

Interviewers' Perceptions of Person–Organization Fit and Organizational Selection Decisions

Daniel M. Cable
Georgia Institute of Technology

Timothy A. Judge
University of Iowa

A model of person–organization fit and organizational hiring decisions is developed and tested, using data from 38 interviewers making hiring decisions about 93 applicants. Results suggest that interviewers can assess applicant–organization values congruence with significant levels of accuracy and that interviewers compare their perceptions of applicants' values with their organizations' values to assess person–organization fit. Results also suggested that interviewers' subjective person–organization fit assessments have large effects on their hiring recommendations relative to competing applicant characteristics, and that interviewers' hiring recommendations directly affect organizations' hiring decisions (e.g., job offers).

Much of the recent interest in the concept of person–organization (P-O) fit (see Kristof, 1996) can be traced to Schneider's attraction–selection–attrition (ASA) framework (Schneider, 1987), which suggests that people and organizations are attracted to one another based on their similarity. Although an emerging body of research is supportive of the ASA framework, much of it remains untested (Schneider, Goldstein, & Smith, 1995). For example, although P-O fit is affected by posthire socialization practices (e.g., Chatman, 1991), little is known about how organizations can establish P-O fit during the selection process (Bretz, Rynes, & Gerhart, 1993).

One selection device that may be critical in establishing P-O fit is the employment interview (Chatman, 1991; Judge & Ferris, 1992). The interview enables organizations and job applicants to interact through organizational representatives, presumably allowing each party to determine if the other demonstrates congruent values and interests (Bowen, Ledford, & Nathan, 1991). Organizational

interviewers also readily declare the goal of locating and hiring applicants who fit (e.g., Rynes & Gerhart, 1990).

Although the interview appears to be a means for organizations to select for P-O fit, much past research on the topic has been practitioner oriented and exploratory (Bowen et al., 1991; Judge & Ferris, 1992). However, some research has examined the relationship between P-O fit and organizational hiring decisions. Rynes and Gerhart (1990) found that P-O fit is a separate construct from general employability and that interviewers evaluate P-O fit according to their organizations' attributes, not just their personal preferences. These researchers also found that applicants' interpersonal attributes (e.g., leadership and warmth) were related to interviewers' fit assessments.

Whereas Rynes and Gerhart (1990) suggested that the employment interview may be a means to assess and hire for P-O fit, two more recent studies have explored different aspects of fit in the selection process. Bretz et al. (1993) reported that interviewers most often mentioned job-related courses, experience, and general applicant characteristics (e.g., attractiveness) when responding to open-ended questions about their subjective fit evaluations. Adkins, Russell, and Werbel (1994) examined work values congruence between applicants and organizations and found that values congruence did not affect interviewers' subjective P-O fit perceptions and that interviewers' P-O fit perceptions had little effect on organizations' selection decisions.

The summary of past research just presented demonstrates that it is difficult to compare results from the initial studies in an incipient area of research. Although these past investigations appear to conflict in some ways, note that fundamentally different questions were inherent in the methodologies. For example, Rynes and Gerhart (1990)

Daniel M. Cable, DuPree School of Management, Georgia Institute of Technology; Timothy A. Judge, College of Business Administration, University of Iowa.

A preliminary version of this article was presented in the Human Resources Division of the 1995 Academy of Management annual meetings in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. We thank Chuck Parsons and Scott Shane for helpful comments and Karin Ash, Teri Bartlett, and Kim Bloom for their help with data collection and entry.

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Daniel M. Cable, who is now at the Kenan–Flagler Business School, University of North Carolina, Campus Box 3490, Carrroll Hall, Chapel Hill, North Carolina 27599-3490. Electronic mail may be sent via Internet to dan_cable@unc.edu.

examined *perceived* congruence (similarity between an interviewer's perceptions of an applicant's and their organization's attributes), whereas Adkins et al. (1994) examined *actual* congruence (similarity between an applicant's attributes and an organization's attributes as independently reported by each party). The present study develops past research on interviewers' P-O fit perceptions by examining both actual and perceived congruence and by examining congruence relative to variables suggested by Bretz et al. (1993) and other researchers (e.g., interviewer liking, applicant physical attractiveness, and work experience).

Past research on P-O fit and the interview also may appear to conflict because different attributes were used to represent the fit construct (Judge & Ferris, 1992). Although interviewers' perceptions of P-O fit may be based on many applicant attributes (e.g., demographics or personality), one important aspect of both individuals and organizations that can be compared directly and meaningfully is values (Chatman, 1989, 1991; Schein, 1990). *Values* are enduring beliefs that a specific mode of conduct or end state is preferable to its opposite, therefore guiding individuals' attitudes, judgments, and behaviors (Chatman, 1989, 1991; Rokeach, 1973). Thus, the present study attempts to unify fit research by defining *P-O fit* as the congruence between individuals' and organizations' values (Adkins et al., 1994; Chatman, 1989, 1991; Kristoff, 1996; O'Reilly, Chatman, & Caldwell, 1991).

Hypotheses

Figure 1 depicts the conceptual model of the role of P-O fit in organizations' hiring decisions. Each link in the model is discussed in turn.

Applicant–Organization Values Congruence

Implicit in the belief that employment interviews enable organizations to establish P-O fit is the assumption that interviewers can assess applicants' values with some degree of validity. However, decades of research have indicated that interviewers are not adept at assessing applicants' personal characteristics (see Arvey & Campion, 1982). In fact, interviewers' prevalent beliefs that they can accurately assess personality characteristics has been called the *interview illusion* and has been interpreted as evidence of the fundamental attribution error (Gilovich, 1991). Thus, past research indicates that interviewers may base their P-O fit judgments on inaccurate perceptions of applicants, suggesting that actual values congruence and perceived values congruence may be unrelated.

Although interviewers' abilities to assess applicants' values has not been the focus of most interview research (Paunonen, Jackson, & Oberman, 1987), some research

supports interviewers' claims that they can assess applicants' values accurately. Integrating results from a number of laboratory studies, Jackson and his colleagues suggested that judges can "interpret verbal, self-referent statements made in an interview context in terms of personality characteristics and relate these to expectations of suitability and performance" (Jackson, Peacock, & Holden, 1982, p. 1). However, this research was conducted under experimental conditions in which personality information about "paper applicants" was manipulated in interview transcripts. Support for interviewers' abilities to assess applicants' values also is provided by the *consensus-at-zero-acquaintance* research paradigm (e.g., Albright, Kenny, & Malloy, 1988). This research literature has demonstrated above-chance agreement between self-reported personality traits and ratings by observers who have had minimal exposure with the targets (Albright et al., 1988; Gangestad, Simpson, DiGeronimo, & Biek, 1992). Furthermore, Borkenau and Liebler (1993) found that strangers' personality assessments not only were related to targets' self-reports but also were correlated with ratings given by targets' close acquaintances.

On the basis of interpretations of the interview as an opportunity to assess applicants' values (Chatman, 1991), the rigorous consensus-at-zero-acquaintance research (Gangestad et al., 1992), and interviewers' own claims of their abilities (Rynes & Gerhart, 1990), we expected actual values congruence to positively predict perceived values congruence:

Hypothesis 1: Actual values congruence positively affects perceived values congruence.

Interviewers' Subjective Person–Organization Fit Evaluations

The previous section concerns *values congruence*, referring to a comparison between an organization's culture and an applicant's values. In addition to comparisons of specific values, it generally is believed that interviewers make subjective *P-O fit evaluations*, or holistic judgments about applicants' fit with their organizations (Rynes & Gerhart, 1990). Conceptually, values congruence and subjective P-O fit perceptions are related but distinct constructs (Adkins et al., 1994). In fact, Schneider's (1987) ASA framework indicates that P-O fit evaluations should be based on the congruence between an organization's values and an applicant's values.

