

A study of the relationships between the richness and realism  
of recruitment information, employee post-entry person-organisation fit  
and employment outcomes: insights from the theories of attraction-  
selection-attrition and channel expansion

Shabnam Emami

School of Business and Management

Royal Holloway, University of London

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## Declaration of authorship

I, Shabnam Emami, hereby declare that this thesis and the work presented in it is entirely my own. Where I have consulted the work of others, this is always clearly stated.

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Date:

## Abstract

In this study, I investigated the relationships between the richness and realism of recruitment information, post-entry person-organisation fit, and employment outcomes. In doing so, I examined the potential mediating role played by post-entry person-organisation fit in the relationship between two attributes of recruitment information (i.e., richness and realism) and employment outcomes (i.e., employee organisational commitment, job satisfaction, and intention to quit). Furthermore, I studied the potential moderating roles played by organisational image, source credibility, and previous work experience in the relationships between the richness and realism of recruitment information and post-entry person-organisation fit. For this study, I drew upon the theories of attraction-selection-attrition and channel-expansion to develop hypotheses and a theoretical framework. I took a quantitative approach, along with a cross-sectional design. I collected the data by means of a survey of 504 employees working in the three job categories of IT, Scientific or Technical services, and Education in the UK. To test the moderated mediation model, I created a two-stage structural equation model. The findings of this study show positive relationships between richness and realism of recruitment information and post-entry person-organisation fit. The study also found that post-entry person-organisation fit plays a mediating role in the relationship between the attributes of recruitment information and employment outcomes. However, the findings do not support organisational image, source credibility, and previous work experience playing moderating roles in the relationships between attributes of recruitment information and post-entry person-organisation fit.

This study makes several theoretical, methodological, and practical contributions. Theoretically, it contributes to the recruitment literature by providing evidence for the significant relationships between pre- and post-entry variables. Previous studies had only examined the relationships between richness and realism of recruitment information and pre-entry outcomes such as attraction and job acceptance, but had neglected post-entry outcomes. In addition, this study contributes to ASA theory by providing support for the mediation role played by post-entry person-organisation fit in the relationships between two variables related to pre-entry (i.e., richness and realism of recruitment information) and variables related to post-entry outcomes. Only a small number of studies have examined the indirect relationship between pre- and post-entry variables and tested the mediation role played by post-entry person-organisation fit. Whereas previous studies in the recruitment area had only considered objective richness (i.e., nominal media richness), this is the first to have focused on the subjective dimension of the concept of richness and helps to better understand the effectiveness of information richness by examining an individual's perceptions of the richness of a communication event. The objective dimension focusses on the inherent features of media, while disregarding individual perceptions of the richness of communication, which may undervalue the effectiveness of a particular medium and, by neglecting to consider the social dimension, may yield a poor understanding of the concept. This study also contributes to the literature on recruitment by expanding the domain of the analysis of realism of recruitment information. Whereas prior studies had been mainly centred on the realism of information about a job, this study's focus is expanded to include information on organisational value.

Methodologically, unlike previous studies, which had analysed mediation relationships primarily via methods such as path analysis—which assumes that all variables are

measured without error—this study examined a complex model, including mediators, by means of advanced statistical software, such as Mplus, and SEM analysis, which uses latent variables to account for measurement error. In doing so, this study contributes to HRM practice by adding to the awareness of how recruitment information affects post-entry outcomes and by emphasising the importance of paying attention to the characteristics of such information.

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## Abbreviations

<b>Abbreviation</b>	<b>Full term</b>
ASA theory	Attraction-selection-attribution theory
AVE	Average variance extracted
CFA	Confirmatory factor analysis
CFI	Comparative fit index
CI	Confidence interval
CR	Composit reliability
HRA	Health research authority
NHS	National health system
NIHR	National institute for health research
PO fit	Person-organisation fit
RJP	Realistic job preview
RMSEA	Root mean square error of approximation
SEM	Structural equation modelling
SRMR	Standardised root mean square residual
TLI	Tucker-lewis index

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## Chapter 1 Introduction

### 1.1 Introduction

This chapter begins by presenting the background of the study and discussing gaps in the extant research on the relationships of recruitment information richness and realism with post-entry person-organisation (PO) fit and employment outcomes (i.e., employee organisational commitment, job satisfaction, and intention to quit). Explanations of this study's research objectives and questions and of its contribution in regard to the key issues or gaps found in the recruitment literature are provided. Finally, the structure of the thesis is illustrated.

### 1.2 Background of the research and research gaps

The initial idea of this study stemmed from my personal experiences. While pursuing a job opportunity, I felt that some of the questions asked by the interviewers were not in fact strictly related to the job; I remember one of the interviewers showing me pictures of one of the organisation's events and asking questions related to organisational life. This surprised me because I had expected more direct questions pertaining to the role for which I was applying. After my application had been rejected by the organisation, I got the impression that the refusal had been due to something between me and the 'organisation', rather than between me and the 'job'. In other words, I had a feeling that, although I might have been a match for the job, I had not been one for the organisation.

Furthermore, I noticed that my friends were having issues with the organisations for which they worked, rather than with their jobs. As a result, they were looking for the same jobs in different organisations. For example, one such friend intended to leave his current organisation because he felt that it was not ambitious enough to reach for

significant/higher achievements and thus made his career aspirations unachievable. My past experiences led me to think about the importance of the 'fit' between employees and organisations. Moreover, I wondered why, during recruitment, we do not have the information we require about an organisation's attributes. I thus started looking carefully at job advertisements to see how organisations describe themselves in them, and found that most organisations fail to adequately do so. This raised the question of how individuals can avoid joining organisations that are not suited to their attitudes and aspirations. Of course, some interviewers, such as those who rejected my application, may have the ability to identify the right people for their organisation; however, job seekers should also have the information needed to make informed decisions in regard to their applications. I thus resolved to conduct research aimed at answering my questions, which led me to study recruitment information and 'PO fit' for my PhD.

At the time of recruitment, a job applicant obtains information about an organisation from various sources, such as its current employees, job advertisements, friends, and social media. Perceptions pertaining to the PO fit are thus formed in the applicant's mind on the basis on the acquired information. Such fit refers to the compatibility between an individual's attributes and those of an organisation (Kristof, 1996; Chatman, 1989). According to attraction-selection-attrition (ASA) theory, individuals are attracted to, selected by, and stay employed with organisations they perceive to be a good fit with their own personal values (Schneider, 1987). The theory emphasises the ongoing role played by PO fit in shaping positive employee attitudes towards an organisation from the recruitment to the post-entry stages. The attraction component of the theory is denoted as the self-selection mechanism, which has found supported in a considerable number of empirical studies (e.g., Dineen, Ash & Noe, 2002;

Chapman et al., 2005; Carless, 2005; Uggreslev, Fassina & Kraichy, 2012). Therefore, recruitment information is likely to play a role in developing perceptions of fit during self-selection and, in turn, post-entry attitudes towards an organisation.

Following the role played by recruitment information in the self-selection stage, its attributes (e.g., its degree of richness and realism) are also likely to influence PO fit perceptions and employment outcomes. The richer and more realistic the recruitment information, the more accurate the PO fit perceptions being formed, which, in turn, are likely to influence post-hire employment outcomes. Information is 'rich' when it is capable of reducing any uncertainty and equivocality found in the participants' communication (Daft & Lengel, 1986). Although Cable and Yu (2006) showed that information richness has a positive effect on individual understanding of recruitment information, the positive relationship between recruitment information richness and post-entry PO fit had not hitherto been empirically investigated.

Information realism, which originated from the realistic job preview (RJP) concept, refers to a recruitment strategy that stresses delivering recruitment information that includes both the positive and negative aspects of a subject (Wanous, 1973). The study of the relationship between the realism of recruitment information and post-entry PO fit is also scarce in recruitment research. Although some studies implicitly suggest a possible positive relationship between recruitment information realism and post-entry PO fit, those studies were focussed on the self-selection mechanism and measured the effect of information realism on job acceptance or on recruitment process attrition (see, e.g., Earnest, Allen & Landis, 2011; Meglino, Ravin & Denisi, 2000; Philips, 1998; Saks & Cronshaw, 1990). To clarify, the relationship between recruitment information realism and job acceptance or recruitment process attrition



demonstrates the role played by information realism in the development of PO fit during the self-selection stage. In addition, although the focus of most previous studies was on job information realism, it neglected the realism of the information pertaining to organisational value.

ASA theory suggests that the richness and realism of recruitment information are indirectly related to employment outcomes, mediated by post-entry PO fit. However, extant studies have failed to examine both the direct and the indirect relationships between recruitment information richness and employment outcomes. A few studies, such as Cable and Judge (1996) and Saks and Ashforth (2002), have investigated post-entry PO fit as a mediator between pre-entry variables other than recruitment information richness and realism and post-entry outcomes. For example, Saks and Ashforth (2002) investigated the relationships between job search variables (e.g., career planning) and employment outcomes mediated by post-entry PO fit.

According to channel expansion theory, specific factors referred to as 'knowledge-building experiences'—such as familiarity with messaging topics and organisational context—help individuals to better understand information (Carlson & Zmud, 1999, p.154). In other words, any previous experiences that help individuals to better understand information affect their perceptions of information richness and realism. This study identified organisational image and previous work experience as two variables reflecting such experiences. Therefore, the relationships of recruitment information richness and realism with the post-entry PO fit were hypothesised to be moderated by organisational image and previous work experience.

Moreover, individuals may sometimes receive rich and realistic information from sources they do not trust (i.e., sources they do not consider to be credible). They thus

will not consider such information when developing their fit perceptions. Therefore, the credibility of the information source may also moderate the relationship of recruitment information richness and realism with PO fit.

Several studies have examined the role played by organisational image during the recruitment process (see, e.g., Cable & Yu, 2006; Gatewood, Gowan & Lautenschlager, 1993; Arnold et al., 2003; Baum & Kabst, 2014); however, no research has investigated its potential moderating role in the relationships between the attributes of recruitment information and post-entry PO fit. There are also gaps in the research regarding the potential moderating roles of recruitment source credibility and previous work experience. However, studies such as Cable and Yu (2006) and Fisher, Illgen and Hoyer (1979) suggest the possibility that source credibility moderates these relationships as an essential element of the self-selection process; individuals will not accept jobs if they don't consider a source to be credible.

As mentioned above, this study drew from two theories—ASA and channel expansion—to develop the theoretical framework. Below, I briefly explain how the two theories are related to the issues under study. ASA, which was proposed by Schneider (1987), is one of the critical theories in the recruitment field. It suggests that organisational membership becomes homogeneous because individuals are attracted to, selected by, and stay employed with the organisations that match their attributes. ASA has roots in interactional psychology, which states that environmental behaviours are the product of interactions between individuals and the environment. Perceptions of fit with an organisation's values are formed based on information obtained from recruitment sources. The richer and more realistic is the information acquired during recruitment, the more accurate are the perceptions of fit—which is the foundation of

the attraction component of ASA theory—resulting in a better post-hiring fit. Those employees who feel they fit well with their organisations hold more positive attitudes towards them. ASA theory suggests the possibility of indirect relationships between recruitment information richness and realism and employment outcomes through PO fit.

Channel expansion theory, which was developed by Carlson and Zmud (1999), is a reformulation of Daft and Lengel's (1986) media richness theory, which describes communication channels as possessing inherent characteristics that define their capacities to deliver rich information. It was developed because the latter was found to yield contrasting scholarly findings. Generally, both theories emphasise the importance of matching communication requirements with media capacity to enrich a communication's participants' understanding of any delivered information. Carlson and Zmud (1994) reformulated media richness theory by distinguishing between two approaches—subjective and objective—to the study of the concept of richness. Whereas objective richness concerns the intrinsic attributes of a medium, subjective richness refers to an individual's perceptions of the richness of information carried in a particular communication event. Furthermore, as mentioned above, channel expansion theory highlights the role played by any experiences suited to help individuals better understand the information in terms of perceiving the degree of information richness.

### **1.3 Research objectives and questions**

To address the key issues or gaps identified above, this study was aimed at examining whether recruitment information richness and realism affect post-entry PO fit, and how they influence employment outcomes. Furthermore, this study sought to understand

the potential moderators in the relationship between recruitment information richness and realism and post-entry PO fit.

Hence, this study was aimed at achieving three main research objectives and answer three related research questions. The first research objective was to examine the relationship between recruitment information richness and realism and post-entry PO fit. Previous studies were mainly focussed on the effects of recruitment information richness or realism on pre-entry outcomes such as attraction, job acceptance, or attrition from recruitment sources. This left a considerable gap in the study of the relationship between pre- and post-entry variables. To fill this gap, this study examined the relationships of recruitment information richness and realism—as two pre-entry variables—with post-entry PO fit. In addition, to the best of my knowledge, only job information realism had hitherto been analysed, with no study having examined the realism of information about organisational values.

**Research Objective 1.** To examine the relationship between recruitment information richness and realism and post-entry PO fit.

**Research Question 1.** Are recruitment information richness and realism positively or negatively related with post-entry PO fit?

The second research objective was to explore the potential mediating effect of post-entry PO fit on the relationships between recruitment information richness and realism and recruitment outcomes. ASA theory introduces PO fit as a bridge that connects pre- and post-entry variables. The theory proposes that individuals are attracted to organisations with which they perceive to fit; that individuals are selected by organisations that fit with them (the selection component is not the focus of this study), and that, post-recruitment, individuals will remain employed with organisations if they

still feel that they fit with them. As observed, PO fit, which is developed by information acquired during recruitment, plays an ongoing role from recruitment to employment. Although ASA is one of the most critical theories in recruitment, previous studies have failed to use it optimally, limiting its use to the investigation of pre-entry outcomes such as attraction, job acceptance, or attrition from recruitment sources. Therefore, this study was aimed at filling this gap by investigating the mediation role played by PO fit in the relationship between recruitment information richness and realism and employment outcomes.

**Research Objective 2.** To explore the potential mediating effect of post-entry PO fit in the relationships between recruitment information richness and realism and employment outcomes.

**Research Question 2.** Does post-entry PO fit mediate the relationships between recruitment information richness and realism and employment outcomes (i.e., employee organisational commitment, job satisfaction, and intention to quit)?

The third research objective was to investigate the potential moderators of the relationships between recruitment information richness and realism and post-entry PO fit. Recruitment information is not the only resource available to prospective employees; organisational image and individual work experience may also affect decisions to submit applications. According to channel expansion theory, any experience that provides individuals with additional knowledge may help them better understand any available information. I identified organisational image and previous work experience as two possible variables capable of moderating the effects of recruitment information richness and realism. Although a few studies have shown that organisational image influences individual perceptions of organisations during

recruitment (Cable & Yu, 2006; Gatewood, Gowan & Lautenschlager, 1993; Arnold et al., 2003; Baum & Kabst, 2014), none had hitherto examined its effect as a moderator on the relationships between recruitment information richness and realism and post-entry PO fit. In terms of previous work experience, several studies have demonstrated that, during recruitment, individuals consider the knowledge accumulated through their previous experiences (Feldman & Arnold, 1978; Carr et al., 2006).

In addition to organisational image and previous work experience, I also identified information source credibility as another potential moderator of the relationships between recruitment information richness and realism and post-entry PO fit. If a person doubts or dismisses the credibility of a source of information, the effects of such information's richness and realism will be inevitably diminished. In other words, people do not consider any information obtained from unreliable sources in their decisions. A few studies have examined the role played by information source credibility in the self-selection process, primarily focussing on its effects on job acceptance (Cable & Yu, 2006; Fisher, Illgen & Hoyer, 1979). Their findings show that the credibility of a recruitment information source interacts with an prospective employee's perceptions. However, no study had hitherto examined its moderation role on the effects of recruitment information richness and realism on PO fit.

**Research Objective 3.** To explore the potential moderators of the relationships between recruitment information richness and realism and post-entry PO fit.

**Research Question 3:** Do organisational image, recruitment information source credibility, and individual previous work experience moderate the relationship between recruitment information richness and realism and post-entry PO fit?

## 1.4 Contributions

In line with the achievement of its three research objectives and the provision of answers to its research questions, this study aimed to make theoretical, methodological, and practical contributions. Theoretically, this study aimed to contribute to the recruitment literature, particularly in relation to the ASA and channel expansion theories. First, this study examined and enhances our understanding of the relationships between pre- and post-entry variables and of those between recruitment information richness and realism and post-entry PO fit (research objective 1), which had not hitherto been investigated by prior studies. Second, this study contributes to ASA theory by investigating the mediation effect of post-entry PO fit on the relationship between recruitment information richness and realism and employment outcomes (research objective 2). As argued, ASA theory views PO fit as playing a bridging role between recruitment and employment outcome variables. However, only a few empirical studies have examined the mediation role of post-entry PO fit in the relationships between pre-entry variables (i.e., recruitment information richness and realism) and employment outcomes. Third, this study contributes to channel expansion theory by examining the moderation effects of organisational image and previous work experience—identified as two possible ‘knowledge-building experiences’—on the relationships between recruitment information richness and realism and post-entry PO fit.

Furthermore, this study is the first to examine the subjective dimension of information richness, which was collected from individual perspectives or perceptions of the actual capacity of the media used to communicate during their recruitment processes. Previous studies conducted in the field of recruitment were focussed on nominal media

information richness (i.e., the richness of the information conveyed by a particular medium). Whereas the objective dimension of such richness depends on the inherent features of a medium and may thus hinder its effectiveness, the subjective dimension considers individual perceptions of the actual richness of information delivered during a communication. The subjective form of richness thus helps to better understand the effectiveness of information richness. The study also contributes to the recruitment literature by expanding the domain of the analysis of recruitment information realism. Previous works only considered the realism of the information pertaining to the job (i.e., the RJP); conversely, this study was focussed on information relating to organisational value. Moreover, in previous work, information realism was examined only as an objective attribute of information; i.e., an inherent quality of information that is the same for all people. However, information realism is linked to individual experiences; in other words, it can also be studied from a subjective perspective.

Methodologically, this study contributes to the recruitment literature by performing structural equation modelling (SEM) to test its complex moderated mediation model. To test mediation relationships, previous studies had performed path analysis (e.g., Saks & Ashforth, 2002; Cable & Yu, 2006), which assumes the measurement of all variables to be devoid of error; conversely, SEM uses latent variables to take measurement error into account.

In addition to its theoretical and methodological contributions, this study makes a practical one pertaining to how human resource professionals can improve employment outcomes—such as employee organisational commitment, job satisfaction, and intention to quit—by enhancing recruitment information richness and realism, primarily in regard to organisational value. This approach could motivate such



professionals to develop rich and realistic recruitment information suited to help job applicants understand the reality of their prospective jobs and working life, which would ultimately result in the development of fit perceptions based on clear and realistic information. Furthermore, this study was aimed at attracting practitioner attention to three elements—i.e., organisational image, applicant previous work experience, and recruitment information source credibility—that affect recruitment information efficacy. As recruitment information may be the only resource for organisations with weak public images, it is essential for them to provide job applicants with rich and realistic information suited to help them make informed decisions. The recruitment information provided by well-known organisations may not need to be as rich and realistic as that supplied by their less-known counterparts, as people may have become familiar with the former's values through their personal experiences. Also, when developing their recruitment information, organisations should consider the attributes of their potential job candidates—e.g., their previous work experiences, which help them better interpret such information. Organisations need to provide richer and more realistic recruitment information for those jobs that involve candidates with little work experience (e.g., graduate jobs, internships). Finally, in order to ensure its effectiveness, organisations need to deliver their recruitment information through credible sources.

