

## PERSON JOB-FIT AND JOB PERFORMANCE AMONG NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION WORKERS: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Hazman Hussain<sup>1</sup>  
Shahimi Mohtar<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup>*School of Technology Management and Logistics, Universiti Utara Malaysia, Kedah, Malaysia.*  
Email: hazman.phd@hotmail.com  
Email: shahimi@uum.edu.my

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**Abstract:** *The paper focuses on the study of the non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the person job-fit and the job performance of workers in the NGOs. Literature on non-governmental organization, job performance and person job-fit is examined in order to build the conceptual framework. This paper proposes a conceptual model to further understand the person job-fit in influencing NGO's worker throughout the job performance. This paper is then developed into concrete research hypotheses for future studies. The model developed is conceptual and quantitative in nature. More research that is empirical needs to be conducted to test for the validity of the formulated propositions. The significance of this paper can be separated into two standpoints. First, the significance of this study can be seen from the theoretical standpoint. Second, from the applied significance perspective, this study is able to provide better understanding on the performance of workers in the service sector within the NGOs context. The definition and model developed for measuring performance can contribute significantly to existing literature on excellence measurement. Further research can help in adding more variables to this measure to make the model a holistic one.*

**Keywords:** *Non-Governmental Organization, NGO, Person Job-Fit, Job Performance*

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### Introduction

One of the most important factors for ascertaining the performance of an organization is the job performance of employees. This is because when employees are performing

well, they can help the organization attain its strategic goals and this ensures that the organization sustains its competitive edge (Lado & Wilson, 1994; Dessler, 2011). Similarly, when managers are aware of the job performance of the employees, they can make decisions on various issues such as promotion, compensation, training to enhance performance, and termination (Piercy, Cravens & Morgan, 1998). Furthermore, effective job performance leads to the attainment of financial and non-financial benefits for the employees (VanScotter, Motowidlo & Cross, 2000).

Globalization gave a rise to several challenges, for example, changing demographics, shortcomings in abilities and worker inefficiencies. All of these can have an impact on the ability of any country to maintain its aggressive work attitude and this can affect job performance of the employees (Davenport, 1999; Fernandez, 2001; Laprade, 2006). The work environment became quite dynamic which created several challenges for the employees and made it difficult for them to sustain their job performance (Galagan, 1997). Managers tend to have high standards with respect to the job performance of the employees and evaluate their job performance from time to time using various managerial activities (Dessler, 2011). Hence, workers need to maintain their job performance and there needs to be correct alignment of work power with the appropriate skills to ensure that organizations are able to attain their objectives on the global level (Tomaka, 2001). Under this pretext, non-governmental organization (NGOs) would not be alienated from comparative settings.

This study concentrated on non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the job performance of workers in the NGOs. Past studies related to NGOs had shown that the importance of NGOs had increased throughout the world, both at the international level (Euske & Euske 1991; Reimann, 2006; Smith & Lumba, 2008; Ungpakorn, 2004a) as well as at the national level (Bano, 2008; Desai, 2003; Serra, Serneels & Barr, 2010). The United Nations (UN) too had broken its own scheme to supervise the growth of NGOs around the world (Martens, 2006; Mezzalama & Schumm, 1993; Weiss & Jolly, 2009).

In developing countries such as Malaysia, both local and foreign NGOs had played significant parts in the evolution of the country (Coate, Handmer & Choong, 2006; Forsyth, 2007). Registered NGOs have to devise an annual work report and a financial statement for the government, while unregistered NGOs do not have to report on this (Tongsawate & Tips, 1988). Therefore, registered NGOs are easier controlled by the government than unregistered NGOs (Miller-Grandvaux, Welmond & Wolf, 2002).

