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**Comparing person organization fit and person job fit**

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**Abstract**

Although there have been many studies conducted to analyze the effects of person-organization fit (POF) and person-job fit (PJF) on individual outcomes, little is known about which of these fit associates stronger with individual variables (i.e., intention to quit job, IQJ, and perceived individual performance, PIP). Therefore the purpose of the study is to compare the relationships of PJF and POF with IQJ and PIP. The sample of the study consists of security guards working at a private company's civil aviation safety department. Totally 98 security guards participated to the research. Results indicated that, the relationships of PJF and POF with IQJ and PIP were not significantly different. Consequently the results indicate that POF and PJF associate similarly with critical individual outcomes.

**Keywords:** person job fit, person organization fit, perceived individual performance, intention to quit the job.

**JEL Classification:** M12.

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## **Introduction**

Person-environment fit has been a popular topic for long years [Schneider 1986; Holland 1997; Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman & Johnson 2005; Edwards 1991; Goodman & Svyantek 1999; Arthur et al. 2006; Greguras, Diefendorff 2009; Kim et al. 2013]. There have been a number of studies on POF and PJF and their associations with organizational and individual outcomes [Boon et al. 2011; Silverthorne 2004; Edwards et al. 2006; Greguras, Diefendorff 2009; Guan et al. 2010; Warr, Inceoglu 2012; Singhal, Chatter 2006]. Despite the increasing number of studies conducted in the topic of POF and PJF, there are still not adequate empirical findings about comparing POF and PJF in the context of their relationships on individual and organizational outcomes, especially for blue color employees in a collectivist culture like Turkey. Therefore, the study was conducted to examine which type of fit stronger related with individual outcomes (Person Organization Fit; POF, vs Person Job Fit; PJF).

The paper is structured as follows. Firstly we define the concepts, and then we did a critical literature review in order to present research questions and hypothesis background. Later we explain the methodology part; including data collection, analysis and results. Finally we discussed the findings, limitations merits, limitations, future research and made a conclusion.

## **1. Literature review**

### **1.1. Defining the concepts**

Person-environment fit is broadly defined as “the compatibility between an individual and a work environment that occurs when their characteristics are well matched” [Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman & Johnson 2005, p. 281]. Different types of fit have been defined in the literature such as POF, PJF, Person-Vocation fit, Person-Group fit and Person-Person fit [Kristof-Brown 2006]. Among the various types of fit, POF and PJF are the most studied ones [Aichia & Sackett 2005]. POF is defined as “the compatibility between people and entire organizations” [Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman & Johnson 2005, p. 285]. PJF is defined as the “congruence or match between a person’s characteristics and those of the job or tasks that are performed at work” [Lee, Reiche & Song 2010]. Thus PJF is considered in two main perspectives, one of them is the match of employees’ knowledge, skills and ability with the job requires and the other is the fit of employee’s needs, desire and preferences with the job itself [Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman & Johnson 2005].

## 1.2. Extant research on person organization fit and person job fit.

Meta-analysis results show that there is a negative relationship between IQJ and POF [Verquer, Beehr & Wagner 2003; Hoffman & Woehr 2006] and PJF (Kristof-Brown 2006; Hassan, Akram & Naz 2012). Considering the relationship between POF and performance, a meta-analysis results indicate that; POF had low correlations with overall job performance (.07) and task performance (.13), but moderate correlations with contextual performance (.27) [Kristof-Brown 2006]. Additionally Lin, Yu,& Yic [2014] and Farooqui & Nagendra [2014] found that there is a significant relationship between POF and performance. PJF has also a significant positive relationship with job performance [June & Rosli 2011]. These findings show that POF and PJF associate positively with performance and negatively with IQJ. Hence it is considered that instead of examining the relationships of POF and PJF with critical variables, it might be useful to compare their association with individual outcomes (i.e., IQJ and PIP). Memon et al. [2014] emphasize that even though the number of studies increase in the topic of POF and PJF, they are examined usually separately. Lauver & Kristof-Brown [2001] stated that POF and PJF are distinct constructs. Therefore it is considered that more studies in the context of comparing these two variables will contribute to understand these concepts better. As mentioned earlier of this manuscript, person environment fit has various types and each type of it represents different kind of compatibility with different aspects of fit. That is why, it is expected that POF and PJF should associate with different kind of attitudes at a different rate. IQJ is related all aspects of an organization, therefore, it is expected that it should be related with any kind of fit. However for performance, PJF should be related stronger than POF [Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman & Johnson 2005]. Hence it is expected that PIP should be associating with PJF stronger than POF. Yet as mentioned above, IQJ is expected to associate with both POF and PJF in a similar way.

In this study it is intended to answer the question: which type of fit (i.e., POF and PJF) associates stronger with individual outcomes (i.e., IQJ and PIP)? To our knowledge, there is no study done taking this sample for the same purpose before, at least in Turkish literature. In that respect, the hypotheses of the study were described as follows.

### ***Hypotheses***

H<sub>1</sub>: POF is associated with PIP stronger than POF.

H<sub>2</sub>: The relationships of POF and PJF with IQJ are not statistically different.

## 2. Method

### 2.1. Participants and procedure

The data collected through valid and reliable scales which were used previously. Questionnaire forms had totally 19 items. The sample was taken from the employees working as security officers at the civil aviation safety department under a private security services company. Questionnaire forms were distributed to only voluntary employees by hand and 98 valid questionnaires were obtained. Random sampling method was used to collect data. Only the employees who had at least 1 year of working experience at the same job for the same company were included to the sample intentionally.

