture: A profile comparison approach to assessing person-organization fit. *Academy of Management Journal, 34*, 487 - 516.

- Omolayo, B. O., & Oluwafemi, A. A. (2012). Influence of workers' attitude towards time and work on perceived job performance in private and public sectors. *Journal of Management & Strategy*, 3(3), 2-10.
- Peterson, S. J., Walumbwa, F. O., Avolio, B. J., & Hannah, S. T. (2012). The relationship between authentic leadership and follower job performance: The mediating role of follower positivity in extreme contexts. *Leadership Quarterly*, 23(3), 502-516.
- Rousseau, D. M., & Parks, J. (1992). The contracts of individuals and organizations. In L. L. Cummings, & B. M. Staw, *Research in Organizational Behavior* (Vol. 15, pp. 1-47). Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.
- Saks, A. M., & Ashforth, B. E. (1997). A longitudinal investigation of the relationships between job information sources, applicant perceptions of fit and work outcomes. *Personnel Psychology*, 50(2), 395-426.
- Seibert, S. E., Kraimer, M. L., & Crant, J. M. (2001). What do proactive people do? A longitudinal model linking proactive personality and career success. *Personnel Psychology*, 54, 845-874.
- Sekiguchi, T. (2004). Person-organization fit and person-job fit in employee selection: A review of the literature. *Osaka Keidai Ronshu*, 54(6), 179-196.
- Vigoda-Gadot, E., & Meiri, S. (2008). New public management values and person-organization fit: A socio-psychological approach and empirical examination among public sector personnel. *Public Administration*, 86(1), 111-131.
- Wang, Y., Yan, X., Sun, N., & Zhang, X. (2010). Mediating effect of person-organization fit on the relationship between organizational socialization and employee performance. *2nd International Conference on Information Science and Engineering, ICISE 2010* (pp. 2918-2921). Hangzhou: School of Business Administration, South China University of Science and Technology, Guangzhou, China.
- Whitaker, B. G., & Levy, P. (2012). Linking feedback quality and goal orientation to feedback seeking and job performance. *Human Performance*, 25(2), 159-178.
- Yaniv, E., Lavi, O. S., & Siti, G. (2010). Person-organization fit and its impact on organizational citizenship behavior as related to performance. *Journal of General Management*, 36(2), 8 1-89.

Ziegler, R., Hagen, B., & Diehl, M. (2012). Relationship between job satisfaction and job performance: Job ambivalence as a moderator. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 42*(8), 2019-2040.