### ***Problem statement***

A long time ago, the creation of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) strengthens public society program by supporting the improvements in the nation by organizing disempowered social layers and by supplementing the traditional foundations of democracy. Malaysia provides a respectable example where various ethnic, cultural background and spiritual offers a chance to show how these elements would interact and shape different forms and views of public society. Subsequently more than five decades of Malaysian independence, many ambiguities in the actual practice of the idea of democracy surfaced and deepened from time to time. Nevertheless, the job performance of workers in the service sector was found to be down due to the lack of the proper skills (Saleh & Ndubisi, 2006).

In the past, there were many researches on organizations in Malaysia. There were various issues discussed range from identifying problems faced by organizations in Malaysia on issues of productivity and skills shortages (Yogeesvaran, 2005; Hamzah & Ho, 1994; Tan, 1996; Saleh & Ndubisi, 2006), organizational performances (Sohail & Hoong, 2003), staff training and performance (Jamaludin & Hasun, 2007). However, the above-cited subject areas were not concentrating on the job performance of workers in the NGOs.

It has been found in an earlier research that the nature of work of those employed in the services sector is unique (Anderson, 2006). The reason for this uniqueness was the workers' central role in any service dealing; hence, an organization's standing can easily be harmed by the job performance of a single worker (Rafaeli, 1989). This means that a central role is played by the job performance of workers with respect to the services so as to bring about community satisfaction.

In this regard, the theory of performance by Campbell (1990) needs to be mentioned which asserts that job performance depends upon declarative knowledge, procedural and skills awareness and motivation. This means that employees may show good job performance when they are aware of what they have to do (understand job expectations), how to do that job (have the required competency) and have a desire to perform that task (are motivated). It has also been found in earlier studies that various factors can have an impact on job performance of employees in a service environment.

Further issues have been identified regarding workers, for example, task, recruitment and downsizing, in addition to human resources enhancement, management and daily supervision of workers (Vilain, 2006). It was reported that NGOs showed little success in worker career development. A career structure for workers was frequently absent in organizations. Furthermore, it was found that they had inadequate planning for employee training. In other organizations that were exhibiting rapid growth, employees who were not able to keep pace with their work requirements faced a lot of issues. Everyone who works in an NGO is not a volunteer and there are some employees who are awarded remuneration for their work. But the pays received by the staff are normally lower compared to the commercial private sector. These workers receive a little pay and invest most of their time fulfilling their responsibilities. These workers normally have a very little organizational and professional expertise (Mukasa, 2006). Other studies have also highlighted the inadequate training given to such workers and the lack of significance awarded to training NGO workers (Ahmad, 2002).

The studies mentioned earlier have examined person-job fit and were not carried out particularly with respect to NGOs. Hence, further studies are required to examine the variable (person-job fit) with respect to the job performance of workers within the NGOs. In addition, the studies pertaining to job performance of workers with respect to person-job fit (such as Caldwell & O'Reilly, 1990; Behery, 2009) were mainly carried out in foreign settings. Hence, there is insufficient data within the Malaysian context regarding job performance of workers, particularly in the service sector NGOs.

Therefore, the problem is investigated in this study is to identify whether there is a relationship between person-job fit with the job performance of workers in the NGOs in Malaysia.

## **Literature Review**

### ***Non-governmental Organization (NGO)***

NGOs refer to the self-governing non-profit organizations that are seeking to attain their objective, for example, the promotion of international human rights (Salamon & Anheier, 1997 cited in Ossewaarde, Nijhof & Heyse, 2008).

The NGOs are now carrying out those activities that were actually the job of the government. International NGOs have developed a great deal in the previous twenty years. These organizations have to work in various fields, for example offering health, public assistance and education services (Ossewaarde, Nijhof & Heyse, 2008).

### ***Job performance***

Job performance is commonly described as the responsibilities carried out by a person at work. Hence, the overall work performance of an employee can be affected by the different phases of job and also by the intricacy of the job (Ackerman, 1997, Murphy, 1989). Job performance is often described in vague and general terms, which decreases its usefulness (Campbell, Gasser & Oswald, 1996). This may suggest that there can be different descriptions of job performance as a construct and may depend on the stage and complexity of the job (Grubb, 1999).