Although theory suggests that values congruence should affect P-O fit evaluations, some past interview research has not supported this prediction. For example, in the most recent study of values congruence and interviewers' P-O fit evaluations, Adkins et al. (1994) found that applicant–organization values congruence had little effect on interviewers' P-O fit perceptions. However, these re-

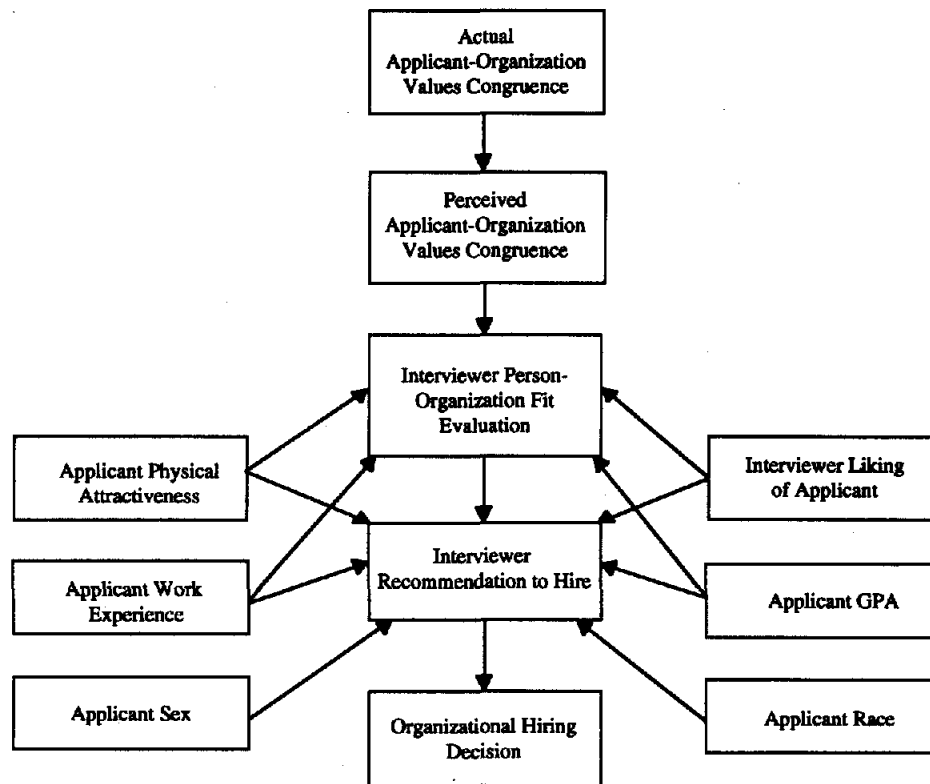


Figure 1. Hypothesized model of person-organization fit in organizational selection decisions (GPA = grade point average).

searchers examined only actual values congruence. Other researchers have emphasized the importance of social and personal constructions of organizations, where individuals' attitudes and behaviors are based on their perceptions rather than a more objective standard (e.g., Ferris & Judge, 1991; Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978; Schneider & Reichers, 1983). For example, Pulakos and Wexley (1983) found that actual similarity between managers and subordinates was less predictive of performance evaluations than perceived similarity. Extending this research to the context of the interview, interviewers' perceptions of applicants' values congruence should have a more proximal influence on their subjective fit evaluations than actual values congruence. Presumably, interviewers evaluate applicants on the basis of information that is available to them, even if this information is inaccurate. Thus, to extend past research and provide a new test of Schneider's (1987) ASA framework, we hypothesized the following:

Hypothesis 2: Perceived values congruence positively affects interviewers' subjective assessments of P-O fit.

Interviewer Person-Organization Fit Assessments and Hiring Decisions

One of the most established findings in social psychology is that individuals are more attracted to others per-

ceived as similar to themselves than those viewed as dissimilar (e.g., Byrne, 1969). Theoretically, individuals are more attracted to others who fit because of reduced cognitive dissonance, improved communication, and increased predictability in social interactions (e.g., Festinger, 1954; Swann, 1984; Tsui & O'Reilly, 1989). In the context of organizational selection, interviewers should prefer job seekers who appear to fit their organization (Bowen et al., 1991; Schneider, 1987). Although theory suggests that interviewers' subjective P-O fit assessments should affect their selection decisions, little empirical research has examined the role of fit perceptions in organizational hiring decisions. Accordingly, we next consider the relationships among interviewers' subjective P-O fit perceptions, their hiring recommendations, and organizations' hiring decisions.

Interviewer recommendation to hire. Almost all organizations use the interview when selecting new employees, and it is widely believed that interviewers' evaluations of applicants are crucial determinants of organizations' hiring decisions (e.g., Dipboye, Smith, & Howell, 1994; McDaniel, Whetzel, Schmidt, & Maurer, 1994). Accordingly, it is important to examine the impact of P-O fit perceptions on interviewers' hiring recommendations. Although past research has demonstrated that P-O fit is a

separate construct from general employability (e.g., Adkins et al., 1994; Rynes & Gerhart, 1990), it has not been established that P-O fit affects interviewers' hiring recommendations, especially relative to other applicant attributes. Thus, on the basis of past theory and research, we hypothesized the following:

Hypothesis 3: Interviewers' subjective evaluations of applicants' P-O fit positively affect their hiring recommendations.

Organizations' selection decisions. If the selection interview is a means to establish P-O fit in organizations, interviewers' evaluations of applicants must affect organizations' hiring decisions. Both anecdotal reports and survey research indicate that the interview is a critical component of organizations' selection strategies (Dipboye, 1992). In fact, Dipboye et al. (1994) reported that the majority of those responsible for final hiring decisions considered the interviewer's impression of the applicant to be the most important factor in their decision. Although much past interview research has overlooked the final outcomes of applicant-organization fit, it is important to examine the impact of interviewers' recommendations on organizational hiring decisions, to understand the processes through which P-O fit operates (e.g., Adkins et al., 1994). On the basis of this discussion, we hypothesized the following:

Hypothesis 4: Interviewers' hiring recommendations positively affect organizations' hiring decisions.

Other Relevant Influences

Past interview research has revealed many applicant characteristics that affect interviewers' hiring recommendations (Arvey & Campion, 1982). Thus, as indicated in Figure 1, relevant variables were added to the model in addition to the hypothesized variables, to better estimate the role of P-O fit in the interview. First, it generally is acknowledged that applicants' physical attractiveness affects interviewers' hiring recommendations (e.g., Arvey & Campion, 1982; Dipboye, 1992; Gilmore, Beehr, & Love, 1986; Raza & Carpenter, 1987); therefore, this link was included. Research also has indicated that interviewers' personal liking of applicants affects their hiring recommendations (Campion, 1978; Keenan, 1977; Raza & Carpenter, 1987), so this relationship was examined in the present study. Not surprisingly, research indicates that interviewers' evaluations are affected by applicants' *human capital* (e.g., grade point average (GPA) and work experience; Campion, 1978; Raza & Carpenter, 1987; Singer & Bruhns, 1991); therefore, these relationships were included in the model as well. Finally, we estimated the relationships between applicants' demographics (sex and race) and interviewers' hiring recommendations, in

keeping with the findings of past research (Gilmore, Beehr & Love, 1986; Hitt & Barr, 1989; McDonald & Hakel, 1985; Raza & Carpenter, 1987).

With respect to the predictors of interviewers' P-O fit evaluations, our a priori expectations were motivated by past research that examined P-O fit in the interview context. Accordingly, we examined the effects of applicant attractiveness on P-O fit evaluations, as suggested by Rynes and Gerhart (1990) and Bretz et al. (1993). We also estimated the effect of liking on P-O fit evaluations because Rynes and Gerhart (1990) suggested that interviewers' personal preferences or liking affect their fit perceptions. Finally, because both Bretz et al. (1993) and Adkins et al. (1994) suggested that applicants' human capital were related to P-O fit evaluations, these relationships also were included in the hypothesized model.

Method

Overview of Data Collection

To circumvent potential confounds of nonexpert judges (e.g., Barr & Hitt, 1986), this study examined interviewers making authentic applicant assessments and hiring recommendations. Also, to mitigate the effects of common-method variance, data were collected in three stages from multiple sources, which are described below.

Time 1. In the spring and fall recruiting sessions of 1994, 64 organizations recruited for positions through the career office in the industrial relations school of a large northeastern university. With the support of the career office, recruiters were contacted and asked to participate in the study before they arrived on campus. Confidentiality of recruiters' responses was assured. Forty-two recruiters from 35 organizations (55% response rate) completed surveys about their organizations (e.g., culture).

Of responding recruiters, 5% held staff positions, 57% were in management positions, 18% were vice presidents, and 20% held positions of director or partner. Of the recruiters, 55% were men and 45% were women, and 91% were Caucasian. The average interviewer had been employed with his or her company for 8.1 years and had been interviewing for 7 years. On average, recruiters interviewed 11 applicants at this university and were recruiting for seven positions across multiple universities. Of the recruiters, 38% were alumni of the university investigated in this study. Recruiters represented organizations averaging 46,845 employees and gross revenues of \$41,795,880. Available information on nonrespondents was gathered, both in terms of recruiters (gender, university alumni status, position level in the organization, and number of applicants interviewed) and organizations (net income, number of employees, and earnings per share). No significant differences existed between respondents and nonrespondents, at least in terms of these variables.