## 1.5 Thesis structure

The remainder of this thesis is structured as outlined below:

Chapter 2 provides a review of the concepts of recruitment information richness, recruitment information realism, and post-entry PO fit, and of those related to employment outcomes (i.e., employee organisational commitment, job satisfaction, and intention to quit), organisational image, and information source credibility. The chapter also provides a review of the extant research findings on the relationships between these variables. Moreover, the chapter explains the ASA and channel expansion theories. The final part of Chapter 2 describes how the theoretical framework used in the study was developed, including the 29 hypotheses.

Chapter 3 explains the quantitative research method used and provides the philosophical justification for its use. The items used to measure the independent, mediating, dependent, and moderator variables from the survey questionnaire are presented. The last part of Chapter 3 explains the data analysis methods, including how the SEM-based test was performed (i.e., the two-step SEM technique: one involving a measurement model and the other a structural one) to test the hypotheses. The chapter also explains how SEM analyses were used to test the mediation relationship.

Chapter 4 presents the results of the statistical analyses. Chapter 5 then follows, presenting the discussion of whether a mediation or a moderated mediation model was supported. Chapter 6 concludes, summarising the study's key findings and its theoretical, methodological and practical contributions. This chapter closes with the

limitations emerging from the study, which are addressed as implied recommendations for further research.

## **1.6 Summary of chapter**

This chapter provided the outline of the study and explained the importance of the investigation of the relationships between recruitment information richness and realism and post-entry PO fit, the mediating effect of post-entry PO fit on the relationships between recruitment information richness and realism and employment outcomes, and the moderating effects of organisational image, information source credibility, and applicant previous work experience on such relationships. The chapter began with an explanation of the research background and gaps. It then explained why this study was necessary by presenting the research objectives and questions, and also highlighted its theoretical, methodological and practical contributions. Finally, it presented the structure of this study. The next chapter will provide a literature review and develop the conceptual framework with the hypotheses.

## **Chapter 2. Literature review**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides a review of the literature on the concepts of richness and realism of recruitment information, post-entry PO fit, employment outcomes, organisational image and source credibility. In addition, a conceptual framework of the relationships between the concepts with several hypotheses is developed based on the ASA and channel expansion theories. This chapter consists of five main parts. In section 2.2, concepts including the independent variables (i.e., richness and realism of recruitment information), the mediator variable (i.e., post-entry PO fit) and dependant variables (i.e., organisational commitment, job satisfaction and intention to quit) are explained. The underlying theories (i.e., ASA and channel expansion theory) that help develop the conceptual framework are elaborated in section 2.3. Section 2.4 presents findings of the previous studies, followed by the presentation of hypotheses I have developed. The conceptual framework of the thesis is also illustrated at the end of section 2.4. Section 2.5 summarises the chapter.

### **2.2 Key concepts in this study**

#### **2.2.1 Recruitment information richness (richness)**

The concept of richness originated from Daft and Lengel's (1986) media richness theory and was later reformulated by Carlson and Zmud (1994). To understand the meaning of richness and its different forms, it is better to begin with the media richness theory. The media richness theory is about matching communication requirements with media capacity for the exchange of rich information. The communication

requirements are defined in media richness theory as resolving uncertainty and equivocality (Daft & Lengel, 1986). Uncertainty exists when there is a difference between the amount of information required for understanding and the available information (Daft, Lengel & Trevino, 1987). Equivocality or ambiguity refers to the existence of 'multiple and conflicting interpretations' about a subject (Daft & Lengel, 1986, p.6). Based on the media richness theory, clarification is made through the exchange of views between sender and receivers of information (Daft, Lengel & Trevino, 1987). Therefore, richness is associated with the amount and quality of the information provided. In other words, the quantity and quality of information should be to a level that can resolve both uncertainty and ambiguity of communication participants.

The concept of richness can be attributed to media (i.e., media richness), information (i.e., information richness) and communication (i.e., communication richness). Media richness refers to the capacity of a particular media to carry rich information. Based on this definition, channels can be rated based on their relative richness, labelled as the media richness continuum. The capacity of media refers to the characteristics of media that enable it to deliver rich information. Previous studies, such as Baum and Kabst (2014) and Frasca and Edwards (2017), analysed richness in the context of recruitment based on media richness. However, all information delivered via a particular medium will not utilise the same amount of channel capacity. According to Carlson and Zmud (1994), there is a difference between the nominal capacity and the actual capacity used in a particular communication event. The actual capacity of media used in a particular event is termed information richness or communication richness. Communication richness is equivalent to the richness of information delivered in a communication event. Hence, they can be considered as the same concepts. The

richness of information is the capability of information to reduce the uncertainty and equivocality of the communication participants (Carlson, 1995; Daft & Lengel, 1983). In other words, the richness of information is the extent to which a piece of information can provide considerable new understanding (Daft & Lengel, 1986). In general, media richness refers to the nominal amount of channel bandwidth regarding providing rich information and information richness to the actual channel bandwidth used in a particular communication.

Carlson and Zmud (1994) reformulated the media richness theory by distinguishing between two approaches in studying richness; subjective and objective. The subjective approach, which is the focus of this study, considers richness as individuals' perception of the actual media capacity used in a particular event. The objective approach, also been referred as nominal richness, acknowledges richness as an inherent attribute of a media delivering information. Nominal richness is the type of richness defined by Daft and Lengel (1983, 1986) within the media richness theory. The main difference between perceived and nominal richness is that the former considers richness as the perception of an individual about the richness of information exchanged throughout the communication event, and the latter considers it an inherent feature of media. Whereas perceived richness varies across individuals, nominal richness is assumed to be the same for all individuals regardless of the communication events they have been subjected to (Carlson & Zmud, 1994). This study focused on the perceived information richness, which is one of the aspects of richness that has yet to be studied. Whereas most of the previous studies focused on nominal media richness, no work, to my knowledge, has yet investigated perceived information richness. To be more specific, this study did not aim to study the richness of a particular medium (i.e., media richness) but to analyse perceptions of different

individuals about the actual capacity of media used in their communications during their recruitment.

This study focuses on subjective dimension of richness for two main reasons. First, there is a considerable gap in the literature. The concept of richness is both a 'technology-driven' (i.e., objective) and 'socially-driven' (i.e., subjective) phenomenon (Carlson, 1995, p.14). According to Carlson (1995), organisational study is a social science, and ignoring the social dimensions of an organisational phenomenon leads to poor understanding of phenomena. On the other hand, all studies in the field of recruitment examined only the objective dimensions of richness. Our understanding of the richness of information in the field of recruitment has also been mainly based on previous studies, such as Alan, Scotter and Otondo (2004), Cable and Yu (2006), Baum and Kabst (2014) and Frasca and Edwards (2017), which all adopted the objective approach. Second, my philosophical viewpoint of this study is post-positivism which considers the subjective dimensions of a phenomenon (see Chapter 3). Based on post-positivism, the nature of social science phenomena, such as richness, is different from natural science ones, such as lights. Although previous research considered richness as an object and utilised methods such as laboratory and field experiments to measure it, this study aimed to investigate this concept from a subjective perspective and measure it through a survey.

As discussed, subjective information richness is the perception of individuals about the actual capacity of media used to provide rich information in a particular event. The capability of different communication media varies the richness of information exchanged during an event (Lengel, 1983; Daft & Lengel & Trevino, 1987). The difference depends on some features, including feedback (i.e., two-way

communication), multiple cues, language variety and personal focus (Daft & Lengel, 1983). Instant feedback lets audiences ask their questions and correct their understandings, and it helps them develop a better understanding. Multiple cues refer to the use of different signs to deliver messages. For example, body language and tone of voice can both give cues throughout face-to-face communication. Hence, they facilitate understanding for audiences. Language variety indicates the use of different languages such as natural language and numbers. For example, the use of only numbers reduces the richness of information. Personal focus is the customisation of a message regarding the needs and situations of the receiver.

In addition, in Baum and Kabst's (2014) study, the amount of information produced was another criterion for richness. For example, Baum and Kabst (2014) evaluated recruitment websites as a source that provides richer information than printed recruitment advertisements because individuals can gain more information. Therefore, the media with higher capacity, in terms of the amount of information carried, were considered richer. In summary, the richness of information is assessed by five criteria: amount, two-way communication, multiple cues, language variety and personal focus. The recruitment information richness in this study is defined as individuals' perceptions about the actual capacity of media used to deliver rich information about the organisation's values during their recruitment (see section 2.2.3.1 for more details about organisational values).

### **2.2.2 Recruitment Information Realism (realism)**

Realism is one of the aspects of information for which the focus is on the content of information. Realistic information includes both positive and negative aspects of a subject (Wanous, 1973). So far, the realism of information has been studied mostly



relating to realistic job preview (RJP) (Breaugh, 2012). Providing realistic information about an organisation for job applicants is a recruitment strategy employed against the traditional methods of recruitment that often provides only positive information (Wanous, 1973). Therefore, realism points out the content of information, including both the positive and negative aspects of a subject.

The purpose of developing realistic information is not selling the recruit through giving only positive information about the job and organisation to applicants, as it is in the traditional methods, but to attract and recruit individuals who are a better fit with the organisation. However, prior studies focused only on providing job information (e.g., Earnest, Allen & Landis, 2011; Meglino, Ravlin & DeNisi, 1999; Saks, Wiesner & Summers, 1994; Bretz & Judge, 1998). On the one hand, organisations deliver information not only about jobs but also about the organisations. On the other hand, both job information and information about the organisation, such as information about the organisation's values, are vital for employment outcomes. To my knowledge, there is no study that has examined the realism of information about organisations. Hence, this work fills this gap by examining the realism of information about the organisational values.

Furthermore, information realism, similar to information richness, can be studied objectively or subjectively. However, previous research focused only on its objective dimension because most of them examined the concept through laboratory or field experimental design, which is often employed for measuring objective phenomena (Earnest, Allen & Landis, 2011). Researchers manipulated recruitment information to provide one group with only positive information and the treatment group with both positive and negative information. In this approach, realism is considered to be an

objective attribute of information. However, the realism of information is attached to the experience of individuals. How can an individual evaluate the realism of recruitment information before experiencing life in an organisation? Whereas findings of previous studies such as Wanous (1973) are valuable for my study, they have ignored the nature of realism as a subjective phenomenon.

In general, individuals evaluate the degree of realism of information based on their experience of reality. Thus, realism is a subjective phenomenon that is better to be examined based on the perception of individuals 'after' they experienced working in an organisation rather than as an objective attribute of information. I borrowed this thought about the nature of realism from Moser (2005). The study of Moser (2005) was about examining the effect of recruitment sources on met expectations. Moser (2005) considered 'met expectation' (i.e., the extent to which a person's expectations at the time of employment are actual) as a subjective concept that needs to be measured after participants experienced organisational life. This approach leads me to reconsider the nature of the concept of realism, which is also close to the met expectation because both are subjective and formed in individuals' minds after experiencing organisational life. Similar to Moser (2005), who questioned how people can know that their expectations have been met if they have not experienced life in a particular organisation, I also doubted the approach of investigating the effect of information realism on met expectations by studying individuals who have not experienced life in the organisation. Hence, this study aimed to examine the perception of individuals in terms of the realism of recruitment information 'after' they have entered/worked in the organisation.

### **2.2.3 Post-Entry Person-Organisation fit (PO fit)**

The PO fit has been defined in different ways in the literature (Morley, 2007). Although the concept of PO fit has been developed since 1990, scholars still have disagreements over its conceptualisation (dos Santos & De Domenico, 2015). The general definition of PO fit is compatibility between individual and organisation (Kristof, 1996; Chatman, 1989). According to Kristof (1996), the concept of 'compatibility' in the PO fit literature has been conceptualised differently. In other words, she believed that the definition of PO fit is subject to confusion because there are multiple conceptualisations for 'compatibility'. The question about the definition of PO fit is what does 'fit' with an organisation mean? Does it mean 'similarity' or 'complementary'? Based on the literature of PO fit, both convey the concept of fit. To clarify, a person is fit with an organisation provided that his/her characteristics are similar to the organisation's attributes, or a person is fit when his/her strengths offset the organisation's weaknesses. The former is termed supplementary fit and the latter complementary fit (Kristof, 1996; dos Santos & De Domenico, 2015; Cable & Edwards, 2004). Supplementary fit refers to a situation in which an individual's attributes are congruent with the organisation's values, goals, cultures, etc. (dos Santos & De Domenico, 2015). In a complementary approach, an individual's characteristics complete what is missing in an organisation rather than comply with what exists. More specifically, the complementary approach is grounded on the psychological need fulfilment theory and supplementary on the value congruence. The psychological need fulfilment process is 'a person's cognitive comparison of the desired amount of a resource or reward relative to the amount that is perceived to be supplied by the organisation' (Cable & Edwards, 2004, p.823). Value congruence is about the similarity between an individual's values and the values of an organisation (Cable &

Edwards, 2004). Generally speaking, supplementary and complementary are two distinct definitions of fit used in the PO fit literature.

Furthermore, PO fit is generally classified as subjective and objective. Subjective PO fit, also referred to as perceived fit, is a person's judgment about fitting with an organisation (Kristof, 1996; Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman & Johnson, 2005). To be more specific, it is the extent to which individuals perceive that their characteristics fit into their organisations' characteristics (Piasentin & Chapman, 2006). Objective PO fit is the match between a person and the organisation as it exists independently of the person's perception of it (Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman & Johnson, 2005).

This study examined subjective PO fit. Subjective PO fit plays a vital role in the recruitment process. Current employees of an organisation accepted the job offers based on their perceptions of fitting with the organisation; that is, subjective PO fit (Saks & Ashforth, 1997). In addition to its role during the recruitment process, prior studies also emphasised the role of subjective PO fit on employment outcomes (see, e.g., Saks & Ashforth, 1997). It is suggested that when individuals' perceptions about organisations formed during recruitment match with the actual situations in the organisations, they will experience a high degree of post-entry subjective PO fit, which will bring advantages such as job satisfaction and organisational commitment (Saks & Ashforth, 1997).

In the case of subjective PO fit, the question is whether it is more appropriate to define fit using the supplementary approach or the complementary one. The question is, 'do people see themselves fit with the organisation when they are similar or when they are complementary to it?'. Most scholars assumed that individuals feel that they fit if they feel similarity with attributes of organisations; that is, the supplementary approach

(Piasentin & Chapman, 2007; Chatman, 1989; Cable & Judge, 1996; Dineen, Ash & Noe, 2002; Kutcher, Bragger & Masco, 2013 Piasentin & Chapman, 2006). The ASA theory employed by this study also adopts the supplementary approach, which proposes that individuals are attracted to organisations that they perceive as similar to their values (see section 2.3.2 for details). Furthermore, the findings of empirical studies such as Cable and Judge (1996) and Bretz and Judge (1998) showed that individuals' job choices are based on their perceptions of fitting with organisations. This study, thus, follows previous works and considers the definition of compatibility as congruency or similarity (i.e., the supplementary approach).

#### **2.2.3.1 Content of PO fit**

According to Chatman (1989) and dos Santos and De Domenico (2015), the concept of PO fit is grounded on interactional psychology. Based on the interactional research, elements of both individual and organisation should be incorporated to define the content of the PO fit accurately (Chatman, 1989). Interactive research suggests that a person's behaviour depends on his or her characteristics and the situation he or she is facing. In addition, a person's behaviour and situation have reciprocal effects on each other. Previous studies attempted to determine which elements of organisations and employees affect each other (e.g., Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman & Johnson, 2005; Ryan & Kristof-Brown, 2003); in other words, which elements are essential to be matched with each other. Different studies proposed various contents, such as value, culture, goals, personalities and skills. Chatman (1989), as the first study to define the concept of PO fit, considered value as its content; that is, PO fit is the match between employees and the organisation's values.

Assuming value as the content of PO fit is more common in the literature than any other proposed contents (e.g., Cable & Judge, 1996; Dineen, Ash & Noe, 2002; Kutcher, Bragger & Masco, 2013, Piasentin & Chapman, 2006; Bretz & Judge, 1994). Value has been selected over other fit dimensions because of its stability over time (Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman & Johnson, 2005). However, Ryan and Kristof-Brown (2003) proposed personality trait as a more stable dimension. Although the personality trait may be as stable as a value, the similarity of individuals' personality traits is seldom desirable, particularly in organisations (Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman and Johnson, 2005). Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman and Johnson (2005) provided an example; if all organisation members are introverted, how will they work together in teams? Another potential alternative for value has been the goal. Although the similarity between goals probably results in positive employment outcomes, goals are not stable (Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman & Johnson, 2005). Values are relatively enduring, albeit they are capable of being changed. Two possible mechanisms explain the stability of value. First, values are learned independently of each other in the 'all-or-nothing-manner' (Meglino & Ravlin, 1998, p.355). An individual has a value or does not have it, making the concept of value stable. Second, individuals have a solid psychological attachment to values because they have been through a demanding process to achieve a value. In other words, a value was developed in an individual's mind following experiencing a difficult situation (Meglino & Ravlin, 1998).

The researcher's approach in conceptualising PO fit also influences the choice of its content. For example, Kristof (1996) and Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman and Johnson (2005) considered different contents for each of their conceptualisations of PO fit (i.e., supplementary and complementary). In the supplementary approach, the content of PO fit on the individual's side is defined as personality, value, goal and attitude and on

the organisation's side as culture, value, goal and norm. In the complementary approach, the content on the individual's side is the individual's resources (i.e., time, effort, commitment and experience) and KSAs (i.e., knowledge, skill, ability). The organisation's side involves the requirements of the organisation. Hence, the content of PO fit varies among different studies based on their methods of conceptualisation.

The subject of study is also important for choosing the content of PO fit. Regarding recruitment, individuals choose organisations based on their values rather than other attributes such as climate and goals (Chatman, 1989). ASA theory, which is employed for the theoretical justification of this study, considered value as the content of PO fit. Moreover, the superiority of the use of value for studies in the recruitment area has been supported by the findings of previous studies. For example, Judge and Cable (1997) and Judge and Bretz (1992) found that individuals accept job offers from organisations that have values matching their own. In general, most studies on attraction and job acceptance, which are two popular subjects in the recruitment area, considered value as the content of PO fit (e.g., Yu, 2014; Carless, 2005; Cable & Judge, 1996).