According to Sarmiento and Beale (2007), job performance is related to two features possessed by an employee, that is, the abilities and skills (natural or acquired) and his/her motivation to use these skills to exhibit better performance on the job. Furthermore, industrial psychologist may have a broader perspective on the definition of performance. Job performance is considered from a multidimensional construct perspective in the field of psychology (Borman, Hanson & Hedge, 1997; Avery & Murphy, 1998; Schmitt & Chan, 1998; Campbell, 1999; Hough & Oswald, 2000; Viswesvaran & Ones, 2000).

### ***Previous research on job performance***

Various aspects were determined in previous studies that may have affected employee performance. These included factors related to individual/employee, organizational level factors and environmental conditions. Commitment is one of the factors related to job performance. Jaramilloa, Mulki and Marshal (2005) carried out a longitudinal study spanning twenty-five years pertaining to the impact of organization commitment on the salesperson-job performance. The study spanned across fourteen nations and was based on sales employees and non-sales employees. It was found in the study that there was a strong correlation between organizational commitment and job performance, with a stronger correlation existing for the sales employees compared to non-sales employees. Furthermore, a stronger relationship was found to exist amongst organizational commitment and job performance in a collectivist setting compared to individualistic societies. This means that when there is high workers commitment, there will be improved job performance.

D'Amato and Zijlstra (2008) carried out a study in Italy in which they examined the impact of self-efficacy amongst hospital staff members. It was found in this study that work outcome with respect to business implementation is positively influenced by self-efficacy along with psychological climate. Another study was carried out to examine the causal link between role stress, selling orientation, customer orientation and job performance of retail salesperson. It was found in the study that customer orientation was influenced by role conflict and role ambiguity, which eventually affected job performance when facilitated by customer orientation (Knight, Kim & Crutsinger, 2007).

The research also sought to find out if job performance could be affected by job demands and job resources, with the mediation of burnout amongst front officers employed in the banking sector (Babakus, Yavas & Ashill, 2009). The moderating effect of client orientation in the kinship was also assessed in this research. It was found that burnout mediates the impact of task requirements and business resource on the performance and turnover intent of the business. There was a direct link between customer orientation and burnout, which brings about the dysfunctional impact of task requirements on burnout and job performance.

To find out whether job performance can be determined by motivation, role perception and ability, a study was conducted on seven Ethiopian public organizations. It was found in the study that there was no significant relationship between ability and workers performance compared to motivation and role perception that had a positive impact on public presentation. It had also been demonstrated that despite the fact that motivation can have an impact on employees' performance, its strength will be lower as the number of years for which an employee has been working increases (Hailesilasie, 2009).

There have been additional studies on job performance with respect to personality factors. A study was carried out by Sawyer, Srinivas and Wang (2009) amongst the call centre employees to find out how personality factors (from the five-element model) affected job performance. Job service performance was used as the indicator. In addition, the use of emotional exhaustion was also examined in this study. The structural equation modelling served as the data analysis tool and it was found that apart from extraversion/introversion, the residue of the personality dimension of the five-element framework which included conscientiousness, agreeableness, acceptance of novel experience and emotional stability and locus of control were significantly related to one or more of the performance indicators. It was also demonstrated in the survey that emotional exhaustion mediated the correlation between locus of control, emotional stability and intention to leave.

### ***Person-job fit***

A person-job fit is a situation in which a person's qualities are consistent with the environment of a constitution or with other individuals (Sekiguchi, 2003). Often, it is also considered to be a person-person fit (Sekiguchi, 2003). Furthermore, there is complementary fit when an individual's qualities fill up a void/space of the organization, therefore complementing and completing the organization (Muchinsky & Manohan, 1987). Supplementary fit was explained by Muchinsky & Manohan (1987) and examines the fit between a person and the environment, and not the task. Hence, it

is not applicable to person-job fit (Sekiguchi, 2004). Therefore, the idea of complementary fit was normally used to describe person-job fit in earlier studies (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005).