Interviewers were asked to complete applicant-evaluation surveys as soon as possible after their interviews. In keeping with the methodology used by Bretz et al. (1993) and Adkins et al. (1994), interviewers were asked to evaluate at least one successful applicant and one unsuccessful applicant, but to complete surveys about as many applicants as time permitted. This

method was used because interviewers seldom reported about negative applicants unless they were asked directly, limiting the variability of their responses. Interviewers rated a total of 112 applicants; the mean number of applicants rated was 3.15, ranging from 1 to 6. Post hoc analyses revealed that the number of applicants rated by a recruiter shared no relationship with judgments made about those applicants (e.g., liking, willingness to hire, or P-O fit evaluation).

Time 2. After completing the recruiting cycle, the job applicants who had interviewed through the career office were asked to complete a survey that assessed personal characteristics (e.g., values and demographics) and their success in obtaining second interviews and job offers from each organization with which they had interviewed during that cycle. Although approximately 3 months separated Time 1 (campus interviews) and Time 2 (applicants reported job offers), some job seekers indicated that they were still waiting to hear from organizations regarding their job prospects. We subsequently contacted those job seekers before graduation to complete our data collection. Confidentiality of individuals' responses was assured, and participation was voluntary. Of the applicants who were rated by interviewers, 91% completed surveys.

Applicants' ages ranged from 19 to 45 years, with an average age of 23 years. Of the respondents, 55% were women and 45% were men, and 72% were Caucasian. Degree-related work experience ranged from 0 to 19 years, with an average of 1.6 years. Of the applicants, 58% were undergraduates, and applicants' GPAs ranged from 2.3 to 4.0, with a mean of 3.42. Available data on nonrespondents (degree, gender, GPA, and work experience) were collected from applicants' résumés, which were on file for recruiters in the career office. No significant differences were found on these variables between respondents and nonrespondents. Respondents' résumés also were used to confirm the GPAs and years of work experience that respondents had reported on the survey. The average difference between respondents' résumés and their direct reports were 0.01 and 3.8 months for GPAs and work experience, respectively ($r = .95$ and $.96$, respectively; both $ps < .01$), indicating that applicants provided us with the same information that was provided to organizational recruiters.

Time 3. Six months after completing surveys about the applicants they had interviewed, interviewers again were contacted and asked to complete a short survey that reassessed their organizations' values. Thirty-eight (90%) of the interviewers who responded to the initial surveys also completed this final survey, and usable data were available for 93 applicant-interviewer pairs.

Measures

Organizations' values. According to the conceptual requirements for interactional research (Bem & Allen, 1974; Chatman, 1989), the assessment of individual and organizational values should be idiographic, so that the relevance of particular values and the uniqueness of patterns of values across people and organizations are represented and commensurate, so that people and organizations can be compared. Also, because many competing work values are socially desirable (e.g., few individuals would care to characterize themselves as lacking fairness or tolerance

until they are forced to make a choice between them), forced ranking (ipsative measurement) is the most appropriate method of values assessment (Chatman, 1989; Meglino, Ravlin, & Adkins, 1989).

Of the available measures of work values, the Organizational Culture Profile (OCP; O'Reilly et al., 1991) appeared to be best suited for the present study. The OCP was expressly developed and validated to assess P-O fit (O'Reilly et al., 1991) and was recommended specifically by Rynes and Gerhart (1990) to understand how organizations use the interview as a means to establish P-O fit. As recommended by O'Reilly et al. (1991), interviewers reported their perceptions of their organizations' values by sorting values into nine categories ranging from *most characteristic of my organization* to *least characteristic of my organization*. Interviewers reported their organizational cultures both at Time 1 and at Time 3.

In the present study, the number of items in the original OCP was reduced from 54 to 40. A pilot study with organizational recruiters suggested that several of the items were too similar for the task of describing applicants (e.g., "flexibility" and "adaptability") and that 54 items simply took too long to compare and sort. To reduce the number of items, 10 organizational researchers were given the OCP and were asked to make the 54 values more manageable by grouping similar values together but retaining each value that was truly unique. Each respondent removed at least 15 items, and only the values that all respondents agreed were highly similar were removed. The 40 values used in the reduced OCP appear in the Appendix.

Because interviewers reported their organizations' values at two different times (approximately 6 months apart), it was possible to assess the consistency of their perceptions. According to the approach recommended and used by Chatman (1991) and O'Reilly et al. (1991), the stability of interviewers' perceptions of their organizations was assessed by calculating test-retest reliabilities. For the 38 interviewers who responded to both culture assessments, the mean reliability was .61 (all $ps < .01$). To assess the reliability of the most defining values of organizations, a second test-retest reliability was computed, using only those values rated as 9, 8, or 7 (very characteristic) and 1, 2, or 3 (very uncharacteristic). The mean test-retest reliability was .87. Not surprisingly, values seen as defining an organization were more stable than those "neither characteristic nor uncharacteristic" of an organization. Overall, these results indicate significant stability in recruiters' perceptions of their organizations' values.

Applicants' values. The reduced OCP also was used to assess interviewers' perceptions of applicants' values and applicants' perceptions of their own values. After their interviews (at Time 1), recruiters sorted the values into nine categories ranging from *most characteristic* to *least characteristic*, according to the question, "To what degree is this a characteristic of the applicant I interviewed?" At Time 2, applicants performed the same Q sort according to the question "How characteristic is this attribute of me?"

P-O fit assessments. At Time 1, interviewers reported their subjective assessment of applicants' P-O fit, according to the question, "To what degree did this applicant match or fit your organization and the current employees in your organization," evaluated on a 5-point graphic scale ranging from *not at all*

(1) to *completely* (5). Although one-item measures are not inherently deficient, their reliability is questionable. Accordingly, we assessed the reliability of the one-item subjective P-O fit scale during the 1994 fall recruiting session by adding a second item ("Do you think this applicant's values reflect your own organization's values and 'personality?' "). Thus, the fall 1994 data collection (approximately 50% of the total database) enabled us to investigate the reliability of the original P-O fit item. The coefficient alpha reliability estimate resulting from the two-item P-O fit scale was .83, indicating that the one-item P-O fit measure provided an adequate measure of interviewers' P-O fit judgments, which therefore is used in all subsequent analyses.

Recommendation to hire. The variable representing interviewers' hiring recommendation comprised three items. Because interviewers decide whether applicants receive further consideration for a job or are eliminated from the selection process (Adkins et al., 1994), second interview invitations are a direct behavioral measure of interviewers' hiring intentions. Second interview invitations were measured during data collection Time 2, when applicants reported which organizations offered them second interviews (coded 1 = yes, 0 = no). Responses to this item were combined with interviewers' reported likelihood that they would recommend that applicants be hired (assessed at Time 1 and ranging from *very unlikely* (1) to *very likely* (5)) and with interviewers' responses to the statement "Please give your overall evaluation of this candidate" (assessed at Time 1 and ranging from *very negative* [1] to *very positive* [5]). When subjected to a factor analysis, these three items resulted in a single factor that explained 87.1% of the variance, and the internal consistency of this three-item scale was .93. Due to differences in scale formats between the items, responses were standardized before the scores were computed.

Selection decision. Organizations' hiring decisions were measured during Time 2, when applicants reported which organizations had offered them jobs. A dummy variable was coded as 1 if the organization had extended an offer to the applicant and as 0 otherwise. As noted above, if applicants indicated that they still were waiting to hear from an organization, we contacted them again before graduation and recorded whether they had received a job offer.

Physical attractiveness. At Time 1, interviewers rated the physical attractiveness of applicants, according to the question, "Please rate the overall level of attractiveness of this applicant (appearance, dress, etc.)," on a 5-point rating scale ranging from *very unattractive* (1) to *very attractive* (5).

Applicant liking. At Time 1, interviewers rated their personal liking of each applicant, according to the statement, "Please estimate how well you personally liked this applicant." Responses were to a 5-point scale ranging from *very little* (1) to *very well* (5).