The concept of value has been studied by both psychologists and sociologists (Schwartz, 1992). As one of the most prominent value researchers, Schwartz (1992, 2012) summarised various definitions of value developed by both psychologists and sociologists and defined it as the criteria employed by people to select and evaluate actions, people and events. Values explain the motivational bases of attitudes and behaviour (Schwartz, 2012). People have different values with varying degrees of importance. In general, value has been conceptualised in different approaches (Meglino & Ravlin, 1998). Values are categorised into two types (Meglino & Ravlin,

1998). The first type includes values that an individual places on objects or outcomes (e.g., the value one places on pay). The second type is values used to describe a person against an object, which is subdivided into 'terminal' and 'instrumental' values (Meglino & Ravlin, 1998, p. 353). Terminal values are the ultimate existence that a person is attempting to achieve (e.g., comfortable life). Instrumental values refer to behaviours that enable individuals to accomplish terminal values (e.g., honesty) (Meglino & Ravlin, 1998). Organisational value is an instrumental value type. To clarify, in organisational behaviour, value is considered as a mode of behaviour. Individuals in organisations behave in a manner that facilitates the attainment of their terminal values.

Value is defined as a person's viewpoint on what is right or wrong (Judge & Bretz, 1992). Another definition of value is that value is related to a person's desire or need for a particular result. While the former is related more to religious subjects, the latter is related more to job choice (Judge & Bretz, 1992). That is to say, individuals choose organisations that match their value-laden goals, such as organisations that benefit a specific group of society or organisations that give them an opportunity for progress in the job. In sum, value is considered a mode of behaviour that enables individuals to address his/her desire for a particular need.

Schwartz (2012) proposed six main features for value. First, values are beliefs linked strongly to feelings. When a person's value is threatened in an environment, her/his feeling will be aroused. Second, values refer to goals that stimulate action. In other words, the primary content of value is the type of goal or motivational concern it represents. If power is a value for someone, it is his/her goal that motivates them to action. Third, values are beyond specific actions and situations. It refers to this point



that values are different from norms that typically indicate specific actions. For example, respect is valued for all situations, such as school or work settings. Fourth, values work as guidance for people's selection. People use values as criteria for the evaluation of different matters. Fifth, each person has a hierarchical system of value in mind. Sixth, the relative importance of various values direct actions.

#### **2.2.4 Organisational commitment**

Different terms have been used to define organisational commitment by various authors. For instance, 'identification with an organisation', 'involvement in an organisation' and 'attachment to an organisation' are three main terms used (Porter et al., 1974; O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986). Porter et al. (1974) defined organisational commitment as 'the strength of individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organisation' (p.604). O'Reilly and Chatman (1986) defined such commitment as 'psychological attachment to the organisation, psychological bond linking the individual and the organisation' (p.492). Psychological attachment refers to the construction of shared interests between individuals and organisations. In general, psychological attachment to the organisation can be considered the most acceptable term for different scholars.

The psychological attachment between individual and organisation is developed following one of three independent foundations: 'compliance or instrumental involvement for specific, extrinsic rewards', 'identification or involvement based on desire or affiliation' and 'internalisation or involvement predicted on congruence between individual and organisational values' (O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986, p.493). These three foundations are congruent with three types of organisational commitment defined by Allen and Meyer's (1990) who believed that commitment is a multifaceted

construct that involves different forms and proposed three types of commitment: affective, continuous and normative. Allen and Meyer's (1990) definition has been widely used in the literature (e.g., Leung & Chaturvedi, 2011; Saks & Ashforth, 2002; Saks & Ashforth, 1997).

Affective commitment, which is very close to the definition of commitment by Porter et al. (1974), is associated with the enjoyment of organisational life. The definition of affective commitment is congruent with the definition of commitment by Buchanan (1974) who defined it as 'partisan, affective attachment to the goals and values of the organisation, to one's role in relation to the goals and values, and to the organisation for its own sake, apart from its purely instrumental worth' (p.533). The psychological attachment is based on identification with attributes such as the values of an organisation or involvement based on desire or affiliation (Allen & Meyer, 1990). The values of an organisation are incorporated into the cognitive response set of the individual (O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986). Hence, organisational commitment is the product of accepting organisational characteristics such as values. Employees show continuous commitment when they consider the pros and cons of staying in the organisation. Normative commitment refers to normative pressure such as moral obligations to stay with the organisation. To clarify, employees may feel guilty about leaving the organisation due to having a normative commitment to it. In other words, it is shaped in individuals' minds that organisations demand their loyalty (Allen & Meyer, 1990).

Meyer, Allen and Smith (1993) stated that organisational commitment has been defined and operationalised differently. Researchers typically choose a form that suits the purpose of their studies. Hence, I employ only the affective commitment of Allen

and Meyer (1990), which matches this study's purpose. As stated, affective commitment is an individual's loyalty or psychological attachment to an organisation due to congruence of an individual's interests, such as value, with an organisation's value. Continuous commitment is about individuals' needs, such as financial needs, which is out of this study's area. Normative commitment focuses on loyalty due to the moral obligation to stay with an organisation, which is not the focus of this study. Therefore, affective commitment is the only dimension of commitment that suits the purpose of this study: value fit. Cable and DeRue (2002) and Leung and Chaturvedi (2011) also employed affective commitment because they believe that such commitment is the most relevant result for value fit.

### **2.2.5 Job satisfaction**

Job satisfaction is generally defined as an emotional reaction to a job that results from evaluating job characteristics based on desired attributes (Edwards & Shipp, 2007). For example, Locke (1969) defined it as 'the pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job as achieving or facilitating one's job values' (p.316). Edwards and Shipp (2007) argued that definitions such as this consider job satisfaction to be the product of cognitive evaluation, but job satisfaction may be a cognitive evaluation itself. There are two approaches in defining job satisfaction: one considers job satisfaction as an affective reaction that is a product of cognitive evaluation, the other refers to it as a cognitive evaluation of the job. The latter is what Weiss (2002) stated as 'a positive (or negative) evaluative judgment one makes about one's job or job situation' (p.175). The former is more related to this study because I was examining satisfaction as an emotion that comes out of an individual's perception of fitting with an organisation. More specifically, in this study, job satisfaction is seen as a positive

attitude towards a job that results from an individual's evaluation of fitting his/her interests, such as value with the organisation's characteristics.

Job satisfaction is also investigated through two different approaches: need-fulfilment and attitudinal. According to Spector (1997), in the need-fulfilment approach, job satisfaction is studied from the perspective that the job meets an individual's physical and psychological needs through aspects provided for him/her, such as pay. In the attitudinal approach, researchers want to know about the general feeling of employees about the job rather than knowing whether the job meets an individual's needs. The focus is on the cognitive process rather than on needs (Spector, 1997). Job satisfaction can be considered to relate to attitudes about different job dimensions, including organisation, pay, and other people such as co-workers or supervisors. This study focuses on the attitudes of employees rather than on determining whether a job addresses needs. The need-fulfilment approach is more suitable for studies focusing on the job rather than for studies such as this one, which mainly focuses on attitudes.

### **2.2.6 Intention to quit**

No statement in the literature has defined the concept of intention to leave, most likely because the two terms 'intention' and 'leave' themselves are sufficiently clear to be understood by everyone. According to the online Oxford dictionary, intention means 'what you plan to do'. Thus, intention to leave refers to employees' plans to leave the organisation. Intention to leave is the last step for employees to leave (Porters & Steers, 1973); that is, intention to leave is a behavioural intention that sometimes proceeds with actual leaving. Intention to leave can be defined as a stage in the voluntary turnover decision process. Based on the turnover decision process model by Mobley (1977), employees intend to quit the organisation after they complete some

evaluations in their minds. To be more specific, when an individual has some negative assessments about an organisation, he/she may start to think about leaving the organisation and then begins to evaluate the cost of searching for an alternative and leaving. At this stage, the intention to search is weakened or strengthened. If it is strengthened, he/she will start searching for alternatives and then evaluate those alternatives with the organisation. The intention to leave is increased following the result of the last evaluation. That is when the individual has thoroughly considered the cost of leaving or staying in the organisation. Hence, intention to leave is a behavioural intention raised when an employee is well conscious of the pros and cons of the behaviour.

### **2.2.7 Organisational image**

The image of an entity is defined as the product of the transaction of signals sent by the entity to a receptor, which emerges as a mental perception in the receptor's mind (Stern, Zinkhan & Jaju, 2001). In other words, image is the 'pattern of beliefs and feelings' in the public mind constructed throughout associations with the entity (Stern, Zinkhan & Jaju, 2001, p.203). Similarly, organisational image is mainly defined as the 'public perception', 'public attitude' or 'public feeling' towards an organisation in the literature (Stern, Zinkhan & Jaju, 2001; Toker, 1961). Fombrun and Shanley (1990) defined organisational image as a representative of an individual's emotional reaction to the organisation's name. This perception or feeling is formed by 'informational cues' or 'signals' received by individuals (Fombrun & Shanley, 1990, p.234). According to Fombrun and Shanley (1990), organisational image is formed in an individual's mind based on information produced by the organisation, media or other sources. Individuals evaluate the effectiveness of an organisation from different perspectives based on their perceptions of its image (Fombrun & Shanley, 1990). In general,

organisational image is part of individuals' perceptions of the organisation developed throughout their interactions.

The image concept originates from marketing studies, but the recruitment discipline employed it a long time ago (e.g., Gatewood, Gowan & Lautenschlager, 1993; Turban, Forret & Henderickson, 1998). Some scholars such as Knox and Freeman (2006) and Gatewood, Gowan, and Lautenschlager (1993) distinguished the general image of an organisation from the image constructed throughout recruitment. For instance, Gatewood, Gowan and Lautenschlager (1993), who researched the role of organisational image in the recruitment process, believed there are two images of an organisation for individuals throughout recruitment. One is developed during an individual's interactions with the organisation. The interactions include exposure to advertisements, buying products or services from the organisation and reading an article about the organisation. The second is the image formed by the information gained within the recruitment process and by an individual's working experience in the organisation. The former is regarded as a general image and the latter as an employer image in the literature. In this study, the organisational image refers to the general image. Organisational image is constructed by signals delivered to individuals during their interactions with the organisation. In other words, the organisational image was formed when individuals were not job applicants of the organisation. This study focuses on an individual's perception of their organisation before the recruitment process.

As outlined above, organisational image is the public's perception of the organisation located in their minds (Stern, Zinkhan & Jaju, 2001). According to Stern, Zinkhan and Jaju (2001), who cited Martineau (1958), this perception may include two dimensions;

functional and emotional. Functional associates with attributes such as quality, reliability, service and price. Emotional is related to a subjective feeling of individuals. However, the border between functional and emotional is not particularly clear because the emotional feeling of people towards an organisation may be the same as their feeling about its functional performance. Indeed, the relation between public and organisation is mainly related to the functional domain. Therefore, organisational image is mainly about public emotion or perception towards the organisation's function (Fombrun & Shanley, 1990). Fombrun and Shanley (1990) considered four functional areas of an organisation: the market, accounting, institutional and strategy, and proposed that they form the organisational image in the minds of individuals. In addition, interactions of individuals with an organisation differ from one another. Hence, the constructed images of an organisation are various among the public (Stern, Zinkhan & Jaju, 2001).

Organisational image, therefore, defines the perception of individuals of different dimensions of an organisation. Scholars such as Cable and Yu (2006), who employed the concept of image in the recruitment context, defined the dimensions based on organisational values. Whereas an organisational image may consist of various dimensions in people's minds, regarding the ASA theory, which states that individuals select organisations based on similarity of values, the dimensions are perceived in individuals' minds at the time of recruitment are related to values. Therefore, individuals formed perceptions of the values of organisations throughout their various interactions with them. This perception is termed organisational image.

Cable and Yu (2006) modified Schwartz's (1992) model, which is the most acknowledged model of universal value, in a manner that could make sense for the

recruitment context. Schwartz (1992) defined a list of universal values by studying 40 samples in 20 countries and also defined a circumplex model with two axes that presented the defined values' relations. One axis was openness to change versus conservation. Whereas openness to change motivates individuals to emotional actions, the conservation axis involves low-risk actions. The second axis referred to self-enhancement versus self-transcendence, differentiating between considering only self-interest in actions versus others' interests. Although Schwartz's (1992) value list has been acceptable for most scholars, it requires some modifications to be appropriate for business studies, particularly the recruitment area. In other words, some items of Schwartz's (1992) model seemed inappropriate for the organisational context if they were to be used in their original form. Thus, Cable and Yu (2006) conducted a survey to find the most relevant values for the recruitment context. Figure 2.1 shows the model developed by Cable and Yu (2006). Because this study's focus is on recruitment information about the organisation's values, I also employed the list provided by Cable and Yu (2006) to define and measure the concept of organisational image.



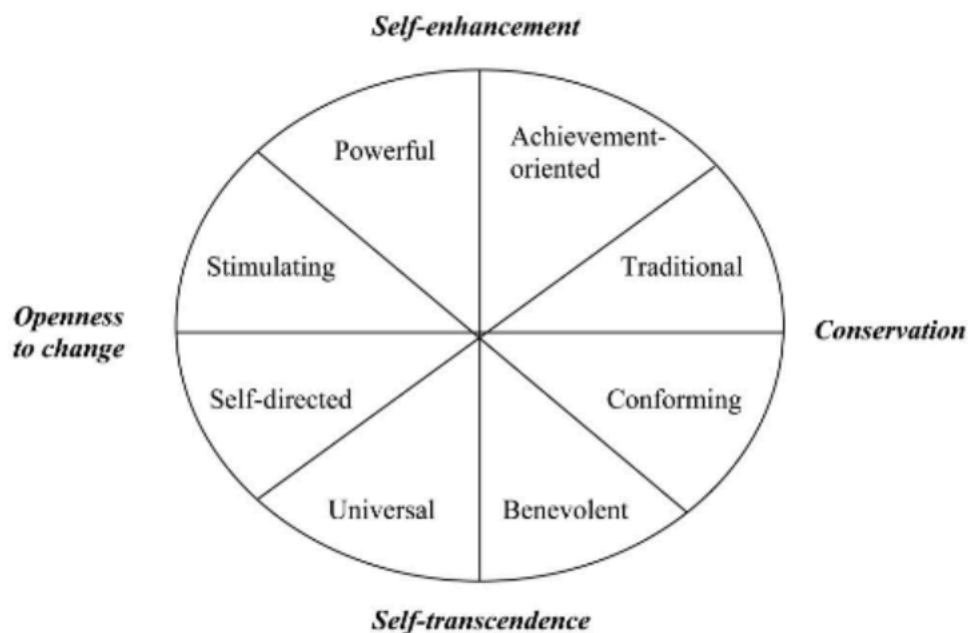


Figure 2.1: Organisational image circumplex model (Cable & Yu, 2006, p.831).

### 2.2.8 Source credibility

Credibility has been mentioned as ‘ethos’ by some scholars such as McCroskey (1966, p.24) and Whitehead (1968, p.59). It refers to whether an individual accepts or trusts information from a source (Cable & Yu, 2006), or a ‘communicator’s positive characteristics’ that influence the receiver’s attitude towards a message (Ohanian, 1990, p.41), or ‘attitude toward a speaker held by a listener’ (McCroskey, 1966, p.66), or ‘a person’s perception of the truth of a piece of information’ (Eisned, 2004, p.352). In simple terms, when ordinary people want to point out the source credibility throughout their everyday life conversations, they say ‘who said it’ (Berlo, Lemert & Mertz, 1969). People accept information when they consider a source of information

to be credible. Therefore, source credibility impacts information effectiveness (Berlo, Lemert & Mertz, 1969).

Credibility is not a new concept but can be seen in Aristotle's texts as 'source quality', which refers to 'good sense', 'good moral character' and 'goodwill' (Whitehead, 1968, p. 59). Hovland and his colleagues (Hovland, Janis & Kelley, 1953), pioneers of the source credibility concept, in their communication and persuasion book published in 1953, referred to two factors of expertness and trustworthiness as dimensions of source credibility (Ohanian, 1990; Berlo, Lemert & Mertz, 1969; McGinnies & Ward, 1980). Expertise refers to the extent to which a source is believed to produce valid information, and trustworthiness refers to the degree of honesty of a source (Whitehead, 1968; McGinnes & Ward, 1980). McCroskey (1966) defined authoritativeness and character as two dimensions of source credibility. The former is similar to expertise and the latter to trustworthiness. Berlo, Lemert and Mertz (1969) added a third dimension to the concept of credibility, which is dynamism. Dynamism refers to the 'energy available to the source which can be used to emphasise, augment, and implement [source] suggestions' (Berlo, Lemert & Mertz, 1969, p. 575). Ohanian (1990) combined two dimensions of Hovland, Janis and Kelley (1953) (i.e., trustworthiness and expertise) with the attractiveness model of McGuire (1985) and added a third dimension—attractiveness. Whitehead (1968) and Applbaum and Anatol (1972) defined credibility as a combination of trustworthiness, professionalism, dynamism and objectivity. Objectivity means being an open-minded and impartial source of information from the viewpoint of the audience. Wynn (2015) and Simpson and Kahler (1981) added sociability. Sociability, which is related to the source's personality, refers to characteristics such as being 'friendly', 'nice' and 'non-gloomy' (Wynn, 2015, p. 354). Likeability is another dimension referred to in the literature by

some authors such as Sorensen, Rhode and Lawler (1973) and Fisher, Ilgen and Hoyer (1979). This dimension concerns whether the source is a desirable one for the audience.

As argued above, various dimensions, such as trustworthiness, expertise, dynamism, objectivity, sociability and liking, have been used to define credibility. However, these aforementioned studies were conducted in various contexts. The dimension of source credibility should be consistent with the context of the study. For instance, the dimension of sociability initially was defined in the context of marketing. Wynn (2015) defined a sociable source as a salesperson who wants to be the best and enjoys chatting with buyers. Although a sociable person affects an individual's purchase intention because they are perceived as credible, he/she might not be regarded as a credible source to gain information about organisations throughout the recruitment process. In recruitment, trustworthiness is a dimension used widely (e.g., Fisher, Ilgen & Hoyer, 1979; Walker et al., 2009; Van Hoyer & Lievens, 2005; Van Hoyer, 2012; Frasca & Edwards, 2017). The dimension of objectivity is also considered to be the same concept as trustworthiness in the context of recruitment. Objectivity refers to the impartiality of the source, which is a criterion that enhances the source's trustworthiness (Fisher, Ilgen & Hoyer, 1979; Van Hoyer & Lievens, 2007). Because the context of this study is also recruitment, trustworthiness is considered a dimension of this work. Therefore, in this research, credibility refers to the believability of information from an individual's perspective.

## **2.3 Theoretical underpinnings**

### **2.3.1 Overview of the theories underpinning the theoretical framework**

The conceptual framework of this study, explained in detail in section 2.4, was developed based on two theories: ASA and channel expansion. The study's theoretical framework consists of a moderated mediation model with indirect effects of attributes of recruitment information on employment outcomes (i.e., organisational commitment, job satisfaction, intention to quit), mediated via post-entry PO fit, moderated by organisational image, credibility of the source of information and years of previous work experience.