Expanding the perspective of complementary fit brings about another perspective called the demands-abilities versus needs-supplies. There is demand-abilities fit when an individual's abilities and expertise fulfils the environmental requirements (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). In this situation, the job requirements refer to those requirements that have to be met to bring about acceptable job performance (French, Caplan & Harrison, 1982). This makes individual-job demand ability fit a strong predictor of business performance (Waldman & Spangler, 1989). Apart from this, an employee's knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs) are consistent with the requirements of the employer or with those requirements that allow for performing job tasks up to a suitable level (Caldwell & O'Reilly, 1990; Will & Sackett, 1996).

This also suggests that individual has the abilities required in a certain field, such as occupation, occupational group or organization requirements (Kristof, 1996). The skills possessed by an individual comprises of training, experience and employee attitudes and expertise (French, Caplan & Harrison, 1982; Dawis & Lofquist, 1984; Caldwell & O'Reilly, 1990).

In contrast, there is a consistency between need-supplies when an organization has the ability to fulfil the requirements of an individual; for example, their financial, physical and psychological requirements (Edwards, 1991). This is also called supplies-values fit which has been the focus of several theories of well-being, adjustment and contentment (Locke, 1969; Caplan, 1987) and has been used in person-job fit (Cable & DeRue, 2002).

### ***Previous research on person-job fit***

It was stated by Edwards (1991) that many empirical researches regarding person-job fit were centred towards the fit between employees demand (related to job). With a collective research, it was observed by Saks and Ashforth (1997) and Edwards (1996) that person-job fit is linked with different variables like loyalty, job satisfaction, and performance.

As assessment was performed on 960 participants within 16 big organisations in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to understand how psychological contract influences as a mediator in the relation between person-job fit, person-organisation fit, and the organisation's affective commitment (Behery, 2009). Through this, it was observed that there was a positive connection of organisation's affective commitment with person-job fit and individual-organisation. Along with this, partially, the psychological contract mediated the link of person-job fit and individual-organisation with organisational affective commitment.

A cross research was considered between two nations: The United States and Turkey. The purpose for this was to analyse person-job fit and person-organisation fit as moderators of the association between intrinsic career success and proactive personality (career and business satisfaction. This study's outcomes revealed that in Turkey, there was a positive connection between proactive personality and job satisfaction for those people having high person-organisation fit. Overall, it was observed that there was a

positive correlation between proactive personality and career satisfaction among people who have high person-job fit and high person-organisation fit. Contrary to this, no support fund was available when this survey was conducted within the United States (Erdogan & Bauer, 2005)

The person-job fit was also considered with regard to job acceptance intentions and organisational attraction during employee selection. During a longitudinal study performed by Carless (2005), the purpose was to investigate any relation which could be present between person-organisation fit and person-job fit with intentions (to agree to the offer and actual decision regarding the job offer) while having the organisational attraction as the intermediary. The hypothesis that perspectives regarding person-organisation fit and person-job fit will impact attraction during a different stage was maintained. Nonetheless, the organisational attractiveness at different levels of selection partially mediated the connection between person-job fit and person-organization fit with intentions (to accept offer and actual decision regarding job offer).

It was indicated through above literatures that person-job fit had usually been related to a number of genes related to workers. The literatures regarding the link between job performance and person-job fit with the workers' job performance has been analysed in this given section.

### ***Relationship between person-job fit and job performance***

There was a study regarding the link between individual-job fit from the polychronicity outlook with business performance and well-being at an individual level. Considering this aspect, polychronicity was described to be indicative of the various kinds of styles or ways of performing the work in companies or was related to time management. This study showed that job performance and well-being of employees is not impacted through person-job fit with regard to polychronicity (Hecht & Allen, 2003). It was revealed through another study performed by Caldwell and O'Reilly (1990) that individual-job fit is linked with the subjective job performance measures. However, when the analysis was done with the aim of job performance measures, the impact was much less than what was observed through subjective performance standards.