Profile similarity scores. The hypotheses to be tested in the present study required the calculation and use of values congruence scores (e.g., Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 2). Consistent with theoretical conceptualizations of P-O fit (e.g., Chatman, 1989; Kristof, 1996) and as recommended and used in past research (Bem & Allen, 1974; O'Reilly et al., 1991), values congruence scores were calculated by correlating two values profiles assessed with the OCP. To reduce potential common-method variance concerns, these congruence scores were com-

puted with data collected from different sources and times. Specifically, the scores representing perceived values congruence were based on interviewers' reports of applicants (assessed during Time 1 data collection) and interviewers' reports of their organizations (assessed during Time 3). The scores representing actual values congruence were based on interviewers' reports of their organizations (assessed during Time 3) and applicants' reports of their own values (assessed during Time 2).

Results

The means, standard deviations, and correlations among all variables appear in Table 1. Because the same group of applicants were interviewing for multiple positions, some applicants were rated by multiple interviewers. Although most of the variables under investigation were reported independently about each applicant (after each individual interview), some variables were duplicated across cases (e.g., applicant demographics). Duplication of variables across cases can lead to correlated errors that violate statistical assumptions. To investigate the hypothesis that duplicated applicant characteristics led to a positive correlation between error terms, we computed the Durbin-Watson statistic, a test designed for exactly this purpose (Greene, 1993). In the present study, the Durbin-Watson statistic (d) confirmed the null hypothesis of no autocorrelation ($d = 1.86, ns$), indicating that the disturbances were not significantly correlated ($r = .07, ns$).

Because interviewers provided data for more than one case, it also was possible that interpretation of the results was confounded by systematic differences across interviewers in their decision making (e.g., general interviewer tendencies to evaluate all applicants positively or negatively). To test the prevalence of interviewer effects, we conducted an analysis of variance on the endogenous study variables (perceived values congruence, P-O fit evaluations, recommendation to hire, applicant physical attractiveness, and interviewer liking), using interviewer as the grouping variable. Each of the 38 interviewers in the study was assigned a unique number to distinguish them. None of the F ratios were significant for any of the variables, indicating that there were no significant differences across interviewers in terms of their mean ratings. Although this analysis does not exclude the possibility of idiosyncratic interviewer effects, it does suggest that variation in interviewer ratings is due to the applicant rather than interviewer effects alone.

To test the model presented in Figure 1, we estimated a covariance structure model using LISREL 8 (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1993), which allows researchers to model entire systems of relationships (e.g., sequential dependent variables). Also, LISREL permits direct comparisons of alternative models, providing information about the relative adequacy of the hypothesized model. One concern when

Table 1
Correlations Between Study Variables

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Actual values congruence	0.11	0.17	—										
2. Perceived values congruence	0.17	0.35	.23	—									
3. Interviewer P-O fit evaluation	3.22	1.00	.16	.64	—								
4. Applicant physical attractiveness	3.62	0.86	-.01	.20	.31	—							
5. Interviewer liking of applicant	3.70	0.94	.25	.40	.51	.28	—						
6. Interviewer hiring recommendation	0.08	2.79	.16	.64	.84	.35	.64	—					
7. Applicant sex	0.50	0.46	-.19	-.24	-.25	-.18	-.05	-.29	—				
8. Applicant race	0.81	0.36	-.02	.08	.12	.03	.04	.14	.06	—			
9. Applicant work experience	1.78	3.25	.03	-.03	-.11	-.04	-.22	-.01	-.01	.18	—		
10. Applicant GPA	3.53	0.33	.08	.15	.22	-.10	.10	.23	-.08	.25	-.09	—	
11. Organizational hiring decision	0.28	0.45	.15	.45	.51	.18	.33	.64	-.26	-.02	-.04	.23	—

Note. $N = 93$. Correlations greater than .19 are significant at the .05 level. P-O fit = person-organization fit; GPA = grade point average.

using covariance structure analyses is sample size. Bentler (1985) suggested that a sample-size-to-parameter ratio of 5:1 is adequate to achieve reliable estimates. Because that ratio was 7:1 in the present study, we considered the sample size adequate for the analyses. A second potential concern with the analyses was the dichotomous nature of job offer decisions. Because LISREL assumes that endogenous variables are continuous, modeling organizations' selection decisions with covariance structure analysis would violate this assumption. To examine the effects of this violated assumption, we predicted hiring decisions using logistic regression, an approach designed specifically to model dichotomous dependent variables (Greene, 1993). Results from this reduced-form equation were nearly identical to the LISREL output, indicating that the dichotomous nature of the dependent variable had little effect on the LISREL analysis and results.

Before discussing support for the specific hypotheses, it is important to evaluate the overall fit of the theoretical model to the data. Fit statistics are the central means through which alternative factor structures are compared, and there are numerous statistics that can be used to describe a model's fit to the data. Table 2 contains the fit statistics for the hypothesized model, as well as several alternative models, which will be discussed later. The most widely used measures of fit are chi-square and the goodness-of-fit index (GFI). Chi-square statistics that are not statistically significant suggest that a model adequately fits the data, and GFIs at or above .90 are believed to indicate acceptable fit (Medsker, Williams, & Holahan, 1994). Thus, according to these indices, the hypothesized model provides a good fit to the data.¹ However, because chi-square and GFI depend on sample size (Hu & Bentler, 1995), researchers have suggested alternative fit statistics that depend less on the sample size and are thought to provide better information on model fit (Marsh, Balla, & McDonald, 1988). Three of these statistics provided by LISREL 8 are the normed fit index (NFI), the comparative fit index (CFI), and the incremental fit index (IFI).

As with GFI, levels at or above .90 for these statistics imply adequate fit, and each of these fit indices indicate that the hypothesized model provides a good fit to the data. Next, we discuss the substantive results from the model.

¹ According to the LISREL program (see Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1993, p. 28), degrees of freedom are provided by the following formula:

$$df = (\text{no. variables}) (\text{no. variables} + 1) / 2$$

— no. freed parameters.

The hypothesized model contains 11 variables and 14 freed parameters (as indicated in the parameter specifications matrix provided in the LISREL output). According to this formula, the proper degrees of freedom for the hypothesized model should be 52. However, the LISREL output indicated that the degrees of freedom were 24. Apparently, this discrepancy was due to a miscalculation in the LISREL program using the FIXED-X command. Because it often is unnecessary to specify a measurement model for exogenous variables, LISREL allows a FIXED-X command to be used, which fixes the covariances among the exogenous variables (contained in the Phi matrix) to be equal to their values in the sample covariance matrix (see Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1993, p. 9). The apparent error was that when calculating degrees of freedom, LISREL treated these fixed parameters as freed. In the present study, because there are 7 exogenous variables in the hypothesized model, the Phi matrix contains 7 variances and 21 covariances, thus, 28 parameters. If one subtracts these 28 parameters from the proper 52 degrees of freedom, one arrives at the 24 degrees of freedom provided in the LISREL output. However, because the elements in Phi are not freed parameters, we believe this to be erroneous and therefore will use the proper 52 degrees of freedom for the hypothesized model. (We thank an anonymous reviewer for bringing this discrepancy to our attention.) One way to resolve this apparent error is to directly fix elements in Phi to be equal to the elements in the covariance matrix. In fact, when we did this, 52 degrees of freedom were obtained, and the model parameters were the same.

Table 2
Fit Statistics for Alternative Models

Model	χ^2	df	GFI	NFI	CFI	IFI
Hypothesized model	35.42	52	.94	.90	.96	.97
Alternative Model 1 Hiring recommendation predicts P-O fit perception.	122.81*	52	.77	.67	.69	.71
Alternative Model 2 P-O fit perception predicts perceived values congruence.	43.34	52	.93	.88	.94	.94
Alternative Model 3 Human capital predicts values congruence.	34.06	50	.94	.91	.96	.97
Alternative Model 4 Demographics predict values congruence.	29.37	50	.95	.92	.98	.98
Alternative Model 5 Interviewer liking and applicant attractiveness predict perceived values congruence.	23.44	50	.96	.94	1.00	1.00

Note. $N = 93$. GFI = goodness-of-fit index; NFI = normed fit index; CFI = comparative fit index; IFI = incremental fit index; P-O fit = person-organization fit.
* $p < .05$.

Figure 2 contains the maximum-likelihood parameter estimates, significance levels, and coefficients of determination for the hypothesized model. Actual values congruence significantly predicted perceived values congruence.