According to ASA theory, individuals are attracted and remain with organisations that are perceived to fit with their values. The perception of fitting with the values of the organisation is formed based on information received from recruitment sources. As much as the information should be rich and realistic, the perception of fitting, which is the foundation of the attraction component of ASA theory, is more accurate and results in fitting in after hiring. Because values are relatively enduring, the fit perception about an organisation's value remains stable. Hence, individuals can actively enhance their post-entry PO fit by selecting an organisation that was perceived to fit with their values. Thus, attributes of recruitment information can help develop the post-entry PO fit. Furthermore, individuals that fit with the organisation have positive attitudes toward it and consequently stay with it. Thus, information richness and realism, which originated from individuals' experiences during recruitment communication, impact employment outcomes through the mediating role of post-entry PO fit.

The channel expansion theory explains that individuals' perceptions about information richness are influenced by their specific experiences, including experiences with

messaging topics and organisational context. Any previous experiences that help individuals understand information better affect their perceptions about information richness. Previous experiences can also affect the perception of the realism of information. In this study, I identified organisational image and years of previous work experience as two specific experiences that are likely to affect perceptions about information richness and realism at the time of recruitment. Furthermore, individuals' perceptions regarding the credibility of an information source impact the effectiveness of information. In other words, individuals may not consider information obtained from unreliable sources in developing their fit perceptions. Hence, organisational image, credibility and years of previous work experience are likely to moderate the relationships between attributes of recruitment information and post-entry PO fit.

### **2.3.2 Attraction-Selection-Attrition (ASA) theory**

Based on the ASA theory, which was first proposed by Schneider (1987), individuals are attracted, selected (and self-select) by and stay in organisations that suit their attributes. To be specific, 'different kinds of organisations [e.g., organisations with different values] attract, select, and retain different kinds of people' (Schneider, 1987, p.440). The theory explains that organisations are products of the people working for them, and the people of organisations are products of the ASA cycle. By way of explanation, because individuals are attracted to, selected by and stay with organisations that suit their characteristics, a homogeneity exists among the organisation's members. The ASA theory discusses a cycle that helps understand an organisation's behaviour (Schneider, 1987). ASA is based on interactional psychology, which states that interactions between individuals and the environment shape environmental behaviour. Schneider (1987) regarded his theory against a common

belief that environmental situations determine the behaviour of people (i.e., situationist position). Thus, people whose values are similar to the organisations, will stay in that organisation, and those whose values are different from the organisations, will intend to leave (Schneider, 1987).

The ASA theory highlights the importance of the recruitment process for employees' attitudes and behaviour. Employees' behaviour is affected by the recruitment process rather than by situations of organisations. If the right people (i.e., fit people) enter the organisation, they will experience positive attitudes due to their similarity and stay with that organisation. The proposed cycle comprises three stages. The first stage is attraction—individuals are attracted to organisations that they perceive fit with their attributes. Regardless of the entire theory, the first stage of the ASA cycle is itself important for the organisational choice literature. According to Schneider (1987), the domain of attraction, which has roots in vocational psychology, originates from the vocational choice theory (Holland, 1959). Whereas employee homogeneity is the subject of the whole theory, the organisational choice is the subject of the attraction stage. This stage reflects on its own a new perspective in the recruitment process. To clarify, it states that they are not only organisations that choose people who fit in with them, but people are also attracted to organisations that have attributes matching theirs. Therefore, the attraction stage plays a vital role in the fit literature. The attraction component also is referred to as the 'self-selection' mechanism. The importance of self-selection for employment outcome is that job applicants can actively establish their post-entry and, consequently, employment outcome (Cable & Judge, 1996).

The second stage is selection, when organisations choose employees based on their requirements. In the context of value requirements, organisations select individuals

who have similar values. Whereas attraction refers to this side of the recruitment process that employees are attracted to organisations based on their psychological needs, the selection asserts that organisations also choose employees based on their requirements. The third stage is attrition, which states that employees who share similar values with an organisation are more likely to stay with that organisation, and those who do not are more likely to leave. The attrition relates to stating that if someone who does not fit well with an organisation is recruited, that person will not stay long, and he/she will leave the organisation. Therefore, because individuals with similar values are attracted to an organisation and selected by the organisation and then stay with that organisation, the organisational values become representative of members' values; that is, homogeneity in an organisation (e.g., in the maturity stage of the organisation) (Schneider, 1987). This study examined only the first and third stages of this theory: attraction and attrition. Selection is related to the employer's decision about an individual's fitting, which is not the focus of this study. To be more specific, this study focuses on employees' perception of fitting rather than on the employer's perception of employee's fitting.

Moreover, the ASA theory argues that 'the same organisational conditions will be differentially satisfying to people in different work environments and, conversely, different work conditions can be equally satisfying to the people in different settings' (Schneider, 1987). In other words, ASA states that employees enter with their attitudes towards the job. Positive attitudes towards jobs are expected when the conditions of the organisation allow the interest of a person in his/her job to be reflected in his/her behaviour. For example, suppose one of the reasons someone is interested in being a software programmer is having autonomy at the job. In that case, they will be satisfied with their job in an organisation if the organisation's values facilitate

autonomously. But autonomously may not be an interesting value for a person who prefers to follow instructions from supervisors. Therefore, organisational attributes affect an individual's attitudes towards the organisation and the job.

### **2.3.3 Channel expansion theory**

The channel expansion theory was developed by Carlson and Zmud (1994,1999). The theory was developed following inconsistent findings of studies based on the media richness theory. Hence, it is reasonable to begin with the theory of media richness, which can be regarded as a foundation of the channel expansion theory. The media richness theory describes communication channels as possessing inherent characteristics that define their capacities to deliver rich information. Due to the fact that the characteristics of channels vary, different channels have diverse capacities to carry rich information. Hence, channels are arrayed along a continuum of richness.

The attributes of a channel related to richness are stated in the media richness theory as immediate feedback, different cues, language variety, personal focus and amount of information (see section 2.2.1 for definitions of each attribute). Attributes of media facilitate resolving ambiguity and uncertainty by developing shared definitions and adding extra information. Ambiguity about a subject is resolved through adding interpretation to the information by a sender (Daft, Lengel & Trevino, 1987; Daft & Lengel, 1986). In other words, it is eliminated by redefinition or giving feedback on the receiver's understanding throughout a communication between the sender and receiver (Daft, Lengel & Trevino, 1987; Daft & Lengel, 1986). Hence, a shared definition of a subject is created. The shared definition can be created by providing immediate feedback, different cues, language variety and personal focus that are considered attributes of channels. In terms of uncertainty, it is resolved by supplying



communication participants with a significant amount of information. In other words, a channel should carry a substantial amount of information to reduce uncertainty.

The findings of previous studies presented that the objective attributes of a medium are possibly not the only determining factor for specifying the richness of the media. For example, in the study by Webster and Trevino (1995), channels such as a letter that was hypothesised to be low in richness (e.g., due to limited two-way communication) were perceived by participants high in richness. Hence, there was doubt that factors beyond the inherent attributes of the channel play a role in defining richness. Indeed, previous findings showed that not all participants perceived a letter to be low in richness. However, many people considered letters as a rich helpful channel for understanding information carried in a communication. Therefore, it seemed that the media richness theory had some weaknesses.

Carlson and Zmud (1999) proposed that the theory of media richness required reformulation regarding the inconsistent findings of previous studies that examined richness. They suggested 'knowledge-building experiences' as a modifier of an individual's perception of richness (p.154). Knowledge-building experiences are defined as experiences through which communication participants develop the knowledge that may be helpful to understand information carried in a communication. Channel expansion theory identified specific experiences, including experience with the channel, messaging topic, organisational topic and communication coparticipants as modifiers of perception about richness. Therefore, the channel expansion theory built on the media richness theory and addressed the weaknesses of the media richness theory by adding the element of knowledge-building experiences.

Both theories of media richness and channel expansion emphasise the importance of matching communication requirements with media capacity to enhance the understanding of communication participants of information carried throughout a communication. As aforementioned, the communication requirements are defined as resolving uncertainty and equivocality (Daft & Lengel, 1986). Uncertainty exists when there is a difference between the amount of information required for understanding and available information (Daft, Lengel & Trevino, 1987). Hence, the media should be capable of providing a sufficient volume of information to reduce uncertainty. Equivocality or ambiguity refers to the existence of 'multiple and conflicting interpretations' about a subject (Daft & Lengel, 1986, p.6). Therefore, media should be able to clarify a subject for users in case of ambiguity. Clarification occurs through exchanging views between the sender and receivers of information (Daft, Lengel & Trevino, 1987). Hence, media capacity is associated with the amount and quality of the information provided; that is, the quantity and quality of information should be to the level that can solve both uncertainty and ambiguity.

## **2.4 Research Hypotheses and Theoretical Framework**

### **2.4.1 Direct Relationships and hypotheses' development**

#### ***2.4.1.1 Richness and realism of recruitment information and post-entry PO fit***

According to the attraction component of the ASA theory, individuals are attracted to and accept job offers from organisations that they perceive fit with their values. This concept is also termed the self-selection proposition, which refers to the point when an individual selects an organisation based on his/her perception of fitting with the organisation. An individual's perception about fitting with an organisation (i.e.,

subjective PO fit) is formed through information acquisition (Saks & Ashforth, 1997; Gatewood, Gowan & Lautenschlager, 1993) and based on an individual's understanding of an organisation's attributes, such as value. Acquiring information reduces uncertainty and gives meaning to the characteristics of the new organisation (Saks & Ashforth, 1997).

At the time of recruitment, an individual obtains information through communication with different channels. Grounded on the channel expansion theory, richness of information, which is associated with features of the channel used in the communication (see sections 2.2.1 and 2.3.3 for further details), improves an individual's understanding of a piece of information by resolving uncertainty and ambiguity. Thus, the richness of information plays a role in the self-selection process. Whereas rich information can result in an accurate perception and informed self-selection, poor information potentially leads to perception and selection based on incomplete and vague information. This explains how the richness of recruitment information helps individuals actively develop their post-entry PO fit. Therefore, it is expected that the richness of recruitment information, regarding its positive role in the self-selection process, positively correlates with post-entry PO fit.

The findings of previous studies supported the attraction component of ASA theory. Individuals are attracted to (e.g., Dineen, Ash and Noe, 2002; Chapman et al., 2005; Carless, 2005; Uggeslev, Fassina & Kraichy, 2012) and accept job offers from organisations that they perceive as fitting them (e.g., Cable & Judge, 1996; Vroom, 1966; Chapman et al., 2005). These findings support that the self-selection process is based on subjective PO fit at the time of recruitment. The positive influence of information richness on forming accurate perceptions about an organisation was

supported by the findings of Cable and Yu (2006). Cable and Yu (2006) examined whether information richness can make job seekers better perceive recruitment information. Cable and Yu (2006) is the only study in the recruitment area that focused on the positive role of recruitment information richness in forming an accurate perception about an organisation. Most of the previous works, such as Allen, Scotter and Ottondo (2004) and Frasca and Edwards (2017), only investigated the effects of information richness on media selection and attraction to organisations rather than on individuals' understanding of recruitment information. The correlation between recruitment information richness and post-entry PO fit has, however, yet to be examined. Hence, this study fills this gap by posing this hypothesis:

**H1a:** There is a positive relationship between recruitment information richness and post-entry PO fit.

As mentioned earlier, realism refers to the content of information involving both positive and negative aspects of reality (see section 2.2.2 for more details). Suppose an individual receives only positive information about an organisation (i.e., non-realistic information), his/her perception of fitting with the organisation would be formed based on only positive information. However, if individuals obtained information with a high degree of realism, their decision would be made based on both positive and negative information. In general, the realistic information allows applicants to make an informed decision about whether or not they fit with the new organisation, and it is therefore likely that recruitment information realism positively correlates with post-entry PO fit.

There are two gaps in the research in terms of lack of studies on the realism of recruitment information: to my knowledge, 1) no study has explicitly examined the relationship between the realism of recruitment information and post-entry PO fit and 2) no study has focused on the realism of 'organisation' information (e.g., organisational values). A strand of research implicitly suggested the possibility of a correlation between the realism of recruitment information and post-entry PO fit, however, those works measured job acceptance or attrition from the recruitment process as surrogate measures for the effect of the self-selection mechanism (see, e.g., Earnest, Allen & Landis, 2011; Meglino, Ravin & DeNisi, 2000; Philips, 1998; Saks & Cronshaw, 1990). In other words, findings of the previous studies supported the role of realism of recruitment information in the self-selection process. The negative correlation between the realism of recruitment information and job acceptance or attrition from the recruitment process, found by previous studies (see, e.g., Premack & Wanous, 1985; Philips, 1998; Saks, Wiesner & Summers, 1994; Meglino, Roavlin, DeNisi, 2000; Earnest, Allen & Landis, 2011), shows that applicants developed PO fit based on obtained information during recruitment. The applicants quit the recruitment process or did not accept job offers from organisations that did not fit with them. The perception of not fitting came from realistic information obtained during recruitment. Most of the findings of previous studies in this area supported the negative correlation between the realism of recruitment information and job acceptance or attrition from recruitment (Premack & Wanous, 1985; Philips, 1998; Saks, Wiesner & Summers, 1994; Meglino, Roavlin, DeNisi, 2000; Earnest, Allen & Landis, 2011). However, there are studies such as Saks and Cronshaw (1990), Colarelli (1984) and Wanous (1973) that were not able to find evidence to support the role of realism of recruitment information in the self-selection process. Based on the

above theoretical concepts and empirical findings, which supports the role of recruitment information realism in the self-selection process, I hypothesised:

**H2a:** There is a positive relationship between recruitment information realism and post-entry PO fit.

#### ***2.4.1.2 Post-entry person-organisation fit and employment outcomes (organisational commitment, job satisfaction, intention to quit)***

According to the ASA theory, individuals are attracted to organisations that they perceive fit with them, and those who feel that they fit experience positive attitudes towards organisations. Generally speaking, the theory refers to the positive relationship between subjective post-entry PO fit and positive attitudes towards organisations such as organisational commitment. As aforementioned, affective commitment, the type of organisational commitment employed in this study, is the psychological attachment to organisation characteristics such as values. Psychological attachment is the product of identification with attributes such as values. Organisational values are integrated into the cognitive response set of an individual (Allen & Meyer, 1990; O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986). In other words, individuals who feel that they have common interests, such as similar values with an organisation, are committed to that organisation. Therefore, perception about fitting with the organisation's values is likely to correlate positively with organisational commitment. The findings of most previous studies also support the positive relationship between subjective post-entry PO fit and organisational commitment (e.g., Saks & Ashforth, 2002; Cable & Judge, 1996; Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman and Johnson, 2005; Greguras & Diefendorff, 2009). Based on the above theoretical justification and empirical findings of previous studies, I hypothesised:

**H3a:** There is a positive relationship between post-entry PO fit and organisational commitment.

In consistent with the proposition made by the ASA theory that employees enter an organisation with specific attitudes towards their jobs, Schneider (1987) placed his position against the view of situationist scholars who believed that the work conditions affect employees' attitudes towards jobs. He argued that when an individual's natural tendency is allowed to be reflected in their behaviours by attributes of an organisation (e.g., processes and structure), employees' chance of having positive job attitudes increases. Thus, if someone can see the evolution of his/her values throughout their working life (i.e., PO fit), they can feel positive attitudes towards the job. In other words, the organisational values can allow or prevent individuals from experiencing what they like about their jobs. Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman and Johnson (2005) also believed that supplementary fit, which is the type of fit employed in this study, affects job attitudes positively through the need-fulfilment mechanism. People will experience more positive job attitudes when their needs are satisfied. Therefore, as much as fitting with the organisations' values is perceived, individuals have more positive attitudes towards their jobs.

The majority of previous studies supported the relationship between PO fit and job satisfaction (e.g., Saks & Ashforth, 2002; Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman and Johnson, 2005; Hoffman & Woehr, 2006; Leung & Chaturvedi, 2011; Bretz & Judge, 1994; Cable & Judge, 1996; Verquer, Beehr & Wagner, 2003). Studies such as Leung and Chaturvedi (2011) did not justify the correlation between PO fit and job attitudes through ASA theory. They studied this relationship from the viewpoint of psychological

theories, such as self-perception and cognitive dissonance theories, which stated that individuals cannot have two contrasting feelings simultaneously. To be more specific, they argued that if someone feels that they fit within an organisation, they cannot feel dissatisfaction with the job because these are two contrasting feelings. In addition to self-perception and cognitive dissonance theories used in previous studies, some works such as Bretz and Judge (1994) referred to the theory of work adjustment as a theory that justifies the relationship between post-entry PO fit and job satisfaction. For example, Bretz and Judge (1994) stated that the perception of fitting with an organisation 'induces' job satisfaction (p.33). Following the findings of previous studies and the proposed theoretical explanation, it is likely that post-entry PO fit positively correlates to job satisfaction.

**H4a:** There is a positive relationship between post-entry PO fit and job satisfaction.

Based on the attrition part of the ASA theory, employees who feel that they fit with an organisation will be likely to stay with the organisation (Schneider, 1987). This theory is applied by many scholars such as Cable and Judge (1996), Cable, Aiman-Smith and Edwards (2000) and Dineen, Ash and Noe (2002). To clarify, employees who fit with organisations have positive attitudes towards those organisations (Chatman, 1989). The positive attitude towards an organisation generally refers to the commitment to the organisation, as explained in previous paragraphs, and a low intention to leave. Individuals may have other reasons for staying in an organisation, such as a lack of market opportunity when they experience a lack of fit and dissatisfaction. However, even in this case, their intentions to quit would be high (Ostroff, Shin & Kinicki, 2005). In brief, when employees feel that they fit with an



organisation, they are likely to have positive attitudes toward the organisation, resulting in low intention to leave. The empirical findings related to the relationship, however, is mixed. For example, Verquer, Beehr and Wagner's (2003) meta-analysis supported the negative relationship between subjective post-entry PO fit and intention to quit, while the relationship is not supported by the studies of Saks and Ashforth (2002) and Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman and Johnson (2005). To examine the relationship, this study followed the proposition made by the SAS theory and hypothesised that post-entry PO fit has a negative relationship with the intention to quit.

**H5a:** There is a negative relationship between post-entry PO fit and intention to quit.

#### **2.4.2 Indirect relationships and hypotheses' development: The mediation model**

The indirect relationships of recruitment information richness and realism through post-entry PO fit with employment outcomes are explained through the ASA theory (i.e., the self-selection mechanism). The self-selection mechanism refers to this point that individuals can actively enhance their post-entry PO fit by selecting organisations that were perceived to fit with their values. Consequently, they have positive attitudes towards the organisations and jobs (e.g., organisational commitment and job satisfaction). As argued previously, individuals self-selected organisations based on information obtained during recruitment. Based on the channel expansion theory, information richness, associated with features of a channel used in recruitment communication, enhances an individual's understanding of a piece of information by resolving uncertainty and ambiguity. Rich information results in an accurate perception of the subject and informed self-selection. Therefore, information richness is expected

to have a positive relationship with the post-entry PO fit. In addition to information richness, the realism of information delivered throughout recruitment can also be expected to be positively associated with the post-entry PO fit. Realistic information helps individuals make an informed decision at the time of recruitment. In other words, perceptions of individuals about fitting with organisations are formed based on both positive and negative information, not only positive information. Hence, information realism also is likely to positively relate to the post-entry PO fit.