In addition, the similarity between individual work and the labours required to complete a task was analysed by Caldwell and O'Reilly (1990). It was observed that there was a positive correlation of job fit with operation and satisfaction. An assessment was performed by O'Reilly III, Caldwell and Mirable (1992) to analysed person-job fit and its link with performance, satisfaction, and subvert. It was observed that person-job fit was related with satisfaction, performance, and turnover. Similar to this, Rousseau and Mc Lean Parks (1992) showed evidences that the level of fit between a person and a company, and the fit between a job and a person could have an impact on the productivity and employee loyalty. Likewise, it was presented by Greenberg (2002) that there is a link between person job fit and business functioning.

It was explained by Edwards (1991) that functioning and job satisfaction can be positively affected through person-job fit. It could also lead to motivation, reduction in job stress, retention, and attendance. With regard to that, it also known that person-job fit leads to enhancement of task performance when the job holder's ability aligns well with the job requirements. It was observed by Kristoff-Brown et al. (2005) that when

person-organisation fit and person-job fit were tested with respect to job performance, it revealed that there is a low correlation between person-job fit and overall performance, while it seemed to have a stronger correlation value with public presentation in comparison to the person-organisation fit. Moreover, with regard to other attitudinal findings, person-job fit still indicates greater correlation than what was expected through person-organisation fit (Kristoff-Brown, Jansen & Colbert, 2002; Saks & Ashforth, 1997). It was also indicated through previous studies that the connection of fit-performance was greater when performance was selected through task performance and organisational citizenship aspects (Schmitt, Oswald, Friede, Imus & Merritt, 2008).

It was further presented by Li and Hung (2010) that there is a strong relation between person-job fit and job performance when they expanded the research to understand the impact of person-job fit on the link between information literacy and work results for employees in financial companies in Taiwan. It was observed through the findings that there was a strong correlation between person-job fit and task performance. Thus, it turned out to be a good predictor of job performance while simultaneously it partially mediated the link between information literacy and job performance.

Even though studies had found that person-job fit could have influence on job performance, the amount of research is yet limited (Mosley, 2002). In addition, given the mixed results on the relationship between person-job fit and job performance (Edwards, 1991), studies on the relationship between person-job fit and job performance have therefore yet to come to similar agreements (Taylor, Locke, Lee, & Gist, 1984; Conte, Rizzutto & Steiner, 1999). Since past studies on the link between person-job fit and performance have contained mixed results (e.g. Lauver and Kristoff-Brown, 2001; Cable and DeRue, 2002; Greguras and Diefendorff, 2009) and there is a lack of research with regards to the NGOs especially in Malaysia, therefore the next hypothesis is to see whether there is a substantial relationship between person job-fit and the job performance of employees.

### ***Research framework and hypothesis***

The purpose of conducting this study is to determine the relationship that may exist between person-job fit with the job performance of the employees working in NGOs. Practically, all research studies in social and behavioural sciences irrespective of disciplines need a rationale or basis for directing inquiry. Sekaran (2005) said that theoretical framework is a conceptual representation of how a researcher theorizes or formulates logical sense of the relationships between various parts that have been classed as significant to the research problem. In principal, a theoretical framework attempts to integrate important pieces of information mainly varying in a coherent approach and thus conceptualizes a problem which can be looked into. A theoretical framework usually provides a formal explanation of the relationships among independent, dependent, moderating, mediating, control and extraneous variables in order to ease the reader in understanding the theorized relationships.

To summing up, the aim of this study is to analyze the relationship between the independent variable namely person-job fit and job performance as the dependent variable.