Thus, Hypothesis 1 was supported. Perceived values congruence significantly influenced interviewers' subjective P-O fit evaluations, providing support for Hypothesis 2. Interviewers' liking of applicants and applicants' physical

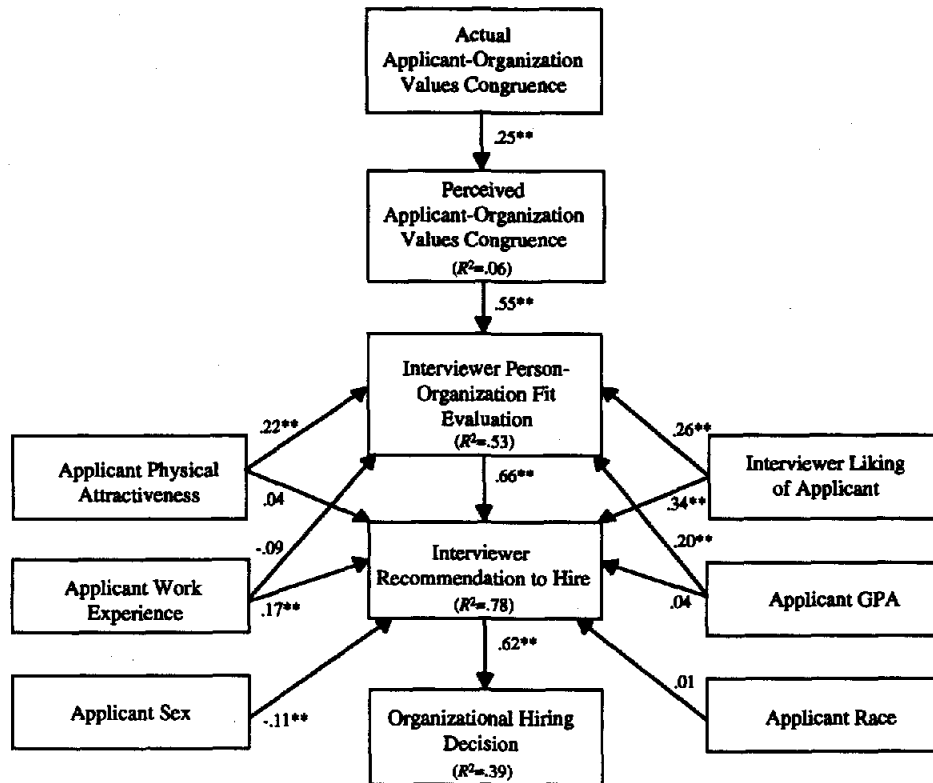


Figure 2. Maximum-likelihood parameter estimates for the hypothesized model of person-organization fit in organizational selection decisions (GPA = grade point average). Statistics are standardized path coefficients; * $p < .05$, two-tailed; ** $p < .01$, two-tailed. R^2 = coefficient of determination for each endogenous link.

Table 3
Total Effects of Variables and Hiring Recommendations and Hiring Decisions

Variable	Interviewer hiring recommendations	Organizational hiring decisions
Actual values congruence	.09**	.06**
Perceived values congruence	.36**	.23**
Applicant physical attractiveness	.19**	.12**
Interviewer liking of applicant	.51**	.32**
Subjective P-O fit evaluation	.66**	.41**
Applicant sex	-.11**	-.07**
Applicant race	.01	.01
Applicant work experience	.11*	.07
Applicant GPA	.17**	.11**

Note. Total effects are standardized. P-O fit = person-organization fit; GPA = grade point average.
 * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

attractiveness also positively and significantly influenced interviewers' perceptions of applicants' P-O fit. Interviewers' assessments of applicants' P-O fit significantly influenced their hiring recommendations, providing support for Hypothesis 3. Hypothesis 4, that interviewers' hiring recommendations would positively affect organizations' final selection decisions, also was supported. In terms of the control variables, applicants with higher GPAs were judged to fit significantly better than applicants with lower GPAs. Applicants who were personally liked by interviewers were more likely to be recommended for hire than less-liked applicants, as were applicants with more work experience. Finally, female applicants were significantly more likely to be recommended for hire than male applicants.

Because the ultimate outcomes in this study are interviewers' hiring recommendations and organizations' hiring decisions, it is informative to examine the relative total effects of each exogenous variable on these outcomes. Accordingly, Table 3 contains the standardized total effects of each antecedent variable provided by the LISREL software. Furthermore, to illustrate the practical results of interviewers' P-O fit perceptions, we have presented in Table 4 the percentage effect sizes of P-O fit on actual

job offers. The results in Table 3 also reveal that perceived values congruence, interviewer liking of the applicant, and subjective fit perceptions have at least moderately strong effects on interviewing outcomes. Although actual congruence has a statistically significant total effect on hiring recommendations and hiring decisions, its effect is relatively weak.

Both Medsker et al. (1994) and Hayduk (1987) recommended evaluating a hypothesized model relative to plausible alternative models. In the present study, there appear to be five alternative models that should be tested. First, it is possible that interviewers' P-O fit perceptions are not antecedents to, but consequences of, their hiring recommendations, so that interviewers rate applicants as having a good fit with their organization if they already have decided to recommend that they be hired. We tested this alternative model by reversing the direction of the link between interviewers' recommendation to hire and interviewers' P-O fit evaluation in Figure 2, leaving all other aspects of the original hypothesized model unchanged.

A second possibility is that recruiters' reports of applicants' values are a result rather than an antecedent of their P-O fit perceptions. Thus, it is possible that interviewers

Table 4
Relationship Between Interviewer Judgments of Applicant Person-Organization Fit and Organizational Selection Decisions

"To what degree did this applicant match or fit your organization and the current employees in your organization?"	No. applicants falling into category	% applicants in category receiving job offers
Not at all	5	0
To almost no degree	23	0
To some degree	26	12
To a large degree	43	48
Completely	5	80

Note. Interviewer judgments of applicant fit were made directly after their interview with applicants (Time 1); information on whether a job offer was received was reported by applicants after organizational selection decision (Time 2).

manufactured applicants' values profiles to look like their organization if they believed they fit, broadly speaking. We tested this alternative model by reversing the direction of the link between interviewers' P-O fit evaluations and perceived values congruence in Figure 2, again leaving all other aspects of the hypothesized model unchanged.

Third, it is possible that applicants' human capital attributes affect interviewers' perceptions of their values, resulting in higher perceived values congruence for applicants' with certain qualifications. This argument is consistent with Spence's (1973) signaling theory, which suggests that employers make inferences about applicants' tacit qualities based on their overt characteristics. We tested this third alternative model by adding links between applicants' human capital (GPA and work experience) and perceived values congruence, again leaving all other aspects of the hypothesized model unchanged.

Similarly, it also appears plausible that applicants' demographic characteristics might affect interviewers' perceptions of their values, so that perceived values congruence might be higher for some groups than others. Although no past research has investigated these relationships, Heilman's (1983) lack-of-fit model would suggest that interviewers' perceptions of applicants' values congruence may be affected by the applicants' demographics due to stereotypes (also see Taylor, Fiske, Etcoff, & Ruderman, 1978). We tested this fourth alternative model by adding links between applicants' demographics (sex and race) and perceived values congruence.

Finally, it appears plausible that interviewers' liking of applicants and applicants' physical attractiveness may affect perceived values congruence. First, in keeping with past research indicating that people's cognitions often are affected by their affective reactions to stimuli (e.g., Zajonc, 1980), interviewers' initial liking of applicants may cause them to alter their judgments of applicants' values. Furthermore, research has indicated that interviewers' initial impressions of applicants influence subsequent judgments about them (Macan & Dipboye, 1988). Thus, applicants' physical attractiveness also may affect interviewers' perceptions of their values, because both attractiveness and likability are applicant attributes that can be identified early in the interview. In the present study, we tested this fifth alternative model by freeing the links between liking and perceived values congruence and between attractiveness and perceived values congruence.

Table 2 contains fit statistics from each of the alternative models. The first alternative model could be rejected immediately, because it provided a poor fit to the data. Specifically, the chi-square was significant, and each of the fit indices fell below the .90 criterion suggested by Medsker et al. (1994). The hypothesized model also provided a better fit than the second alternative model, across all of the fit indices. Specifically, the second alternative model

was an average of .02 lower across the four standardized fit statistics in Table 2, and researchers have suggested that alternative LISREL models may be judged by whether they differ by at least .01 across standardized fit statistics (Widaman, 1985). The third alternative model did not improve on the fit of the hypothesized model. Because this model was less parsimonious than the hypothesized model, it would need to fit significantly better to be preferred. Furthermore, neither of the new links (GPA and work experience) of this alternative model was significant (both $p > .10$).