On the other hand, according to the ASA theory, those who feel that they fit with the organisation's values will experience positive attitudes towards it. Hence, based on the ASA theory, there is a possibility of a positive relationship between subjective post-entry PO fit and positive attitudes towards organisations such as organisational commitment. Affective commitment, the type of organisational commitment considered in this study, is the psychological attachment to organisation characteristics such as values. Organisational values are integrated into the cognitive response set of the individual (Allen & Meyer, 1990; O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986). In other words, individuals who feel that they have common interests, such as similar values with the organisation, are committed to that organisation. Therefore, it is expected that the feeling of fitting with the organisation's values relates positively to organisational commitment.

Moreover, the higher perception of fitting with organisation values can also makes individuals feel more positive attitudes towards their jobs (i.e., higher job satisfaction) because organisational values could allow or prevent individuals from experiencing what they liked about their jobs (Schneider, 1987). To clarify, values are reflected in a job of an individual as well. Hence, the feeling of fitting with organisation values means

an individual feels that they fit with values throughout various aspects of their working life, including their job. It is, therefore, also expected that PO fit has a positive relationship with job satisfaction. In addition, according to the attrition component of the ASA theory, those who feel that they fit more are less intent to leave the organisation. In brief, the relationships between richness and realism of recruitment information and employment outcomes are likely to be mediated by post-entry PO fit.

The mediation model proposed in this study fills two research gaps, namely, 1) the relationship between information richness and employment outcomes has not been studied and 2) the indirect relationship between the realism of information and employment outcomes has not been examined. Generally speaking, very few studies have examined the post-entry PO fit as a mediator between pre-entry variables and post-entry outcomes (e.g., Cable & Judge, 1996; Saks & Ashforth, 2002). In the study by Cable and Judge (1996), the relationship between value congruence, another surrogate for the recruitment variables, and employment outcomes (i.e., organisational commitment, job satisfaction, intention to quit) mediated by post-entry PO fit was examined. The common part between this study and Cable and Judge (1996) is that both studies examined the mediating role of post-entry PO fit in relationships between recruitment variables and employment outcomes. The findings of Cable and Judge (1996) supported that individuals who had high pre-entry perceptions about value congruence at the time of recruitment had high employment outcomes (e.g., organisational commitment and job satisfaction), excluding intention to quit. Saks and Ashforth's (2002) findings also supported the mediating role of post-entry PO fit in the relationship between pre-entry PO fit and post-entry PO fit. This study contributes to the PO fit and recruitment literature by examining the indirect relationships of two new pre-entry variables with employment outcomes; that is, mediated by post-entry PO fit.

**H1b:** Post-entry PO fit mediates the relationship between recruitment information richness and organisational commitment.

**H2b:** Post-entry PO fit mediates the relationship between recruitment information realism and organisational commitment.

**H3b:** Post-entry PO fit mediates the relationship between recruitment information richness and job satisfaction.

**H4b:** Post-entry PO fit mediates the relationship between recruitment information realism and job satisfaction.

**H5b:** Post-entry PO fit mediates the relationship between recruitment information richness and intention to quit.

**H6b:** Post-entry PO fit mediates the relationship between recruitment information realism and intention to quit.

## **2.4.3 The moderated mediation model and hypotheses' development**

### ***2.4.3.1 The role played by organisational image***

The indirect relationships between recruitment information richness and realism with employment outcomes mediated by PO fit are likely to be stronger for those with high perceptions about an organisation's image. Job applicants are influenced by recruitment sources and other sources such as organisation image during recruitment. Organisational image is an individual's initial belief about an organisation developed throughout their interactions with the organisation (e.g., using the services or products of the organisation, reading an article about the organisation in the newspaper, etc).

The previous studies showed that organisational image plays a vital role in forming an individual's perception of an organisation throughout recruitment (e.g., Cable & Yu, 2006; Gatewood, Gowan & Lautenschlager, 1993; Arnold et al., 2003; Baum & Kabst, 2014), however, no research has examined the moderating role of organisational image in the relationships between attributes of recruitment information and post-entry PO fit.

In general, organisational image can be considered another flow of information used by individuals during recruitment. A study by Gatewood, Gowan and Lautenschlager (1993) supported the role of organisational image in the recruitment process. However, they found that the effect of information obtained from recruitment sources on an individual's perception of an organisation is stronger than that of organisational image on an individual. Baum and Kabst (2014) showed that when the information from recruitment sources is lean (i.e., low in richness), but the perception of organisation image is high, the overall perception of individuals is formed mainly by their beliefs about the organisation's image. Baum and Kabst (2014) determined that the effectiveness of the image of an organisation on an individual's perceptions depends on attributes of information gained from recruitment sources. As mentioned, the role of image in the recruitment process has been examined by a few previous studies, but no research has examined its moderating role in the relationships between attributes of recruitment information and post-entry PO fit.

As argued before, an individual self-selects an organisation based on the perception of fitting with the organisation's values (i.e., ASA theory). The PO fit perception was developed based on information received throughout recruitment communication. The recruitment communication could be so rich that it helps individuals develop a fit

perception based on accurate and clear information, whereas poor communication could result in a PO fit perception formed based on ambiguous information. According to the channel expansion theory, some 'knowledge-building experiences' also modify relationships of information richness by helping individuals understand information better. For example, when someone has prior familiarity with an organisation, he/she can better understand the information obtained during recruitment communication. Hence, I propose in this study that the image of an organisation, which is the perception of an individual of the organisation formed throughout interactions with it, can be considered a kind of knowledge-building experience that can modify the relationship between recruitment information richness and PO fit. This modification, in turn, would strengthen or weaken the indirect relationship of recruitment information richness via post-entry PO fit with employment outcomes. In other words, the indirect effect will be stronger for those individuals with stronger perceptions of organisational image; whereas, the indirect effect will be weaker for those individuals with weaker perceptions of organisational image.

**H1c:** Organisational image moderates the indirect relationship of recruitment information richness via post-entry PO fit with organisational commitment in such a manner that the indirect effect will be stronger for those individuals with stronger perceptions of organisational image.

**H2c:** Organisational image moderates the indirect relationship of recruitment information richness via post-entry PO fit with job satisfaction in such a way that the indirect effect will be stronger for those individuals with stronger perceptions of organisational image.

**H3c:** Organisational image moderates the indirect relationship of recruitment information richness via post-entry PO fit with intention to quit in such a manner that the indirect effect will be stronger for those individuals with stronger perceptions of organisational image.

Individuals who receive unrealistic information at the time of recruitment but have a strong perception about the image of an organisation still have a chance to experience high PO fit after entry. In other words, because organisation image is developed based on individuals' interaction with the organisation, such as using its products or services or reading an article about the organisation in a newspaper, it could be considered another flow of information. This flow of information that came from personal experiences is realistic. Hence, individuals' perception of information realism is likely to interact with their perceptions of organisation image. Therefore, organisation image would be expected to moderate the positive relationships between recruitment information realism and post-entry PO fit in such a way that strengthens their relationship. Organisational image is likely to moderate the indirect relationships of recruitment information realism and employment outcomes.

**H4c:** Organisational image moderates the indirect relationship of recruitment information realism via post-entry PO fit with organisational commitment in such a manner that the indirect effect will be stronger for those individuals with stronger perceptions of organisational image.

**H5c:** Organisational image moderates the indirect relationship of recruitment information realism via post-entry PO fit with job satisfaction in such a way that the indirect effect will be stronger for those individuals with stronger perceptions of organisational image.

**H6c:** Organisational image moderates the indirect relationship of recruitment information realism via post-entry PO fit with intention to quit in such a manner that the indirect effect will be stronger for those individuals with stronger perceptions of organisational image.

#### ***2.4.3.2 The role played by source credibility***

The relationships between information richness and realism through post-entry PO fit with employment outcomes is expected to be stronger for those who perceived their sources of information to be more credible. Many studies have shown that different sources of information carry different credibility from the perspective of receivers (Breaugh & Starke, 2000; Cable & Yu, 2006; Fisher, Illgen & Hoyer, 1979; Van Hove & Lievens, 2005; Frasca & Edwards, 2017; Walker et al., 2009). When a person perceives a source of information as incredible, even if he/she acquired rich and realistic information, they may not consider it in developing fit perception.

So far, the role of credibility in the recruitment process has been studied from two angles. One involved examining the effect of credibility of the source of recruitment information on job acceptance (e.g., Cable & Yu, 2006; Fisher, Illgen & Hoyer, 1979), and the other is the examination of the credibility of different types of recruitment information sources (e.g., Cable & Yu, 2006; Fisher, Illgen & Hoyer, 1979; Van Hove & Lievens, 2007). The results of only the former group are helpful for this study because job acceptance is one of the variables employed to examine the attraction component of ASA theory. To clarify, these studies' findings showed that credibility plays such an essential role throughout the self-selection process that individuals do not accept jobs if the source is conceived as incredible. Thus, a person may receive



rich information, but because he/she cannot trust the source, they would not consider it a piece of rich information and would not form the PO fit perception based on it. Hence, credibility is expected to interact with information richness. It is likely that credibility moderates the direct relationship of information richness with post-entry PO fit. In turn, credibility is expected to moderate the indirect relationships of information richness with employment outcomes, mediated by post-entry PO fit. The indirect effect will be stronger for those who perceived the source of recruitment information as being more credible.

**H7c:** Credibility of source moderates the indirect relationship of information richness via post-entry PO fit with organisational commitment in such a way that the indirect effect will be stronger for those individuals who perceived the source of recruitment information as being more credible.

**H8c:** Credibility of the source moderates the indirect relationship of information richness via post-entry PO fit with job satisfaction in such a manner that the indirect effect will be stronger for those individuals who perceived the source of recruitment information as being more credible.

**H9c:** Credibility of the source moderates the indirect relationship of information richness via post-entry PO fit with intention to quit in such a way that the indirect effect will be stronger for those individuals who perceived the source of recruitment information as being more credible.

Moreover, when a person cannot trust the source of information, the perception about the realism of information is also affected. For instance, impartiality is one of the attributes that can enhance the source's credibility. If individuals feel that a source of

information promotes the organisation, they cannot trust that source (Hoye & Lievens, 2007; Fisher, Ilgen & Hoyer, 1979). Hence, credibility is expected to interact with information realism. It is likely that credibility moderates the direct relationship between information realism and post-entry PO fit. In turn, credibility is expected to moderate the indirect relationships of information realism with employment outcomes, mediated by post-entry PO fit. The indirect effect will be stronger for those who perceived the source of recruitment information as being more credible.

**H10c:** Credibility of the source moderates the indirect relationship of information realism via post-entry PO fit with organisational commitment in such a way that the indirect effect will be stronger for those individuals who perceived the source of recruitment information as being more credible.

**H11c:** Credibility of the source moderates the indirect relationship of information realism via subjective PO fit with job satisfaction in such a manner that the indirect effect will be stronger for those individuals who perceived the source of recruitment information as being more credible.

**H12c:** Credibility of the source moderates the indirect relationship of information realism via post-entry PO fit with intention to quit in such a way that the indirect effect will be stronger for those individuals who perceived the source of recruitment information as being more credible.

#### ***2.4.3.3 The role played by years of previous work experience***

The indirect relationships between recruitment information richness and realism with employment outcomes, mediated by PO fit, are likely to be stronger for those who had more years of previous work experience. The previous work experience provides two

types of knowledge for individuals—the consequences of not fitting with an organisation's values and self-knowledge (Feldman & Arnold, 1978; Carr et al., 2006; Zedeck & Oleno, 1975). This knowledge helps people know what organisation characteristics are essential for their working life. The knowledge about consequences of not fitting gives awareness about an organisation's ideal values, and the self-knowledge helps an individual to know his/her values. Hence, previous experiences help individuals better interpret or evaluate the information obtained throughout recruitment communication.

For example, a person may receive rich and realistic information about the values of an organisation but not have attention to it. One reason someone might neglect recruitment information about values is that he/she is not aware of the consequences of not fitting with an organisation's value after hiring, or he/she does not know his/her preference of values. However, Zedeck and Oleno's (1975) study does not support the proposition that veterans use the knowledge acquired by previous work experience to interpret recruitment information. The findings of Backhaus (2003), Carr et al. (2006) and Feldman and Arnold (1978) showed that the importance of fit for employees with more years of experience is higher than for employees with fewer years of experience because they are likely to have experienced outcomes of working for an organisation that did not fit with their values. When someone can connect to a subject of information, his/her perception about the richness of information obtained differs from a person who cannot relate to it.

Based on the channel expansion theory, the experiences that build knowledge can be considered moderators for information richness effects. People with more years of prior experience better interpret information obtained during recruitment than those

with no experience or few years of experience. In other words, the previous work experience is considered an additional flow of knowledge that assists individuals to understand the information received during a communication better. Therefore, years of previous work experience strengthen the relationship of information richness with post-entry PO fit and, in turn, moderate its indirect relationships with employment outcomes. To my knowledge, no study has examined the moderating role of years of previous work experience in the relationship between information richness and post-entry PO fit.

**H13c:** Years of previous work experience moderates the indirect relationship of information richness via post-entry PO fit with organisational commitment in such a way that the indirect effect will be stronger for those individuals with more years of previous work experience.

**H14c:** Years of previous work experience moderates the indirect relationship of information richness via post-entry PO fit with job satisfaction in such a manner that the indirect effect will be stronger for those individuals with more years of previous work experience.

**H15c:** Years of previous work experience moderates the indirect relationship of information richness via post-entry PO fit on intention to quit in such a way that the indirect effect will be stronger for those individuals with more years of previous work experience.

As argued above, previous work experience can be considered a 'knowledge-building experience' that affects individuals' evaluation of recruitment information. People with more experience may be more capable of identifying whether a piece of information is realistic or not than people with fewer years of work experience. In other words, years

of previous work experience affect individuals' evaluation of the realism of recruitment information by providing knowledge that originates from experience. For example, people with no experience are mostly too optimistic about an organisation and likely to interpret negative information as positive. People with more years of work experience, on the other hand, are likely to be more able to evaluate the realism of recruitment information and to emphasise negative information during decision-making as they potentially experienced working with poor fit organisations and would attempt to avoid repeating that experience (Meglino, Ravlin & DeNisi, 2000; Meglino & Ravlin, 1998). Therefore, I hypothesised that the relationship between recruitment information realism and employment outcomes would be stronger for those with more previous work experience.

**H16c:** Years of previous work experience moderates the indirect relationship of information realism via post-entry PO fit with organisational commitment in such a way that the indirect effect will be stronger for those individuals with more years of previous work experience.

**H17c:** Years of previous work experience moderates the indirect relationship of information realism via post-entry PO fit with job satisfaction in such a manner that the indirect effect will be stronger for those individuals with more years of previous work experience.

**H18c:** Years of previous work experience moderates the indirect relationship of perceived realism via post-entry PO fit with intention to quit in such a way that the indirect effect will be stronger for those individuals with more years of previous work experience.

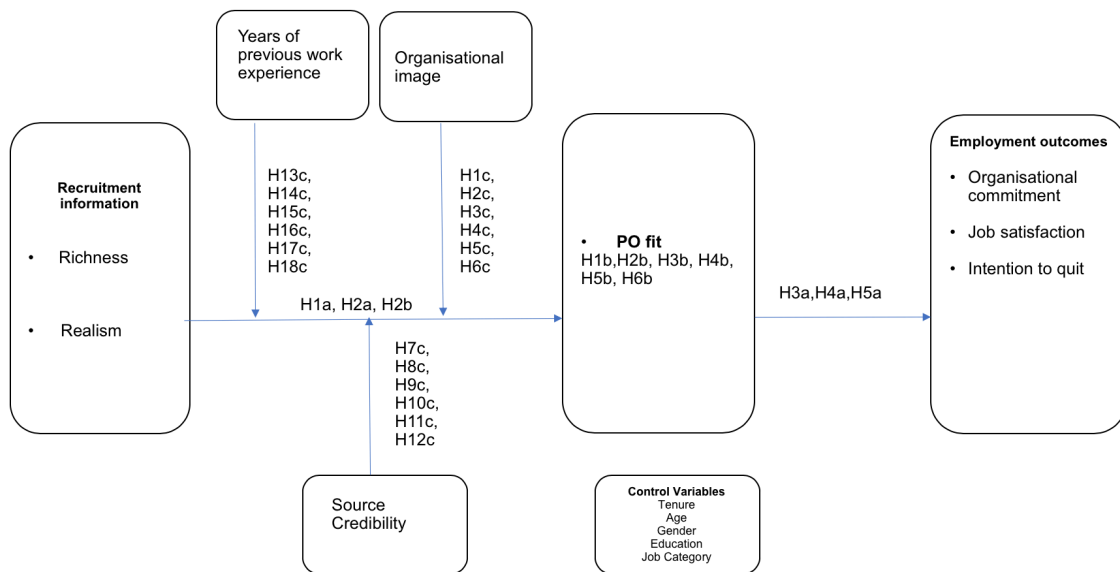


Figure 2.2: Theoretical Framework

## 2.5 Summary of chapter

In this chapter, I provided both theoretical and empirical reviews of the relationships between recruitment information richness and realism, post-entry PO fit and employment outcomes and explained the theoretical framework and hypotheses developed.

Firstly, I presented concepts of recruitment information richness and realism, post-entry PO fit, organisational commitment, job satisfaction, intention to quit, organisational image and source credibility. The ASA theory and findings of previous studies in the area of recruitment suggested that individuals are attracted to and join

organisations based on congruency of their attributes with the organisation's. In addition, an individual's decision at the time of recruitment is based on their perceptions rather than actual fit; hence, the subjective form of PO fit was selected over the objective form in the current study. I explained how the findings of previous studies, which mostly employed the 'similarity' approach in defining PO fit, suggested to me that I should select organisational value as the content of PO fit.

Secondly, I introduced two theories—attraction-selection-attrition (ASA) and channel expansion. Based on ASA, individuals are attracted to, selected by and remain with organisations that they perceive fit with their values. This study employed only two components of theory (i.e., attraction and attrition) because selection is related to the employer's side. The channel expansion theory explains that some experiences provide knowledge for individuals that affects that individual's perception about the richness of information obtained during a communication.

Thirdly, I analysed recruitment studies and found gaps in the existing literature. The gaps involving the relationships between the richness and realism of recruitment information with post-entry PO fit have not been examined. In general, the mediating role of post-entry PO fit in the relationship between pre-entry variables and post-entry outcomes has been studied by very few studies. More specifically, no research has investigated the mediating role of post-entry PO fit in the relationships between recruitment information richness and realism with employment outcomes (i.e., organisational commitment, job satisfaction and intention to quit). The moderating roles of organisational image, source credibility and years of previous work experience in the relationships between recruitment information richness and realism with post-entry PO fit have also yet to be studied.

Finally, I established a theoretical framework and developed several hypotheses to address the research gaps. First, it was hypothesised that there was a positive relationship between a) the richness and realism of recruitment information and post-entry PO fit; and between b) post-entry PO fit and employment outcome. Second, post-entry PO fit was hypothesised to play a mediating role in the relationships between richness and realism of recruitment information and employment outcomes (i.e., organisational commitment, job satisfaction, intention to quit). Third, the organisational image, source credibility and years of previous work experience were posited to moderate the relationships between richness and realism of recruitment information and post-entry PO fit.