Table 1 presents the characteristics of participants; gender (male: 54.1%) and civil statuses (married: 51%). Most of the participants were less than 35 years old. However 25% of the participants was quite new in their job. Lastly, most of the participants were holding a high school degree. This is an expected result for the blue collar workers. Details are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Characteristics of participants

Variables	Category	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	45	45.9
	Female	53	54.1
Civil status	Single	48	49.0
	Married	50	51.0
Age	20-25	22	22.4
	26-35	73	74.5
	36-45	3	3.1
Tenure	1-2 years	23	23.5
	2-5 years	43	43.9
	5-10 years	27	27.6
	11-20 years	5	5.1
Education	High school	71	72.4
	Associate's degree	15	15.3
	Bachelor's degree	12	12.2

Note: N = 98.

### 2.2. Measures

*Job Performance.* The self-appraisal approach scale with four items was used which used by Al-Gatan [1983] and Darwish [2000] before. It is a 7-point scale that was employed ranging from 1 “very low” to 7 “very high”.

*Person-Job Fit.* The person-job fit scale with four items was used. The scale was developed by Saks, Ashforth [1997] and rated on a five 5 point scale.

*Person-Organization Fit.* The person-organization fit scale with 4 items was used. The scale was also developed by Saks, Ashforth [1997] and rated on a 5 point scale.

*Intention to Quit the Job.* IQJ questions derived from Firth et al. [2004]. The scale has two items rated on a five 5 point scale. The same scale has been used by Van Schalkwyk et al. [2010] before.

### 3. Results

Descriptive statistics ( $M$ ,  $\alpha$ ) are displayed in Table 2. One item was omitted from each scale except IQJ scale, because of the low reliability value. Except PJF and POF, overall, alpha values were satisfactory due to the limited number of items (i.e., a minimum of .66). Hypotheses 1 and 2 were tested with correlations (Table 3).

**Table 2.** Descriptive statistics and reliability analysis

	$M$	$\alpha$
PJF	1.96	0.66
POF	3.01	0.64
IQJ	2.64	0.80
PIP	3.97	0.83

Note: N = 98, M = Mean.

#### 3.1. Correlation analysis and Z-test

Table 3 presents the correlation analysis results and z test for testing the difference in the relationship of PJF and POF with PIP and IQJ. As it is seen, PIP was positively related with both POF and PJF. Similarly IQJ was significantly and negatively related to both POF and PJF. Correlation analysis also shows that there is a strong relationship between PJF and POF. In order to analyze the difference of correlation both PJF and POF with PIP and IQJ z-test was performed by the formula developed by Steiger [1980]. As it is seen no statistical differences were observed for the relationships of PJF and POF with PIP and IQJ.

**Table 3.** Correlation analysis and Z-test results

Variables	PJF	POF	z-test for the difference PJF & POF	
			z	p
PIP	.26***	.30***	4.60	4.41
IQJ	-.29***	-.27***	7.40	1.30
PJF		.70***		
POF		-		

\*  $p < .05$ .

\*\*  $p < .01$ .

\*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

Note: N = 98.

These findings show that  $H_1$  was not supported and  $H_2$  was supported. Depending on the literature review it is expected that PJF should be associating with PIP stronger than POF. On the other hand, it should be noted that PIP is not as the same as the task performance. This could be a reason that the  $H_1$  was rejected. These findings also show that it is a complicated issue to distinguish POF and PJF. Although they represent different aspects of fit, the correlation coefficient of both variables with PIP was almost the same. In the case of IQJ, expected findings were obtained.

#### **4. Discussion & conclusion**

One of the main purposes of human resource management department in organizations is to hire the suitable candidate. Thus, it is critical to evaluate the POF and PJF before making hiring decisions. When both factors are considered, it is likely to have a pleasant atmosphere in the workplace. This will contribute to have higher organizational and individual effectiveness.

The main contribution of the research is to compare the correlation of POF and PJF with PIP and IQJ. The z-test score shows that, the differences in correlation coefficient for POF and PJF with PIP and IQJ are not statistically significant. This is an interesting and critical finding in terms of comparing POF and PJF. The study also emphasizes the importance of both concepts since both of the variables significantly related with individual outcomes. On the other hand, the study indicates that even though the level of POF and PJF are different, their relationships with individual outcomes are not significantly different. In addition, the findings of the study were similar to the results of the studies done for similar purpose before. On the other hand, regarding the consequences of fit, no new findings were obtained except for POF and PJF comparison. As emphasized in the literature POF and PJF is critical for the organizations and individuals. This shows the importance of fit for the human resource managers or organization while deciding whom to hire for the organization.

The main limitation of the study was the sample size. Due to the limited number of employees that the company employs at the civil aviation safety department, it was not possible to increase the sample size. Also, the questionnaire form was created short on purpose because it is aimed to not to lose the participants' motivation while conducting the survey. Therefore, there might be some measurement problem because of the limited number of items (i.e., low level of internal consistencies values). On the other hand PIP was evaluated depending on employee's their own perception which could be resulted in subjective evaluation of participants.

Depending on these findings, it is proposed that in the future research, the factors effecting employees to stay in the organizations should be examined by comparing blue and white color employees. For that, a quantitative research might be useful in order to have better understanding on the factor influencing employee's workplace preferences. Such a study might help to understand the roles factors such as probability of finding a job, role of financial issues of employee to keep working for an organization. Because, in a developing country, employee's priority might be more about financial issues rather than psychological issues.

To sum up, it is clear that POF and PJF play an important role for the success of an organization. In that case there are some responsibilities for organizations such as paying more attention on hiring processes, effective leadership, personality assessments while hiring the candidates and for carrier management, maintaining diversity in workplace and pursuing a successful carrier planning [Sutarjo 2011].

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