The fourth and fifth alternative models both appeared to demonstrate a better fit with the data than the hypothesized model. Results from the fourth model indicated that sex (but not race) significantly predicted perceived values congruence, so that female applicants were significantly more likely to be perceived as having the same values as organizations. Results from the fifth alternative model indicated that interviewers' liking (but not applicants' physical attractiveness) significantly predicted perceived values congruence, so that applicants who were liked by interviewers were significantly more likely to be perceived as having congruent values. Although these relationships in the alternative models were significant, they were not added to the hypothesized model in the present study because it generally is not appropriate to modify a hypothesized model in the midst of testing it (MacCallum, Roznowski, & Necowitz, 1992).

Discussion

Researchers have proposed that a critical function of the employment interview is the assessment of applicants' values congruence with recruiting organizations (Bowen et al., 1991; Chatman, 1991; Rynes & Gerhart, 1990). Experimental research has indicated that judges can assess individuals' personal characteristics and organizational suitability (Jackson et al., 1982), and conversations with actual interviewers reveal that the interview is believed to be a means of assessing applicants' values congruence with organizations. However, little field research has examined the determinants of interviewers' fit judgments, and no research has demonstrated that interviewers' P-O fit perceptions affect either their hiring recommendations or organizations' hiring decisions. Given the pervasiveness of the interview in selection systems (Arvey & Campion, 1982; McDaniel et al., 1994) and the positive outcomes of P-O fit (Chatman, 1991; Govindarajan, 1989), the lack of answers to these basic questions is a substantial gap in the literature.

This study suggests that interviewers base their P-O fit evaluations on the congruence between their perceptions of applicants' values and their organizations' values. Furthermore, as indicated in Table 3, perceived values congru-

ence had significant effects on interviewers' hiring recommendations and organizations' hiring decisions. Thus, work values appear to be an important element of the interviewing process. Results also indicated that interviewers' subjective P-O fit perceptions were important predictors of their hiring recommendations, even after controlling for the relevant variables suggested by past interview research (e.g., attractiveness and demographics). Furthermore, other organizational members placed considerable weight on interviewers' assessments of applicants, because job offers were based in large part on interviewers' evaluations (see Tables 3 and 4). In fact, when we used methods of calculating percentage effect sizes in logistic regression (Hanusheck & Jackson, 1977), the LOGIT results indicated that a one-unit increase in fit from the mean would result in a 44% increase in the probability of receiving a job offer. Thus, an applicant who was perceived to fit the organization fairly well (being rated as a 4 on the 1–5 scale) would be 44% more likely to receive a job offer than the average fitting applicant, even after controlling for interviewer liking, applicant attractiveness, work experience, GPA, sex, and race. This cumulative set of findings is consistent with past practitioner-oriented research on the topic (e.g., Bowen et al., 1991) and also confirms the selection component of Schneider's (1987) ASA model.

Results from this study perhaps are made more interesting by the finding that the relationship between actual values congruence and perceived values congruence, although significant, was relatively small ($\beta = .25$, $p < .01$). This finding implies that interviewers' inferences about applicants' values and P-O fit often are inaccurate, at least from applicants' perspectives. These results are consistent with past performance appraisal research indicating that perceived similarity is a more effective predictor of subordinate evaluations than actual similarity (Pulakos & Wexley, 1983). Results from the present study also replicate Adkins et al.'s (1994) recent finding that actual values congruence had little direct effect on interviewers' P-O fit perceptions. However, the present findings also help clarify and integrate conflicting results from past research in the following way: Values congruence affects interviewers' P-O fit perceptions, but apparently it is perceived congruence rather than actual congruence that best predicts fit judgments. The relatively weak effect of actual congruence on selection decisions is likely due to the fact that it is a relatively distal influence: In the hypothesized model, actual congruence is mediated by three other variables (perceived congruence, subjective fit perceptions, and recommendation to hire) before it influences actual selection decisions.

Although the present study integrated several discrepancies between past research investigations, note the important methodological differences that remain. Specifi-

cally, although we examined the effect of applicants' GPA and work experience, Bretz et al. (1993) found that recruiters also were interested in applicants' articulateness and job-related course work. Thus, it is possible that a more fully specified model would have affected our results, perhaps restraining the relative effects of the P-O fit variables. Furthermore, because Bretz et al. interviewed recruiters from four different colleges, whereas the present study examined data from only one college, it is possible that differences in results can be attributed to different samples, so that the relevance of values congruence and P-O fit depends on the occupational field. Another methodological difference is that this study used the OCP, whereas Adkins et al. (1994) used the Comparative Emphasis Scale. Although both of these scales measure work values ipsatively, the CES examines 4 values, but the OCP used in this study examined 40. Finally, it is important to recognize the effects that prescreening decisions may have on the importance of P-O fit relative to other variables (e.g., human capital). Because the percentage of prescreening permitted in different interviewing situations may vary and because prescreening decisions may affect the variance of applicants' work experience, course work, GPA, and demographics (Macan & Dipboye, 1988), prescreening may affect the impact of P-O fit variables relative to other applicant characteristics. In summary, although it is difficult for a single study to examine all relevant variables, it is important for P-O fit research to continue to integrate past research and determine the effects of methodological differences.

Finally, results from the comparison of the hypothesized model with the alternative models merit some discussion. The hypothesized model was motivated by past interview and P-O fit research, and the LISREL fit statistics indicated that this system of relationships provided a good fit to the data. Of the five alternative models tested (including eight different links), only two new links appeared to significantly improve the fit of the hypothesized model. Although this set of findings increases confidence in the validity and robustness of the hypothesized model, the results also suggest that future research would benefit from examining the relationships between perceived values congruence, applicant sex, and interviewer liking. Specifically, results indicated that applicants' sex may affect interviewers' perceptions of their values due to stereotyping, consistent with Heilman's (1983) model. Likewise, the significant relationship between interviewer liking and perceived values congruence may highlight the construed nature of perceived values congruence, helping to explain the relatively small effect of actual values congruence. Future research is needed to cross-validate the findings of these alternative models (MacCallum et al., 1992).

Limitations and Strengths

This study has several limitations. First, interviewers reported applicants' values at the same time that they reported how well applicants fit their organization. This data collection methodology allows for a reverse interpretation of Hypothesis 2 (that interviewers first form a fit perception, then use this perception to complete the OCP so that applicants' values reflect their fit perception). However, several factors weigh in favor of the causal direction contained in the hypothesized model. First, organizational theory suggests that values affect P-O fit (Chatman, 1989, 1991; Schneider, 1987), not the reverse causation. Second, a direct test of the alternative model described above indicated a considerably worse fit with the data than the model derived from past theory and research (see Table 2). Finally, if perceived values congruence was simply a function of interviewers' P-O fit judgments, then perceived values congruence would not have been related to actual values congruence because actual values congruence was reported independently of perceived values congruence. If perceived values congruence is simply a manifestation of P-O fit judgments, actual values congruence and perceived values congruence will be unrelated. However, actual values congruence was significantly and positively related to perceived values congruence, consistent with P-O fit theory.

A second potential weakness of this study concerns the assessment of P-O fit with profile similarity indices (PSIs). Although PSIs are consistent with theoretical conceptualizations of P-O fit and therefore have been recommended and used by P-O fit researchers (e.g., Chatman, 1989, 1991; Rynes & Gerhart, 1990), they also have been criticized. As noted in Kristof's (1996) review, PSIs obfuscate the contribution of individual elements to the overall score, discard information regarding the direction and magnitude of the differences between two entities, and may make unjustified assumptions about the congruence relationship. Although polynomial regression may circumvent these problems, several aspects of the present study made PSIs practicable and even necessary. First, as discussed above, it is necessary to use an ipsative, idiographic measurement approach to assess values (Chatman, 1989; Meglino et al., 1989), which precludes polynomial regression. Also, the polynomial regression approach requires that each variable, interaction variable, and higher order term be entered into the regression equation simultaneously (159 additional variables in the present study), which is obviously not feasible given the sample size (Schneider et al., 1995). Finally, as noted by Kristof (1996), the statistics emanating from polynomial regression may not accurately represent the P-O fit construct. Fortunately, the problems with profile similarity assessments imply that these methods provide conserva-

tive estimates of true relationships, not that the methods provide upwardly biased (inflated) estimates. Thus, although PSIs have their limitations, the consequences of not using them were judged to be even more restrictive.