The following chapter discusses the measurement of the constructs and the data collection and analysis methods used in this study.



## Chapter 3: Research Methodology and Design

### 3.1 Introduction

Chapter 2 developed and presented a conceptual framework that combines both mediators and moderators to elucidate the relationship between attributes of recruitment information (i.e., richness and realism) and employment outcomes (organisational commitment, job satisfaction and intention to quit). This chapter explains the methodological rationale and methods utilised in this research. It begins with a justification of the quantitative approach employed in the study and then covers the research design, sampling process, research instruments (i.e., measurements), fieldwork procedures and data analysis methods.

### 3.2 Philosophical Perspectives

The general argument concerning the methods whereby social science is studied pertains to the applicability of the data collection techniques employed in natural science. The typical approach taken by researchers in support of their logic for accepting or rejecting the use of natural science methods in social science involves referring to philosophical assumptions, including ontological and epistemological positions. The ontological perspective “concerns the very essence of the phenomena under investigation” (Burrell & Morgan, 1979, p.1). The epistemological position pertains to “how one might begin to understand the world and communicate this as knowledge to fellow human beings” (Burrell & Morgan, 1979, p.1). The two assumptions affect the approaches taken by researchers to collect and examine knowledge about the social phenomena they are studying (Burrell & Morgan, 1979). In other words, researchers’ ontological and epistemological positions affect their

choices of data collection and analysis methods. In addition, researchers' ontological perspectives affect their epistemological viewpoints and assumptions about methodology choices (Guba & Lincoln, 1989).

There are two general philosophical approaches to the study of social science subjects: objectivism and subjectivism. Those researchers who hold an objectivist position consider the social world to be similar to the natural one (i.e., external to human beings), ignoring the role played by meaning in the former, and endeavour to understand the entities involved in a social phenomenon and their relationships, and to find a method suited to their measurement (Burrell & Morgan, 1979). On the other hand, researchers who holds a subjectivist position see the social world as being very close and personal to individuals (Burrell & Morgan, 1979), and attempt to understand the ways in which individuals understand social phenomena. Objectivist researchers focus on what can be considered general laws among individuals, and subjectivist ones on what is particular to the individual. In general, objectivism is associated with and articulated by quantitative researchers, whereas subjectivism is the interest of qualitative ones.

This study sought to measure and analyse the relationships between the attributes of recruitment information richness and realism, post-entry PO fit, and employment outcomes through a quantitative method (i.e., a survey) established on the development and testing of hypotheses. The use of a quantitative survey method was based on my post-positivist view of the relationships under study. Below, I first illustrate post-positivism and how it led me to my choice of data collection method.

Post-positivism evolved from the positivist paradigm. Following authors such as Howell (2013) and Guba and Lincoln (1989), I will illustrate post-positivism by highlighting its commonalities and differences with positivism. Both the positivist and post-positivist positions hold that causes are likely to establish effects or outcomes (Creswell, 2014), and both are reductionist—i.e., they postulate that an idea can be reduced to small constituent parts. For example, research questions can be reduced to hypotheses, and hypotheses to variables (Creswell, 2014). Thus, those social scientists who hold either position tend to choose quantitative methods for their research (Guba & Lincoln, 1989).

Whereas the positivist philosophy turns to natural science and established facts or laws, post-positivism assumes probable facts or laws. Indeed, post-positivism considers theory as an “approximation of truth” (Howell, 2013; p.53), rather than as a rigid law written in stone. Furthermore, positivism views reality as being external to the researcher, whose mind is assumed not to play any role in its construction (Bryman, 2012). In other words, positivism adheres to the concept of the complete separation between a subject and its researcher. Post-positivism abandons such a clearly defined separation, pursuing instead partial objectivity and distance (Howell, 2013). To clarify, post-positivism does not view all realities as being the same; it distinguishes between those that are social products constructed by human beings and those that are natural phenomena (e.g., gravity and light) not produced by human beings but discovered by them (Howell, 2013). Theories and models are thus considered to belong to the former group—i.e., knowledge produced by human beings (Howell, 2013). Consistent with the post positivist perspective, I consider the theoretical framework developed in this

study to differ from the objects studied in natural science; I consider it to be not a rigid law, but no more than an “approximation of truth” (Howell, 2013, p.53).

I considered a survey to be an appropriate data collection method for my research as the perceptions, feelings, or opinions of individuals are the subjects of measurement (Fowler, 2013). As mentioned above, post-positivism does not believe in the perfect complete separation between researcher and subject, while holding the presence of some distance between them (Howell, 2013). Throughout the data collection and analysis stages, social science researchers such as myself thus do maintain some distance from the subject, although not as much as natural scientists. Although the questionnaire used in this study was developed by human beings (i.e., me and previous researchers), some distance was maintained from the subject during the data analysis stage. In brief, I consider my choice of a survey as the data collection method for my research to be consistent with my post-positivist viewpoint and to be appropriate for the subject under study.

### **3.3 Research design**

Research design is a structure that guides the implementation of research methods, including data collection and data analysis methods (Bhattacharjee, 2012; Creswell, 2014). Different research designs are categorised in various ways. One of the general categorisations is quantitative, qualitative and mixed-method designs. Each group can include multi sub designs. For example, the quantitative design includes experimental and survey. The qualitative design involves focus groups, ethnography, observation,

etc. Another way of classification is whether data collection occurs only at a point in time (i.e., cross-sectional) or over short or long periods (i.e., longitudinal). This study is based on quantitative, survey and cross-sectional designs. In the following paragraphs, the reasons for choosing this combination of designs are clarified.

Research design is generally developed based on the interest or level of comfort of a researcher with one design (e.g., time, budget and researcher background) and the nature of the subject of research (Bhattacharjee, 2012). The first stage of this study includes the selection of a quantitative design that suits my research capability and the nature of the study. To clarify, I have a Diploma in Mathematics and Physics, Bachelor of Information Technology Engineering and Master of Business Administration. Thus, quantitative methods match well with my skills and interests. Regarding the choice of research design relying on the nature of research phenomena, quantitative designs are more appropriate than qualitative ones when researchers integrate different theories to develop a new theory (Bhattacharjee, 2012). This study derives concepts from previous theories to develop a new conceptual framework (see Chapter 2 for further details). Therefore, a quantitative method was an appropriate choice for the current study. The use of quantitative methods for a social science phenomenon was also justified by my research philosophy as explained in section 3.2.

After selecting a quantitative design, the design related to data collection (i.e., survey) should be introduced. In general, there are two types of quantitative data collection designs: survey and experimental, including laboratory and fieldwork (Bhattacharjee, 2012; Creswell, 2014). A survey involves the use of questionnaires distributed among research participants. In an experimental design, a researcher manipulates one or more independent variables in artificial (i.e., laboratory experiments) or field (i.e., field

experiments) settings. Participants are randomly assigned to different treatment levels, and the results of the treatments on outcomes are observed (Bhattacharjee, 2012). As aforementioned, a survey is utilised when the perceptions, feelings or opinions of individuals are the subjects of measurement. In contrast, experimental designs are employed when the effect of a treatment on an outcome is the subject (Fowler, 2013). Because this study focused on the relationships between different perceptions and feelings of individuals from recruitment time to post-hire (see Chapter 2 for more details), the survey design was considered more appropriate. The online survey was administered through Qualtrics, an online survey platform. Its link was placed in Prolific, an online participant recruitment service (see section 3.4.1 for more details about Prolific).

Although the longitudinal design would be ideal, I had to adopt cross-sectional design because I could not gain access to individuals in the recruitment stage in the originally targeted organisation, the National Health Service (NHS), due to the Covid-19 pandemic (please see section 3.6 for details about the fieldwork process). Due to the unsuccessful attempt and time pressure, I had to change my targeted research population and use a survey platform (i.e., Prolific) to collect data. Although the survey platform could facilitate a longitudinal study, time was insufficient to conduct such study. More specifically, a considerable amount of time dedicated to data collection was in vain due to the interruption caused by the pandemic in the first fieldwork. If this study was based on a longitudinal design, predictor variables (i.e., recruitment information richness and realism) would have to be measured when individuals were at the recruitment stage. Furthermore, mediator and outcome variables (i.e., PO fit and

employment outcomes) would have to be measured some months after they had entered organisations.

Although the longitudinal design was preferable to the cross-sectional design for my study because of its higher internal validity, the external validities of both designs are at the same level (Bhattacharjee, 2012). Bhattacharjee (2012) defined internal and external validities as two critical attributes of a research design. Internal validity checks whether the causality between the dependant and independent variables, inferred by observations, is trustworthy. In other words, it tests whether the observed change in a dependant variable is undoubtedly caused by a change in a hypothesised independent variable and not by an irrelevant variable outside of the research context. Internal validity requires three conditions: 1) the effect occurs only if its cause happens, 2) the cause must happen prior to the effect, and 3) there should not be any explanation for the effect rather than the cause. In a longitudinal design, cause (i.e., independent variable) and effect (i.e., dependant variable) are measured twice so that the cause precedes effect. However, in a cross-sectional design, both are measured at the same time. Thus, the second condition of internal validity is missed in the cross-sectional design. It would be probable that the hypothesised effect might have influenced the hypothesised cause rather than the opposite (Bhattacharjee, 2012).

External validity refers to the generalisability of findings from the sample to the population. A longitudinal design is free from recall bias, which is more likely to occur in a cross-sectional design. For example, in this study, I asked about past perceptions, which makes the study prone to recall bias. However, I tested mediator relationships that are particularly sensitive to recall bias for people with the tenure of less than two years to ensure that this bias does not exist (see section 4.3.3.2).

### **3.4 Sampling**

This study's target population was changed from staff members of two trusts of the UK's NHS to UK employees in three IT job categories (software, information system and data processing), scientific or technical services, and education (college, university, adult education). The population change was due to unexpected termination of collaboration of the trusts after a year of communication with them and interruptions during fieldwork. According to one of the trusts, the disruptions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, which was followed by a national lockdown approximately two weeks after the approval letter from the Health Research Authority (HRA) was issued, had limited their ability to resume their collaboration with me. To collect data from the NHS, I was required to gain approval from the HRA and the research and development departments of each sample trust. Prior to receiving approval from the HRA, I had to obtain approval from the research and development department of the Royal Holloway University of London. In total, it took six months to gain approval from the HRA. During the time, I had sent many documents related to data collection requirements (e.g., sample size, occupational groups, method of survey distribution and study's timeframe) several times to different departments of each trust (both directly and indirectly through HRA).

Furthermore, not only were documents sent to them before the pandemic but also during it. Each trust was expected to assess the requirements of the study and their capabilities at different points of time. However, they informed me that they were no longer able to take part in my research at a very short notice. Although they expressed their interest in collaborating with me in this study during our contacts, they suddenly terminated the study by refusing to circulate the survey among employees and not



responding to my emails. It is noteworthy that email was the only means of contact during the national lockdown because the staff members were asked to work remotely from home. Although the difficult situation of the NHS during the still-ongoing Covid-19 pandemic is understandable, the unclear communication of the two trusts over a year and their very late announcement about their incapability is disappointing. Details about the process of first fieldwork and interruptions that affected the study are described in section 3.6.

Therefore, the Covid-19 pandemic and unclear communication of the two NHS trusts meant that I had to change the population of the study two months before the planned data collection deadline. Because the pandemic affected all organisations in the UK, it was very likely that the same problem with the NHS could occur with other organisations. Two months was also insufficient to communicate with another organisation and finalise data collection. Therefore, I employed an online research participant recruitment service (i.e., Prolific) to help me with data collection. In the following, I explain this service in detail.

#### **3.4.1 Prolific**

Prolific is a platform for online subject recruitment developed data collection services for academic researchers (Palan & Schitter, 2018). It is supported by Isis Innovation, University of Oxford. Thousands of researchers are registered with Prolific. The participant pool of Prolific is people resident in OECD countries except for Turkey, Lithuania, Colombia and Costa Rica. Prolific also is available for South African participants. Prolific recruits participants through social media, posters and university campaigns or referrals from researchers or other participants. People register with Prolific are notified of eligible studies based on the criteria researchers set. For every

study posted, Prolific sends out emails to a random subset of all eligible participants. Participants also can see available studies for which they are eligible on the webpage of Prolific. Participants can be pre-screened based on the required criteria of each study.

A minimum fixed payment of £5 per hour is required to publish a survey and communicate with both researchers and participants when they register with the platform. Participants will be paid if the researcher accepts the submissions by participants. Rejection of a submission impacts the acceptance score of participants, and researchers can filter participants with a high rate of rejections. Participants can terminate a study by not completing it or indicating that they wish the researcher not to use their data. Thus, participating in a study in Prolific is entirely voluntary, and consent can be withdrawn at any time without any negative impact on participants' scores.

There are common concerns about using Prolific, which were addressed before its use. For example, how to ensure each participant has only one account in Prolific? Prolific employs several tracking mechanisms to prevent duplicate participant accounts: IP address detection and account verification through email and phone numbers. They also have regular checks on their participants to detect suspicious activity. Prolific does not let an account open a survey link twice to prevent multiple submissions by an account. I also enabled an option that places a cookie on participants' browsers in Qualtrics, preventing multiple submissions by one IP address.

There are alternative platforms such as MTurk and CrowdFlower to Prolific. The study by Peer et al. (2017) assessed these three platforms in terms of data quality, participant non-naivety, dishonest behaviour of participants and attention to

instructions given by a study. Data quality of the three platforms was compared by assessing internal reliability (i.e., Cronbach's alpha) of reliable and valid psychological scales used successfully before. The results demonstrated that Prolific had higher data quality than the two other platforms. Non-naivety is defined as the level of familiarity of participants with research materials, such as research questions. In general, non-naivety results in bias. Studies that recruit participants from platforms such as Prolific are more prone to bias caused by non-naivety. However, Peer et al. (2017) found that participants of Prolific and CrowdFlower are naiver and less dishonest compared to MTurk. The result regarding participants' attention demonstrated that the attention of participants of Prolific and MTurk to instructions given by a study was more than participants of Crowdflower. In general, the study by Peer et al. (2017) identified Prolific as a superior platform regarding data quality and the naivety of participants compared to two other platforms. In addition, MTurk and Crowdflower have not been designed for the scientific community but the business one (Palan & Schitter, 2018). In sum, Prolific seems to be the most appropriate online participant recruitment platform for academic researchers.

### **3.4.2 Target Population**

The target population of this study was employees resident only in the UK and working in three IT job categories (software, information system, data processing), scientific or technical services, and education (college, university, adult education). These occupational groups were selected because employees in these groups are knowledge workers. Such workers may be more willing to invest in recruitment processes and know their commitment and satisfaction. According to Prolific, the number of eligible individuals for this study was 2,851 out of 262,334 participants.

Most of the previous studies, such as Saks and Ashforth (2002), Reeve, Highhouse and Brooks (2006), Fraska and Edwards (2017), recruited undergraduate students who were in their final year. Recruiting students can facilitate longitudinal design, which seems a primary reason for most studies to recruit this group. However, I could not employ students in this study because students' previous work experience is generally limited, which makes the sample biased. This could be the case at least in this study, in which years of previous work experience is one of the variables. Hence, I insisted on recruiting employees rather than students in this study.

### **3.4.3 Sampling Technique**

The sampling technique on Prolific is convenience sampling. Such sampling is non-probability based and involves a sample being drawn from that part of the population simply available to the researcher. According to Bryman (2012), convenience sampling is more common than probability sampling in organisational studies. A convenience sampling strategy has some disadvantages, such as rapid-responder bias, selection bias (i.e., participants select to answer to your study based on reward or subject) and bias towards factors such as gender, age and education level. However, pre-screening and using techniques such as re-asking the pre-screening questions (e.g., enquiring about job category or country of residency) prevent biases. However, some sort of bias, such as selection bias, is common in most surveys. I checked each person's responses to pre-screening questions (i.e., questions about job category or country of residency) and the duration of responding to the survey. If any of the respondents did not meet the study criteria, I could have rejected their submission and recruited a new person.

The data collected for my research was from a sample of 504 individuals. The sample size was determined with the aims of achieving adequate statistical power and avoiding bias in the parameter estimates. When determining the sample size, I considered the type of model I planned to test as suggested by Wolf et al. (2013). As my study includes moderated mediation model, I considered how sample size can influence statistical power of such model. The power of moderated regression is affected by distributional property of the predictor and moderator variables. It is advised to utilise large sample size to achieve normal distributions (Shieh, 2009). On the other hand, findings of Sim, Kim and Suh (2022) showed that to achieve sufficient statistical power for one-level mediation models with two predictors that are analysed using bootstrapping analysis method (see section 3.7.4), a minimum sample size of 110 is required. Given the above recommendations and study budget, the sample size of 504 was selected.

### **3.5 Measurement**

Except for the recruitment information realism, all measures utilised in this study's questionnaire had been tested and validated by previous studies. I could not use the measure of recruitment information realism from previous studies due to the lack of research on this concept (see Chapter 2 for more details). The validity and reliability of the construct were checked carefully before the principal analyses. Items of all continuous variables measured were grounded on a seven-point Likert scale. The measured items are discussed below, and an assessment of their validity and reliability is presented in Chapter 4. A summary of measures, including full measures of each scale, is provided in Table 3.1.

### 3.5.1 Independent variables

**Recruitment Information, Richness (*richness*).** I followed Carlson and Zmud's (1999) approach to measure the richness of recruitment information, asking about individuals' perceptions of exposure to different dimensions of richness at the time of recruitment. I added one extra item in addition to Carlson and Zmud's items (1999). The additional item was generated based on my understanding of the concept through reviewing the literature of information richness (see Chapter 2). Whereas Carlson and Zmud (1999) only considered the criteria mentioned by Daft and Lengel (1986), I also noted the item of 'amount of information' from Baum and Kabst (2014). Therefore, the recruitment information richness was measured by seven items. One was based on the criteria (i.e., amount of information) defined by Baum and Kabst (2014) and the other four criteria (i.e., two-way communication, multiple cues, language variety and personal focus) by Daft and Lengel (1986). Among the items were: 'How much information about the current organisation did you gain at the time of recruitment?' and 'I had an opportunity for two-way communication (e.g., asking questions about the current organisation as my potential working environment and receiving answers) at the time of recruitment'. Following previous studies, the 'amount of information' item was measured on a seven-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (not much at all) to 7 (a great deal) and other items on a seven-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

**Recruitment Information, Realism (*realism*).** Two items measured the realism of recruitment information. The items were developed based on the construct's definition (see Chapter 2). The items were 'To what extent do you think the information given at the time of recruitment was realistic about your current organisation?' and 'To what

extent do you think the information given at the time of recruitment is close to what you are experiencing as an employee of the current organisation?'. The Likert scale ranging from 1 (the information was absolutely unrealistic) to 7 (the information was very realistic) was used for the former, and the Likert scale ranging from 1 (very far from what I am experiencing) to 7 (very close to what I am experiencing) was used for the latter. The reason for not using measures from previous studies is that those studies were implemented in the experimental design; they did not measure the recruitment information realism and examined only the effects of treatment of realism of information through laboratory or field experiments. The items used in the study were developed based on the definition of realism of information in the recruitment context. It is noteworthy to mention that I used more than one item to measure a construct to avoid low levels of content validity and issues during the data analysis stage (Churchill & Iacobucci, 2002).