## ***Research framework***

Sekaran (2005) mentioned that the concept of research framework is to explain the relationships between the variable in a study. The construction of the research framework of this study is prepared based on the literature review of the theories and concept of person-job fit and job performance. Although there were many variables that have been identified to have influence on job performance, few of them were consistently supported by studies that investigated specifically on 1990 had defined it. This is mainly due to lack of a standard definition for what constitutes job performance (DelVecchio, 1999). Therefore, based on the research questions and objectives of this study and supported by the underpinning theories for this research, a research framework is developed in relation to the hypothesis of this study as shown in Figure 1.

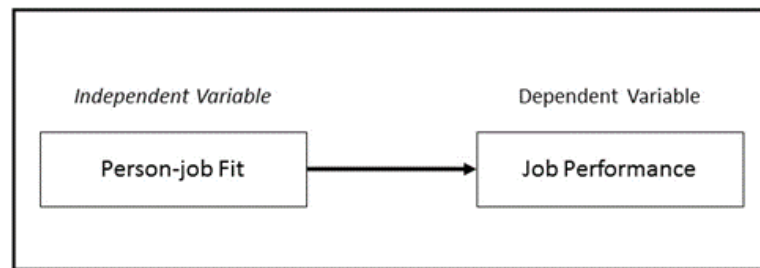


Figure 1: Research Framework

This study incorporated the research work by Rizzo et al. (1970), McClelland (1973) and Muchinsky and Monahan (1987) into a multivariate framework that relates the factor of person-job fit with job performance among the workers of the service sector organizations.

### ***Statement of hypothesis development***

Hypotheses are statements in quantitative studies, in which the researcher formulates a prediction or a supposition around the outcome of a relationship between the variables. Creswell (2012) mentioned that hypotheses are traditionally employed in observational research and they do as research questions that narrow the purpose of the statement to specific predictions. Theories are a clear statement of what is expected to be studied.

Generally, hypothesis development is set up prior to the conduct of the research that identifies the main concepts involved in the study. A hypothesis is defined as “a tentative yet testable statement, which predicts what you expect to find in your empirical” (Sekaran & Bougie, 2009). Therefore, once hypothesis had been developed to delineate the relationship between variable, testing can be carried out to confirm the relationship so that solution can be found to overcome identified problems (Sekaran & Bougie, 2009). Furthermore, in terms of the choice of hypothesis directions, it is always safe to use two-tailed test in order to avoid making wrong judgement on the direction of a relationship while at the same time when there have been conflicting findings in previous research studies (Hair, Money, Samouel, Page, 2007).

Passing upon the literature review discussed in the previous and the proposed research framework, hypothesis statements have been conveyed based on the relationships between person-job fit and job performance. This study will principally investigate the relationship that exists between those independent variable and dependent variable.

Thus, in order to answer the research questions of this study, the following research hypotheses were developed based on the given research framework (see Figure 1) and to analyze the relationship between person-job with the job performance of employees:

Direct Relationship Hypothesis Statement Proposed:

H1: There is a significant relationship between person-job fit and job performance.

The above hypothesis state the relationship between independent variable and the dependent variable and the statement will be verified in the next phase of this study. Creswell (2012) defines hypothesis testing as a process of formulating decisions about outcomes by comparing an observed value with a population value to ascertain if no difference or relationship exists between the values.

## **Conclusion**

This paper proposes the conceptual framework that may work for upcoming research to run with empirical proof on the relationship that exist between the person job-fit and job performance and the researchers expect that the research result will contribute to the professionals to rationalize additional determination in refining the job performance. Worker is an asset for the organization, therefore the success or failure of the organization depends on worker's job performance. Hence, the paper examines and studies the literature review on worker development and its effect on worker's job performance and the key variables identifies related to workers development and their performance. The further discussion develops a proposed model which explains the relationship between worker development variable (person-job fit) and job performance and consequently the worker performance will affect on organizational effectiveness. Thus, this research might provide better understanding to the decision makers on the person-job fit significant role in relation to the job performance.

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