Other limitations of this study resulted from the brevity of our surveys, which reflected interviewers' busy schedules. For example, it would have been advantageous to have multiple-item scales for each measure (e.g., interviewer liking and applicant attractiveness), because measurement error may have constrained several relationships in the model. Similarly, this study examined only values congruence when predicting interviewers' subjective P-O fit evaluations. Although the relationship between values congruence and P-O fit has been well established (Chatman, 1989), past research also has suggested that other aspects of applicants and organizations may contribute to P-O fit perceptions. For example, it would be interesting for future research to examine applicant-organization goal congruence or the congruence between applicants' personality and organizations' human resource systems, when predicting interviewers' subjective P-O fit perceptions.

The potential weaknesses of this investigation are accompanied by a number of strengths. The determinants of P-O fit perceptions and the effects of those perceptions on selection decisions were modeled based on a careful review of past theory and research concerning both P-O fit and the interview. The conceptual model included both actual and perceived values congruence, distinct constructs which are directly relevant to P-O fit theoretically but have not been examined simultaneously to date. Finally, the inclusion of competing variables reduced the possibility that the results were affected by omitted variable biases.

A second strength of this study was that interviewers rated applicants immediately after they interviewed for actual jobs, thus avoiding potential confounds due to nonexpert judges. In addition to extending the generalizability of the results, the examination of actual interviewers reduces concerns about survey priming because it appears unlikely that interviewers would alter their actual evaluations based on an optional, confidential survey. This argument is reinforced by significant direct and indirect effects of interviewers' evaluations on organizations' job offer decisions.

Finally, this study examined data collected from different sources and times, and interviewer-supplied data were complemented with applicants' reports of their second interview and job offers, demographics, values, and human capital. Furthermore, several variables reported by applicants were confirmed against their résumés. Because expected, significant relationships were found between variables reported by both applicants and interviewers, concerns about common-method variance were reduced. Threats of priming and common-method variance also

were mitigated in the context of assessing interviewers' fit perceptions because the calculation of values congruence was based on data collected 6 months apart.

Implications and Future Research

Surprisingly, P-O fit has not been considered in the context of the employment interview in any of nine comprehensive literature reviews of interview research (Harris, 1989). Results from our study appear particularly interesting in this respect because interviewers' P-O fit perceptions were the best predictors of hiring recommendations relative to the determinants discussed in those same literature reviews. These findings suggest that future research on the employment interview should continue to examine P-O fit perceptions and should investigate interviewers' perceptions of applicants' characteristics because presumably this is what they and their organizations rely on for hiring decisions. It also is important for future research to determine the sources of interviewers' perceptions of applicants' values. A limitation of this study is that we did not examine applicants' performance in the interview (e.g., dress, oral communication skills, and non-verbal behavior), and therefore, we were unable to examine the effects of interview performance on interviewers' P-O fit judgments. It would be interesting to reveal which applicant attributes or actions are related to interviewers' perceptions of their values.

Although the relationship between actual and perceived values congruence was significant, the effect size was relatively small. Furthermore, tests of plausible alternative models suggested that perceived values congruence is related to applicants' sex and interviewers' liking, relationships that have not been examined in past interview research and that were not expected in the hypothesized model. These results suggest that actual and perceived applicant-organization congruence are not always aligned, and this has serious implications for theories of person-environment fit as they currently are interpreted.

From the perspectives of person-environment fit (Pervin, 1968) and similarity-attraction research (Byrne, 1969), actual congruence should affect the relationships between organizations and individuals regardless of whether it is perceived explicitly (e.g., through improved communication). If it is not congruence per se but perceived congruence affecting the composition of organizations, a new interpretation of P-O fit must allow for conditions under which congruence and perceived congruence disconnect (e.g., Ferris & Judge, 1991). Much past research has investigated the fit of relatively concrete attributes, such as demographics (Tsui & O'Reilly, 1989). It is possible that when examining relatively subjective characteristics such as values, perceived and actual fit may become unaligned and that perceived congruence is more

predictive of decisions and outcomes than actual congruence (Pulakos & Wexley, 1983). This perspective is entirely consistent with theories of social memory (e.g., Wyer & Carlston, 1994), which suggest that judges' cognitive representations of people and events, and not the original stimuli, govern subsequent judgments and behaviors. As noted by Wyer and Carlston (1994), "Consequently, it is important to understand the nature of these mediating cognitive representations to predict the influence of information on perceivers' judgments or behavioral decisions" (p. 42).

The construed-reality approach of P-O fit has important implications for recruiting organizations. If interviewers rely on their fit perceptions when making hiring recommendations and these perceptions are based primarily on misinterpreted values, the function of the interview as a means to assess and establish values congruence is called into question. Data from the present study corroborate experimental findings that interviewers can evaluate applicants' personal characteristics and make P-O fit judgments with significant degrees of accuracy. However, it remains for future research to resolve whether interviewers' level of accuracy in values assessment has positive utility after factoring in the financial costs and social benefits of the employment interview.

Finally, results from this study have implications for how recruiters structure their interviews. Research has indicated that the validity of an interview increases when it is structured around a job analysis and is consistent across applicants (Campion, Pursell, & Brown, 1988; McDaniel et al., 1994). However, job-based structured interviews appear to be somewhat incompatible with assessing applicants' values and P-O fit, because these criteria extend well beyond immediate job-related factors (Rynes & Gerhart, 1990). In fact, subjective fit impressions typically are what structured interviews remove from interviewer decision making (Campion et al., 1988). Accordingly, it is important to determine whether the interview is most valuable as a verbal, job-based ability test or as an opportunity to assess P-O fit. Because theoretical and empirical research suggest that organizations may maximize performance when P-O fit is established (e.g., Barney, 1991; Govindarajan, 1989), the interview may have its greatest utility as a P-O fit assessment device (Bowen et al., 1991; Chatman, 1991). Furthermore, as noted by Judge and Ferris (1992), it may be possible to improve interviewers' P-O fit judgments by structuring interviews around organizational cultures (rather than specific jobs) and by assessing applicants' personal characteristics that are relevant to the fit criterion.

References

- Adkins, C. L., Russell, C. J., & Werbel, J. D. (1994). Judgments of fit in the selection process: The role of work value congruence. *Personnel Psychology, 47*, 605-623.