### **3.5.2 Dependant variables**

***Organisational Commitment.*** The organisational commitment was measured by five items out of the eight items introduced by Allen and Meyer (1990). The items have been utilised widely by previous studies (e.g., Piasentin & Chapman, 2007; Saks & Ashforth, 2002; Greguras & Diefendorff, 2009). A sample item is 'I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with the current organisation'. Following previous studies, the Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) was used. To be consistent with the subject of this study, only affective organisational commitment was considered (see Chapter 2). The measurement items developed by Allen and Meyer (1990) was also based on the definition of affective organisational commitment.

**Job Satisfaction.** Job satisfaction was measured by three items from Brayfield and Rothe (1951). One example of its items is 'I feel fairly satisfied with my job'. The Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) was employed in line with previous studies. The items of Brayfield and Rothe (1951) were used to measure job satisfaction. Brayfield and Rothe (1951) consider job satisfaction as a feeling arising from cognitive judgment about a job rather than the cognitive judgment itself. Their assumption is congruent with this study's definition of job satisfaction (see Chapter 2). In other words, job satisfaction was considered as an 'attitude'.

Furthermore, Brayfield and Rothe (1951) formulated seven requirements as characteristics of an appropriate scale to measure job satisfaction. The requirements were: 1. The measurement tool measures overall job satisfaction rather than specific aspects of job satisfaction 2. It is applicable for various jobs 3. It is sensitive to variations in attitudes 4. It should be interesting, realistic and varied to motivate both employees and management to cooperate 5. It should be reliable 6. It should be valid 7. It should be brief and easily scored. In addition, previous studies such as Ambrose, Arnaud and Schminke (2007), Piasentin and Chapman (2007), whose definitions of job satisfaction matched with this study, also used the same items. In general, items developed by Brayfield and Rothe (1951) seemed reliable and valid scales that also fitted this study.

**Intention to Quit.** Intention to quit was measured by three items adapted from Collarelli (1984), which were used by studies such as Ashforth and Saks (1996), Oldham and Cumming (1996) and Saks and Ashforth (1997). The examples of items were 'If I have my own way, I will be working for the current organisation one year from now', and 'I am planning to search for a new job during the next 12 months'. Following



previous studies, the items were measured on a seven-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

### **3.5.3 Mediator**

**PO fit.** Items used to measure PO fit was adapted from Cable and DeRue (2002). Cable and DeRue (2002) defined the three items in line with the supplementary PO fit, the type of PO fit considered in this study. Among the items were 'The things that I value in life are very similar to the things that my organisation values' and 'My personal values match with the organisation's values'. Items were measured on a seven-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

### **3.5.4 Moderators**

**Organisational Image.** Following Cable and Yu (2006) and Allen, Mahto and Otondo (2007), the organisational image was measured by asking respondents about the description of their organisation based on an index of values. The value index utilised in this study was initially from Schwartz's (1992) model of universal value, but Cable and Yu (2006) adapted the model to be appropriate for organisational context. Schwartz's (1992) model could not be used in an organisational context because many of its items, such as 'spiritual life' or 'national security', were not related to work and organisation (Cable & Yu, 2006). Therefore, the nature of the original value index was changed from universal type to organisational type by Cable and Yu (2006).

The study asked respondents to rate the eight values of Cable and Yu (2006) in terms of their relevance to their current organisations' image that they had in mind at the time of hiring. The meaning of each value was also provided in the questionnaire. An example of values is 'Achievement-Oriented: Personal success through

demonstrating competence according to social standards (ambitious, successful, capable, influential)'. Items were measured on the seven-point Likert scale from 1 (completely irrelevant) to 7 (completely relevant).

**Source Credibility.** The credibility was measured by four of McCroskey and Young's (1981) items adapted by Allen, Scotter and Ottondo (2004). The items matched well with the dimension of credibility (i.e., trustworthiness) considered in this study. Among the items were 'The information was believable' and 'The information source seemed credible'. The seven-point Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) was employed.

**Years of Previous Work Experience.** Years of previous work experience was measured by asking, 'Please specify the total number of years you had worked prior to joining the current organisation?'. The work experience itself had importance for this study rather than the type of job (i.e., it did not matter whether the previous work experience was related to a different or same job with the current job). Hence, it was highlighted in the questionnaire that 'It includes working in any organisation and any job'. The items were measured on 'none', 'less than two years', 'between two and six years' and 'more than six years'. Prior studies, such as Carr et al. (2006), used self-reported measures, but scales would provide a more evident viewpoint about results.

### **3.5.5 Control variables**

The tenure of each employee affects his/her perception of PO fit. To clarify, new employees may know less about the organisation's values than old employees, and their judgment about fitting with the organisation's values is, therefore, likely to differ. In addition, old employees had more opportunities to be socialised with the organisation than new employees. Hence, I considered tenure as the control variable of the study. The tenure was measured by 'How long have you been working in the

current organisation?’ on scales of ‘less than a year’, ‘between one and two years’, ‘between two and six years’ and ‘more than six years’. Also, consistent with Cable & Judge (1996), employees’ demographic attributes (age, gender, education) were included to control for the possibility that some groups were more likely to perceive that they fit. Controlling for age and education would also avoid sample bias. To prevent sample bias, I also controlled for job categories. Furthermore, when predicting employment outcomes (organisational commitment, job satisfaction, and intention to quit), I controlled for demographic variables (age, gender, education) as well as job categories to avoid sample bias.

*Table 3.1 Measurement Scale*

Construct		Number of items	Measurement items	Reference	Scales
<b>Independent variables</b>					
Recruitment information richness	<b>Amount of information</b>	1	1. How much information about the current organisation did you gain at the time of recruitment?	Adapted from Allen, Scotter and Otondo (2004), who cited Abernethy and Franke's (1996) ['How much employment or job opportunity related information did the website provide compared with what you expected to find?]	<b>7-Point Likert Scale:</b> 1=Not much at all 2=Little 3=Somewhat little 4=Average 5=Somewhat much 6=Much 7=A great deal
	<b>Two-way communication</b>	1	To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?  1. I had an opportunity for two-way communication (e.g., asking questions about the current organisation as my potential working	Adapted from Allen, Scotter and Otondo (2004) [The advertisement provided the opportunity for two-way communication]	<b>7-Point Likert Scale:</b> 1=Strongly disagree 2= Disagree 3=Somewhat disagree 4=Neither agree nor disagree 5=Somewhat agree

		environment and receiving answers) at the time of recruitment).		6=Agree 7=Strongly agree
<b>Multiple cues</b>	3	<p>To what extent do you agree with each of the following statements?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The information carried symbolic meaning in addition to the actual words.</li> <li>The information told a lot about the organisation's value beyond what was said</li> <li>The information was transferred to me through multiple cues such as body gestures, graphics, voice inflexion, physical presence.</li> </ol>	Allen, Scotter and Otondo (2004), who cited Trevino, Lengel and Daft (1987)	<b>7-Point Likert Scale:</b> 1=Strongly disagree 2= Disagree 3=Somewhat disagree 4=Neither agree nor disagree 5=Somewhat agree 6=Agree 7=Strongly agree
<b>Language variety</b>	1	<p>To what extent do you agree with the statement?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The information was transferred to me using various languages, such as spoken language, written and numerical language.</li> </ol>	Based on the definition of language variety stated by Daft and Lengel (1986)	<b>7-Point Likert Scale:</b> 1=Strongly disagree 2= Disagree 3=Somewhat disagree 4=Neither agree nor disagree 5=Somewhat agree 6=Agree 7=Strongly agree
<b>Personal focus</b>	1	<p>To what extent do you agree with the statement?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The information was targeted at me.</li> </ol>	Allen, Scotter and Otondo (2004)	<b>7- Point Likert Scale:</b> 1=Strongly disagree 2= Disagree 3=Somewhat disagree 4=Neither agree nor disagree 5=Somewhat agree 6=Agree 7=Strongly agree

Recruitment information realism		2	<p>1. To what extent do you think the information given at the time of recruitment about the current organisation was <u>realistic</u> (<b>Please note:</b> the information is about the current organisation, <b>not</b> the job)?</p> <p>2. To what extent do you think the information given at the time of recruitment about the current organisation was close to what you are experiencing as an employee of the current organisation? (<b>Please note:</b> the information is about the current organisation, <b>not</b> about the job)</p>	N/A	<p><b>7-Point Likert Scale:</b>  1=The information was absolutely unrealistic.  2=The information was unrealistic.  3=The information was slightly unrealistic  4=The information was neutral.  5=The information was slightly realistic.  6=The information was realistic.  7=The information was very realistic.</p> <p><b>7-Point Likert Scale:</b>  1=Very far from what I am experiencing  2=Far from what I am experiencing  3=Somewhat far from what I am experiencing  4=Neutral  5=Somewhat close to what I am experiencing  6=Close to what I am experiencing  7=Very close to what I am experiencing</p>
<b>Mediator variable</b>					
Post-entry PO fit					
PO fit		3	To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?	Cable and DeRude (2002)	<p><b>7-Point Likert Scale:</b>  1=Strongly disagree  2= Disagree  3=Somewhat disagree</p>

			<p>1. The things that I value in life are very similar to the current organisation's values.</p> <p>2. My personal values match with the current organisation's values.</p> <p>3. The current organisation's values provide a good fit with the things that I value in life.</p>		<p>4=Neither agree nor disagree 5=Somewhat agree 6=Agree 7=Strongly agree</p>
<b>Dependent variables</b>					
Employment outcomes					
Organisational commitment		5	<p>To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?</p> <p>1. I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with the current organisation.</p> <p>2. I enjoy discussing the current organisation with people outside it.</p> <p>3. I feel 'emotionally attached' to the current organisation</p> <p>4. The current organisation has a great deal of personal meaning for me.</p> <p>5. I feels a strong sense of belonging to the current organisation.</p>	Five items out of eight items of Allen and Meyer (1990)	<p><b>7-Point Likert scale:</b> 1=Strongly disagree 2= Disagree 3=Somewhat disagree 4=Neither agree nor disagree 5=Somewhat agree 6=Agree 7=Strongly agree</p>
Job satisfaction		3	<p>To what extent do you agree or disagree with each statement?</p> <p>1. I feel fairly satisfied with my job</p> <p>2. I find real enjoyment in my work</p>	Brayfield and Rothe (1951)	<p><b>7-Point Likert Scale</b> 1=Strongly disagree 2= Disagree 3=Somewhat disagree 4=Neither agree nor disagree</p>

			3. I feel enthusiastic about my work		5=Somewhat agree 6=Agree 7=Strongly agree
Intention to quit		3	<p>To what extent do you agree or disagree with each statement?</p> <p>1. If I have my own way, I will be working for the current organisation one year from now</p> <p>2. I am planning to search for a new job during the next 12 months</p> <p>3. I frequently think about quitting my job</p>	Collarelli (1984)	<p><b>7-Point Likert scale:</b> 1=Strongly disagree 2= Disagree 3=Somewhat disagree 4=Neither agree nor disagree 5=Somewhat agree 6=Agree 7=Strongly agree</p>
<b>Moderator variables</b>					
Organisational image		8	<p>Rate each item (current organisation's values) regarding its relevance for describing the image of the current organisation for you before joining.</p> <p>1. Achievement-Oriented: Personal success through demonstrating competence according to social standards (ambitious, successful, capable, influential)</p> <p>2. Powerful: social status and prestige, control or dominance over people and resources</p> <p>3. Stimulating: excitement, novelty and challenge in life</p> <p>4. Traditional: respect, commitment and acceptance of the customs and ideas that one's culture or religion provides</p> <p>5. Self-directed: independent thought and action--choosing, creating, exploring</p>	Cable and Yu (2006)	<p><b>7-Point Likert scale:</b> 1=Completely irrelevant 2=Mostly irrelevant 3= Somewhat irrelevant 4=Neither relevant nor irrelevant 5= Somewhat relevant 6=Mostly relevant 7=Completely relevant</p>

			<p>6. Universal: understanding, appreciation, tolerance and protection for the welfare of all people and nature</p> <p>7. Benevolent: preserving and enhancing the welfare of those with whom one is in frequent personal contact</p> <p>8. Conforming: Complying with directions and conforming to rules</p>		
Years of previous work experience		1	1. Please specify the number of years you had worked <u>before</u> joining the current organisation <b>(Including working in any organisation and any job)?</b>	N/A	<p>1. None</p> <p>2. Less than two years</p> <p>3. Between two and six years</p> <p>4. More than six years</p>
Source Credibility		4	<p>To what extent do you agree or disagree with each statement?</p> <p>1. The information was believable.</p> <p>2. The information source seemed credible.</p> <p>3. I am not sure if I trust this information. <b>(R)</b></p> <p>4. I am uncertain whether this information is legitimate. <b>(R)</b></p>	Allen, Scotter and Otondo (2004), who adopted from McCroskey and Young (1981)	<p><b>7-Point Likert Scale:</b></p> <p>1=Strongly disagree</p> <p>2= Disagree</p> <p>3=Somewhat disagree</p> <p>4=Neither agree nor disagree</p> <p>5=Somewhat agree</p> <p>6=Agree</p> <p>7=Strongly agree</p>
<b>Control variables</b>					
Tenure		1	How long have you been with the current organisation?	N/A	<p>1. Less than a year</p> <p>2. Between one and two years</p> <p>3. Between two and six years</p> <p>4. More than six years</p>
Age		1	How old are you?	N/A	<p>1. 18-24</p> <p>2. 25-34</p> <p>3. 35-44</p>



					4. 45-54 5. 55-64 6. 65 above
Gender		1	What is your gender?	N/A	1. Male 2. Female 3. Others 4. Prefer not to say
Education		1	What is your highest education degree?	N/A	1.High school 2.Bachelore degree(s) 3.Master degree(s) 4.PhD 5.Other
Job category		1	Please specify your industry.	N/A	1.Software 2.Information services and data processing 3.College, University, and adult education 4.Other

## **3.6 Fieldwork**

This study's first fieldwork was seriously interrupted due to three main issues—the Covid-19 pandemic, a lack of communication among different organisations of the NHS (which was the first target population of this study) and poor communication of trusts with me. These problems interrupted the study for approximately nine months. In the following sections, I first explain the procedures of the unsuccessful fieldwork, which is followed by the procedures of the second fieldwork conducted successfully via the online participant recruitment platform (i.e., Prolific).

### **3.6.1 First fieldwork**

#### ***3.6.1.1 Access strategy: stage 1***

Considering the procedure specified by the UK's HRA, researchers who aim to collect data from any organisation of the NHS are obliged to apply for HRA approval at the first step. This approval includes completing forms and providing documents as requested by the HRA at any time of the approval process. One of the assessment criteria that HRA has stated is defined as the level of capacity and capability assessment expected of participating organisations (NHS Health Research Authority, 2020a). It was also stated that 'NHS organisations in England participating in research should assess, range and confirm their capacity and capability to undertake a study, as appropriate to the nature of the study and their specific roles and responsibilities within it' (NHS Health Research Authority, 2020a). Therefore, it was expected that the trusts should assess their capacities and capabilities at the early stage of the approval process for this study.

### **3.6.1.2 Access strategy: stage 2**

The second stage of the approval process was more related to dealing with the sponsor of the study. During the HRA process, an HRA officer requested further documents, including organisation information documents (OIDs), which were agreements between the sponsor of the study (i.e., Royal Holloway University of London) and participating NHS organisations, and a certificate of insurance from the sponsor. The research and development department of the Royal Holloway University of London was the point of contact with the sponsor, who requested a data management plan document and all documents that had been sent to the HRA. Obtaining a sponsorship certificate from the university took approximately two months because all documents were rechecked by the sponsor and modified several times. Finally, the HRA approval letter was issued after about six months, dated 11 March 2020, roughly two weeks before the first UK national lockdown.

### **3.6.1.3 Access strategy: stage 3**

The third stage was receiving approval from the research and development department of each participating NHS organisation. To do so, I got in touch with each trust's research and development department and submitted the approval letter and all previously submitted documents. Below, I explain the process for each trust separately.

*Trust 1.* To obtain approval from trust 1 (the name of the trust is not disclosed due to confidential reason), I sent the HRA approval letter to them. Before doing so, I had contacted the trust a year before and registered the study with them. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the study was suspended following the National Institute of Health

Research (NIHR) order that all non-covid related studies should be suspended until returning to a normal situation. In total, the study was suspended for six months. After six months of suspension, I contacted the trust again, and they issued an approval letter to me.

I then contacted the director of the human resource management department of the trust and explained the subject of the study and requirements of the fieldwork, requesting for collaboration. In response, the director indicated that the study matched well with trust interests, and they were happy to collaborate with me. After that, details of the fieldwork, including the timeframe and distribution method (i.e., random circulation of emails including the link of the survey among their staff members), were discussed in an online meeting with the deputy of the human resource department. I also prepared a participant recruitment advertisement for the trust newsletter to attract employees to the study. Therefore, with the assistance of the deputy of the trust, the pilot study was conducted, and 30 responses were obtained. In addition, I received five pieces of feedback about the questionnaire.

*Trust 2.* Similar to trust 1, I also contacted trust 2 to submit the HRA approval letter. However, the process in trust 2 was different from trust 1. They requested me to introduce someone working in the trust as a 'local collaborator'. Such a collaborator is a person undertaking specific research procedures (NHS Health Research Authority, 2020b). I contacted some people from the human resource management departments of the trust through LinkedIn to find a local collaborator. However, because they did not respond through LinkedIn, I attempted to find their work emails. Finally, I was able to find a person who agreed to be registered as a local collaborator of the study. Although non-covid related studies were suspended in this trust, the research and

development department proceeded with the approval process. However, I experienced substantial negligence on the part of the research and development department of the trust due to a lack of communication between the old and new staff members assigned to review the studies and the different departments responsible for reviewing the study. After six months of struggling with the research and development department of the trust (e.g., informal complaints to the deputy of the research and development department, setting up meetings with the heads of responsible departments), an approval letter was issued.

#### **3.6.1.4 Response rate**

*Trust 1.* The pilot study was followed by a primary data collection phase. After the trust deputy agreed with me on how to begin the procedure, I prepared an email including the link to the online survey and asked her to distribute it randomly among staff members. I noticed that the response rate was 0% over the first weeks after the trust distributed the email. The issue was reported to the trust. They replied that the link to the survey with the participant recruitment advertisement had been published in the newsletter of the trust. Despite being persistent, requesting the distribution of the link through emails of staff members, they kept stating that they put the link on the newsletter, and a 0% response rate could be due to the pandemic. They had no intention to distribute the survey via emails. However, it was clear that this 0% response rate was not related to participants' willingness to answer but was associated with the survey's distribution approach. In other words, the study's survey was placed in a blind spot, which did not attract the attention of even one staff member, but the trust justified that the zero response rate was due to the second wave of the pandemic and refused to circulate the link and advertisement through emails.