- Albright, L., Kenny, D. A., & Malloy, T. E. (1988). Consensus in personality judgments at zero acquaintance. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 55*, 387-395.
- Arvey, R. D., & Campion, J. E. (1982). The employment interview: A summary and review of recent research. *Personnel Psychology, 35*, 281-322.
- Barney, J. (1991). Firm resources and sustained competitive advantage. *Journal of Management, 17*, 99-120.
- Bart, S. H., & Hitt, M. A. (1986). A comparison of selection decision models in manager versus student samples. *Personnel Psychology, 39*, 599-617.
- Bem, D. J., & Allen, A. (1974). On predicting some of the people some of the time. *Psychological Review, 81*, 506-520.
- Bentler, P. M. (1985). *Theory and implementation of EQS: A structural equations program*. Los Angeles: BMDP Statistical Software.
- Borkenau, P., & Liebler, A. (1993). Convergence of stranger ratings of personality and intelligence with self-ratings, partner ratings, and measured intelligence. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 65*, 546-553.
- Bowen, D. E., Ledford, G. E., & Nathan, B. R. (1991). Hiring for the organization, not the job. *Academy of Management Executive, 5*, 35-51.
- Bretz, R. D., Rynes, S. L., & Gerhart, B. (1993). Recruiter perceptions of applicant fit: Implications for individual career preparation and job search behavior. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 43*, 310-327.
- Byrne, D. (1969). Attitudes and attraction. In L. Berkowitz (Ed.), *Advances in experimental social psychology* (Vol. 4, pp. 35-89). New York: Academic Press.
- Campion, M. A. (1978). Identification of variables most influential in determining interviewers' evaluations of applicants in a college placement center. *Psychological Reports, 42*, 947-952.
- Campion, M. A., Pursell, E. D., & Brown, B. K. (1988). Structured interviewing: Raising the psychometric properties of the employment interview. *Personnel Psychology, 41*, 25-42.
- Chatman, J. (1989). Improving interactional organizational research: A model of person-organization fit. *Academy of Management Review, 14*, 333-349.
- Chatman, J. (1991). Matching people and organizations: Selection and socialization in public accounting firms. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 36*, 459-484.
- Dipboye, R. L. (1992). *Selection interviews: Process perspectives*. Cincinnati, OH: College South-Western.
- Dipboye, R. L., Smith, C. S., & Howell, W. C. (1994). *Understanding industrial and organizational psychology: An integrated approach*. Fort Worth, TX: Harcourt Brace.
- Ferris, G. R., & Judge, T. A. (1991). Personnel/human resource management: A political influence perspective. *Journal of Management, 17*, 447-488.
- Festinger, L. (1954). A theory of social comparison processes. *Human Relations, 7*, 117-140.
- Funder, D. C., & Colvin, C. R. (1988). Friends and strangers: Acquaintanceship, agreement, and the accuracy of personality judgment. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 55*, 149-158.
- Gangestad, S. W., Simpson, J. A., DiGeronimo, K., & Biek, B. (1992). Differential accuracy in person perception across traits: Examination of a functional hypothesis. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 62*, 688-698.
- Gilmore, D. C., Beehr, T. A., & Love, K. G. (1986). Effects of applicant sex, applicant physical attractiveness, type of rater, and type of job on interview decisions. *Journal of Occupational Psychology, 59*, 103-109.
- Gilovich, T. (1991). *How we know what isn't so: The fallibility of human reason in everyday life*. New York: Free Press.
- Govindarajan, V. (1989). Implementing competitive strategies at the business unit level: Implications of matching managers to strategies. *Strategic Management Journal, 27*, 25-41.
- Greene, W. H. (1993). *Econometric analysis*. New York: Macmillan.
- Hanusheck, E. A., & Jackson, J. E. (1977). *Statistical methods for social scientists*. Orlando, FL: Academic Press.
- Harris, M. M. (1989). Reconsidering the employment interview: A review of recent literature and suggestions for future research. *Personnel Psychology, 42*, 691-726.
- Hayduk, L. A. (1987). *Structural equation modeling with LISREL: Essentials and advances*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Heilman, M. E. (1983). Sex bias in work settings: The lack of fit model. In L. L. Cummings & B. M. Staw (Eds.), *Research in organizational behavior* (Vol. 5, pp. 269-298). Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.
- Hitt, M. A., & Barr, S. H. (1989). Managerial selection decision models: Examination of configural cue processing. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 74*, 53-61.
- Hu, L., & Bentler, P. M. (1995). Evaluating model fit. In R. H. Hoyle (Ed.), *Structural equation modeling: Concepts, issues, and applications* (pp. 76-99). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Jackson, D. N., Peacock, A. C., & Holden, R. R. (1982). Professional interviewers' trait inferential structures for diverse occupational groups. *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance, 29*, 1-20.
- Jöreskog, K. G., & Sörbom, D. (1993). *LISREL 8 user's reference guide*. Chicago: Scientific Software.
- Judge, T. A., & Ferris, G. R. (1992). The elusive criterion of fit in human resources staffing decisions. *Human Resource Planning, 15*, 47-67.
- Keenan, A. (1977). Some relationships between interviewers' personal feelings about candidates and their general evaluation of them. *Journal of Occupational Psychology, 50*, 275-283.
- Kristof, A. L. (1996). Person-organization fit: An integrative review of its conceptualizations, measurement, and implications. *Personnel Psychology, 49*, 1-49.
- Macan, T. H., & Dipboye, R. L. (1988). The effects of interviewers' initial impressions on information gathering. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 42*, 364-387.
- MacCallum, R. C., Roznowski, M., & Necowitz, L. B. (1992). Model modification in covariance structure analysis: The problem of capitalization on chance. *Psychological Bulletin, 111*, 490-504.
- Marsh, H. W., Balla, J. R., & McDonald, R. P. (1988). Goodness-of-fit indexes in confirmatory factor analysis: The effect of sample size. *Psychological Bulletin, 103*, 391-410.
- McDaniel, M. A., Whetzel, D. L., Schmidt, F. L., & Maurer, S. D. (1994). The validity of employment interviews: A com-

- prehensive review and meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 79, 599–616.
- McDonald, T., & Hakel, M. D. (1985). Effects of applicant race, sex, suitability, and answers on interviewer's questioning strategy and ratings. *Personnel Psychology*, 38, 321–334.
- Medsker, G. J., Williams, L. J., & Holahan, P. J. (1994). A review of current practices for evaluating causal models in organizational behavior and human resource management research. *Journal of Management*, 20, 439–464.
- Meglino, B. M., Ravlin, E. C., & Adkins, C. L. (1989). A work values approach to corporate culture: A field test of the value congruence process and its relationship to individual outcomes. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 74, 424–432.
- 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.
- Paunonen, S. V., Jackson, D. N., & Oberman, S. M. (1987). Personnel selection decisions: Effects of applicant personality and the letter of reference. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 40, 96–114.
- Pervin, L. W. (1968). Performance and satisfaction as a function of individual-environment fit. *Psychological Bulletin*, 69, 56–68.
- Pulakos, E. D., & Wexley, K. N. (1983). The relationship among perceptual similarity, sex, and performance ratings in manager-subordinate dyads. *Academy of Management Journal*, 26, 129–139.
- Raza, S. M., & Carpenter, B. N. (1987). A model of hiring decisions in real employment interviews. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 72, 596–603.
- Rokeach, M. (1973). *The nature of human values*. New York: Free Press.
- Rynes, S. L., & Gerhart, B. (1990). Interviewer assessments of applicant "fit": An exploratory investigation. *Personnel Psychology*, 43, 13–35.
- Salancik, G. R., & Pfeffer, J. (1978). A social information processing approach to job attitudes and task design. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 23, 224–252.
- Schein, E. H. (1990). Organizational culture. *American Psychologist*, 45, 109–119.
- Schneider, B. (1987). The people make the place. *Personnel Psychology*, 40, 437–453.
- Schneider, B., Goldstein, H. W., & Smith, D. B. (1995). The ASA framework: An update. *Personnel Psychology*, 48, 747–773.
- Schneider, B., & Reichers, A. E. (1983). On the etiology of climates. *Personnel Psychology*, 36, 19–39.
- Singer, M. S., & Bruhns, C. (1991). Relative effect of applicant work experience and academic qualification on selection interview decisions: A study of between-sample generalizability. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 76, 550–559.
- Spence, M. A. (1973). Job market signalling. *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 87, 355–374.
- Swann, W. B., Jr. (1984). Quest for accuracy in person perception: A matter of pragmatics. *Psychological Review*, 91, 457–477.
- Taylor, S. E., Fiske, S. T., Etcoff, N. L., & Ruderman, A. J. (1978). Categorical and contextual bases of person memory and stereotyping. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 36, 778–793.
- Tsui, A. S., & O'Reilly, C. A. (1989). Beyond simple demographic effects: The importance of relational demography in superior subordinate dyads. *Academy of Management Journal*, 32, 402–423.
- Widaman, K. F. (1985). Hierarchically nested covariance structure models for multitrait-multimethod data. *Applied Psychological Measurement*, 9, 1–26.
- Wyer, R. S., & Carlston, D. E. (1994). The cognitive representation of persons and events. In R. S. Wyer & T. Srull (Eds.), *Handbook of social cognition* (pp. 41–98). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Zajonc, R. B. (1980). Feeling and thinking: Preferences need no inferences. *American Psychologist*, 35, 151–175.

Appendix

The Reduced Set of Items Used on the Organizational Culture Profile

Adaptability	Decisiveness
Stability	Being competitive
Being reflective	Being highly organized
Being innovative	Achievement orientation
Quick to take advantage of opportunities	A clear guiding philosophy
Taking identification responsibility	Being results oriented
Risk taking	High performance expectations
Opportunities for professional growth	Being aggressive
Autonomy	High pay for good performance
Being rule oriented	Security of employment
Being analytical	Praise for good performance
Paying attention to detail	Being supportive
Confronting conflict directly	Being calm
Being team oriented	Developing friends at work
Sharing information freely	Being socially responsible
Being people oriented	Enthusiasm for the job
Fairness	Working long hours
Not being constrained by many rules	Having a good reputation
Tolerance	An emphasis on quality
Informality	Being distinctive

Received September 3, 1996

Revision received February 26, 1997

Accepted March 1, 1997 ■