*Trust 2.* After receiving the approval letter, I contacted the local collaborator and asked her to help me distribute the survey. She mentioned that due to the second wave of the pandemic, I had to wait for one month. After that period, I contacted her several times, and she never replied to me.

### **3.6.2 Second fieldwork**

Loss of time caused by the unsuccessful first fieldwork explained in section 3.6.1 forced me to change the target population from staff members of the two trusts of the NHS to employees resident in the UK and working in three job categories of IT (software, information system, data processing), scientific or technical services, and education (college, university, adult education).

I used the online research participant recruitment platform of Prolific to gain access to the targeted population. The access strategy to the participants was straightforward, and I was only asked to decide the number of required participants, pre-screening criteria (country of residency and job category) and hourly amount of pay. After the number of responses reached 500, I checked the responses. I paid those I was happy with, whose answers to the pre-screening questions matched the pre-screen criteria previously selected. Moreover, their duration of responding to the survey should be close to what I expected (3–5 minutes). The response rate in platforms such as Prolific is typically reported as an accumulated response (absolute number) according to time (minutes) from the onset of the survey (Peer et al., 2017). The response rate of this study was 504 responses in 87 minutes (i.e., 2 hours and 27 minutes).

### 3.6.3 Pilot study

A pilot study was conducted after the questionnaire design was completed. The aim of performing a pilot study before primary data collection is to ensure that questionnaire items measure what we are seeking (Bryman, 2012). In other words, this approach assists the researcher to identify whether or not any changes are required in the questionnaire. It is crucial to conduct a pilot study to check the validity and prevent mistakes, such as using unreliable items or wording faults, from occurring in the main study (Bell, Bryman & Harley, 2018).

Therefore, before running the main study, I collected data from 41 respondents. I asked for feedback on the questionnaire from three individuals who matched the criteria defined in Prolific. The questionnaire's wording was fine-tuned based upon the individual's feedback. Further explanations for some questions were added using parentheses. For example, in question7, I added further explanation regarding the image of an organisation within the parentheses (see Appendix). The accumulated data were analysed using the SPSS package. I assessed the internal consistency of the scale via Cronbach's alpha. The results showed that there was high reliability across all items, and there was no need for any item deletion. Table 3.2 summarises the results of the reliability tests.

Table 3.2 Cronbach's alpha of the pilot study

<b>Scales in the study</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>N of items</b>	<b>Cronbach's alpha</b>	<b>N of items deleted</b>
Recruitment information richness	41	7	0.86	none

Recruitment information realism	41	2	0.81	none
PO fit	41	3	0.96	none
Organisational commitment	41	5	0.86	none
Job satisfaction	41	3	0.94	none
Intention to quit	41	3	0.89	none
Organisational image	41	8	0.80	none
Source credibility	41	4	0.87	none



### **3.7 Data analysis Methods**

This study utilised structural equation modelling (SEM) due to the capability of SEM to examine various models. According to Hair et al. (2005), SEM allows researchers 'simultaneously examining a series of interrelated dependence relationships among measured variables' (p.70). Therefore, a researcher would be capable of complex testing of relationships such as moderation and mediation, which also exist in this study. Therefore, a match between the capability of the SEM method in meeting the required tests of this study resulted in selecting SEM over other analysis methods such as ANOVA and regression. Obviously, my previous knowledge and training courses on SEM during my PhD also influenced my choice of analysis method.

I will discuss SEM and its two-step analysis approach in the following sections, which consist of a series of measurement models by using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to test the reliability and validity of scales, as well as a structural model using fit indices to evaluate how well the specified model accords with the data. I will also discuss the mediation and moderation methods used for this research within the context of SEM.

#### **3.7.1 Structural equation modelling**

According to MacCallum and Austin (2000), 'SEM is a technique used for specifying and estimating models of linear relationships among variables' (p. 202). In contrast to other regression analysis techniques that explain multiple relationships in a single equation, SEM aims to test a set of relationships representing multiple equations (Hair et al., 2005). Researchers widely use SEM to confirm or discontinue theoretical models. SEM has been

selected due to its unique features. Firstly, SEM is a confirmatory technique; it is utilised to test a theory developed based on prior knowledge or findings in a hypothesis about possible relationships among variables (Tabachnik & Fidell, 2007). Hence, it suited well with the aim of data analysis of this study. To clarify, SEM was used to test the conceptual framework developed after reviewing the literature (see Chapter 2).

Secondly, SEM is a combination of factor analysis and multiple regression analysis. In other words, it allows a researcher to 'simultaneously examine a series of interrelated dependence relationships among measured variables and latent constructs as well as between several latent constructs' (Hair et al., 2005, p.70). To clarify, SEM depicts all of the relationships among constructs, similar to a series of multiple regression equations, which are unobservable (also referred to as latent factors) and measured by observable variables (also termed indicators), similar to factor analysis (Hair et al., 2005).

Thirdly, SEM enables researchers to test sophisticated relationships, such as mediation and moderation, which are an essential part of the analysis in this study (Schumacker & Lomax, 2004). To clarify, in contrast to other statistical analysis methods, SEM allows for examining multiple relationships in which one variable can be dependent in one equation and independent in another. For instance, in this study, the PO fit is a dependant variable in the equation with recruitment information richness and realism and an independent variable in the equation with employment outcomes (i.e., organisational commitment, job satisfaction, intention to quit) (Hair et al., 2005). SEM enabled me to test these two relationships simultaneously. In addition, interactive effects of variables also can be tested in SEM. In this study, the interactive effects of each moderator (i.e., organisational

image, credibility, years of previous work experience) and each independent variable (i.e., recruitment information richness, recruitment information realism) were tested through this capability of SEM. Fourthly, SEM takes measurement errors of each variable into account, whereas other methods assume that measurements occur without error.

### **3.7.2 Stages of Structural Equation Modelling**

According to Hair et al. (2005), SEM assesses how well the theory accords with reality as explained by data. The 'theory' refers to relationships among latent constructs defined by a researcher(s). A set of the observed variables defines each latent construct. There are two models in SEM: 1) a measurement model of the relationships between observed and latent variables and 2) a structural model of the relationships between latent variables. Measurement and structural models are explained in detail in section 3.7.3. To evaluate the theory (i.e., structural model) developed based on the data collected, Hair et al. (2005) defined six stages of the decision process based on SEM, which also was considered when conducting this study: defining individual constructs, developing the overall measurement model, designing a study to produce empirical results, assessing the measurement model validity, specifying the structural model and assessing structural model validity. Stages 1 and 2 were conducted during an earlier phase of the study when the literature was being reviewed. The third stage, which includes the research design and data collection process, was explained earlier in this chapter. The fourth, fifth and sixth stages were conducted as parts of the SEM analysis, as explained in section 3.7.3.

The foundation of a SEM analysis is measurement theory. Thus, it is essential to have a good measurement theory before proceeding with the analysis. The results of hypothesis

tests that involve relationships among constructs (i.e., structural model) would not be reliable and valid if the measurement model were constructed inadequately. An excellent theoretical definition of the construct is the starting point for selecting or designing measurement items for each construct. In addition to indicators, a researcher must select a measurement scale to complete the operationalisation of a construct. Two scenarios may occur at the item generation stage: 1) items and their scales are taken from prior research, and 2) new scales must be generated (Hair et al., 2005). In the former, the researcher attempts to select items and scale from previous studies that performed well. In the latter, items are developed by specifying the construct's domain and generating a sample of items via a literature review (Churchill, 1979).

The validity and reliability of items are assessed during the pilot study and later by assessing the validity of the measurement model. Researchers who wish to generate new items must justify why they did not use previous items. Due to the different research designs of the current study with previous works, there were no available items to measure recruitment information realism. To clarify, previous studies that measured recruitment information realism were implemented in experimental designs, not surveys. In an experimental design, participants are randomly assigned to different treatment levels, and the results of the treatments on outcomes are observed. For example, one group of participants receive realistic information and the other group unrealistic information. Hence, researchers of previous studies on recruitment information realism did not generate any items to measure recruitment information realism. Therefore, I developed items of recruitment information realism through reviewing the literature (see Chapter 2). The reliability of the construct was assessed once during the pilot study and

later during the confirmatory factor analysis. The validity was also tested via the confirmatory factor analysis.

After developing the constructs' items, each construct included in the model should be identified by assigning their items. The equations represent this identification and assignments. At this stage, factor loadings of items are measured, and the construct validities and reliabilities are tested. This stage was conducted through the confirmatory factor analysis phase of SEM explained in section 3.7.3.1. At the confirmatory factor analysis stage, researchers also evaluate whether the measurement model fits the data. At the final stage, relationships between constructs based on theory developed at earlier stages of study (i.e., literature review) are specified (i.e., the hypotheses are developed).

### **3.7.3 Two-step structural equation modelling**

I conducted a two-stage SEM model to test this study's theoretical model. The two-stage approach in which the measurement and structural model are analysed separately was presented by Anderson and Gerbing (1988). This two-stage strategy is in contrast with the one-stage approach in which the analysis of measurement and structural models are performed simultaneously. In a two-stage approach, these analyses are conducted separately. It makes more sense to consider the measurement model as a baseline, be assured about constructs' validity and reliability, and then test relationships between its constructs (i.e., structural model). Therefore, this study firstly analysed the measurement model and then the structural model.

### **3.7.3.1 The measurement model**

A measurement model consists of relations of the observed variables to their assumed latent variables (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). In other words, the measurement model links items to constructs (Wang & Wang, 2019). For example, recruitment information realism includes two items (item 1: To what extent do you think the information given at the time of recruitment about the current organisation was realistic?; item 2: To what extent do you think the information given at the time of recruitment about the current organisation was close to what you are experiencing as an employee of the current organisation?). In the measurement model, the relationships between two recruitment information realism items and the latent variable of recruitment information realism are modelled. In the same measurement model, relationships between another observed variable, and their assigned latent constructs are modelled. The purpose of analysing the measurement model is to assess how well the observed variables 'serve as a measurement instrument for the underlying latent variables or factors' (Wang & Wang, 2019, p.4). The confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) technique (i.e., the first stage of SEM) is conducted to perform this assessment. CFA tests the proposed relationships between observed measures and the underlying latent variables against the data. If the indicators set that measure a construct are weakly related to it, they cannot be appropriate measurement tools. CFA tests the validity and reliability of measurement instruments and whether the proposed model fits the data based on relations between indicators and underlying construct. Thus, multiple tests are conducted, including fit indices, reliability and construct validity (i.e., convergent and discriminant validity) (Hair et al., 2005).

Fit measures:

The next stage evaluated the fit indices of the final model. Brown (2015) classified different fit indexes into three main categories: absolute fit, fit adjusting for model parsimony and comparative or incremental fit. However, he also clearly stated that this categorisation is not perfect, and some indices (such as Tucker-Lewis's) may fall into more than one category. He also advised researchers to consider one index from each group to evaluate the model's fit. I followed his advice regarding considering one index from each group.

Absolute fit indices assess the goodness of fit based on whether  $S$  is congruent with  $\Sigma$  (i.e., the proposed model ( $S$ ) is compared against congruency with the observed model ( $\Sigma$ )). Chi-Square ( $\chi^2$ ) and the standardised root mean square residual (SRMR) are two samples of this type. However, the  $\chi^2$  is highly sensitive to sample size. It likely rejects the model when the sample size is large (Wang & Wang, 2019). It is prone to type I errors (i.e., rejecting the correct hypothesis). Because this study's sample size is also significant ( $n= 504$ ), I considered the value of only the SRMR index to evaluate the absolute fit. In general, smaller values of SRMR show better fits. An SRMR value of less than 0.08 is considered a good fit (Hu & Bentler, 1999), and less than 0.10 is acceptable (Kline, 2015; Wang & Wang, 2019). The parsimony fit indices consider an additional factor; that is, the degree of freedom (df). The most popular index in this category is the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA). The RMSEA values are often interpreted as: 0= perfect fit; <0.05= close fit; 0.05–0.08= fair fit; 0.08–0.10= mediocre fit; and >0.10= poor fit (Brown, 2015; Hu & Bentler, 1999). Comparative fit indices compare a model with a nested baseline model, in which covariances among all indicators are set as zero. The

comparative fit index (CFI) and Tucker–Lewis's index (TLI) are two indices that fall into this category. For the approximate fit indices, the commonly accepted standards for CFI and TLI are greater than 0.90 (Hu & Bentler, 1999; Hair et al., 2005).

#### Reliability and Validity:

An essential issue in CFA is the reliability of a set of indicators defined to measure a construct. Reliability (also called scale reliability or construct reliability) is a 'measure of the degree to which a set of indicators of a latent construct is internally consistent based on how highly interrelated the indicators are with each other' (Hair et al., 2005, p.611). A total score of a latent variable is achieved by summing the measures of a set of underlying items. The total score is also referred to as the composite score. The internal consistency of indicators, or reliability of composite score, is assessed traditionally by the Cronbach alpha. However, it is better not to use Cronbach's alpha due to the possibility of violating the tau-equivalence assumption. If indicators are not tau-equivalence, which is often the case, Cronbach's alpha will underestimate or overestimate the reliability depending on the correlation of measurement errors (Wang & Wang, 2019). According to Brown (2015), Fornel and Larcker (1981) and Malhotra and Dash (2016), the scale reliability is measured by composite reliability (CR), which is the ratio of variation modelled by coefficients to the total variation modelled by coefficients and errors. CR indicates the shared amount of variance among observed variables that are used to measure a latent variable. The following formula calculates the CR:



$CR = \frac{[\text{squared of summation of standardised factor loadings}]}{[\text{squared of summation of standardised factor loadings}] + [\text{summation of error variances}]}$

The following formula calculates the error variance for each item:

$\text{Error Variance} = 1 - [\text{squared of standardised factor loading}]$

According to Malhotra and Dash (2016), the validity of a scale is defined as 'the extent to which differences in observed scale scores reflect true differences among objects on the characteristic being measured, rather than systematic or random error' (p.292). Two components of validity were checked in this study—content and construct. Content validity, also termed face validity, is a subjective evaluation of validity: how well items of a scale represent all dimensions of the scale. I was assured about it by using most of the previous studies' measures and checking the one developed based on its definition (i.e., recruitment information realism) by obtaining advice from an experienced researcher (i.e., my supervisor). Construct validity includes convergent and discriminant validities. Convergent validity checks whether items of a construct all measure one construct and that they are, therefore, highly correlated. Discriminant validity is used to ensure that items supposed to measure different constructs are not highly correlated. This strategy makes the questionnaire free from redundancy. Suppose all the standardised factor loadings of items are statistically significant and greater than 0.50, and the average variance extracted (AVE) for all constructs is above 0.50. In that case, the convergent validity of each construct is acceptable. However, Fornell and Larcker (1981) suggested that high CR values can also be considered to check convergent validity. They believed that AVE is a more conservative indicator than CR. Thus, if standardised factor loadings

of items are statistically significant and greater than 0.50, and CR is high, the convergent validity can be confirmed. The discriminant validity will be approved if the squared correlation between two factors is below the AVE of each corresponding factor (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). AVE is calculated using the following formulas:

$$AVE = \frac{[\text{summation of squared factor loadings}]}{[\text{summation of squared factor loadings}] + [\text{summation of error variances}]}$$

### **3.7.3.2 The structural model**

Once relationships between latent variables (i.e., constructs) and their items (i.e., factors) have been assessed in the measurement models, the potential relationships among latent variables are hypothesised and tested (Wang & Wang, 2019). A structural model is different from a conventional path analysis due to its latent variables (Wang & Wang, 2019). However, we may still have some observable variables in the structural model, such as 'years of previous work experience' in this study, but not all variables are observable.

## **3.7.4 Mediation and Moderation analyses**

### **3.7.4.1 Mediation analysis**

Hoyle (2012) defined a mediator as 'a third variable that intervenes in the relationship between an independent variable and a dependent variable' (p.418). A mediator transmits the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable'. A mediation model is an attempt to explain 'how' or 'why' two variables (i.e., predictor and outcome) are related

to each other, such as how the recruitment information richness would be related to employment outcomes in this study. The mediator variable accounts for the effect of the predictor on the outcome. Figure 3.1 below shows the mediation relationship.



Figure 3.1 Mediation Model

At least from the mid-1980s until very recently, the four-step method of Baron and Kenny (1986) has been employed to perform mediation tests. At the first step, ignoring M, the predictor X has a statistically significant non-zero effect on the outcome Y. This is known as the total effect of X on Y, often denoted as the ‘c’ path. Second, the predictor X should have a statistically significant non-zero effect on the mediator M; the effect is denoted as the ‘a’ path. Third, the mediator M needs to have a statistically significant non-zero effect on the outcome Y; the effect is denoted as the ‘b’ path. Finally, to show complete mediation, the effect of predictor X on outcome Y, when controlling for mediator M, needs not to be statistically significant; the path is denoted as the ‘c’ ‘ path.

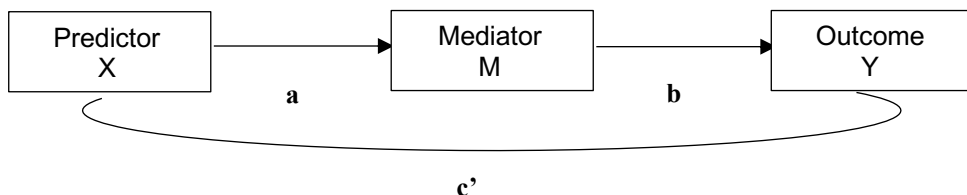


Figure 3.2 Mediation analysis

Although many studies have used the method of Baron and Kenny (1986), it has some flaws, and improved software made better alternative methods easier to implement. Using multiple hypothesis tests rather than a single one that is of interest (i.e., the path from X to Y via M) could result in an incorrect decision biased by the single test (Hayes, 2009). In addition, the first step in which the predictor needs to have a statistically significant non-zero effect on outcome is inaccurate. The mediation exists even if the total effect (i.e., 'c' path) is close to zero. The total effect (i.e., 'c') is equal to the sum of the indirect effect of X on Y via M, which is  $a*b$  and the direct effect of X on Y. The indirect and direct effects may have different signs, resulting in a total effect that is less than the indirect effect and close to zero. If we follow Baron and Kenny's (1986) approach, we reject the mediation model because the first step is rejected. In contrast, the 'c' may be close to zero only because direct and indirect effects have two signs.

In general, it is suggested to use a single test for the indirect effect rather than multiple tests. To clarify, the indirect effect of X on Y via M is the product of the path from X to M denoted as 'a' path and the path from M to Y denoted as 'b' path; that is,  $a*b$ . The indirect effect (i.e.,  $a*b$ ) represents the part of the predicted change in outcome Y, caused by a unit change in predictor X; that is, as a result of the effect of X on M, and M in turn affecting Y. Thus, it is tested for mediation whether  $a*b$  is significantly different from zero. Here, the total effect is decomposed into direct and indirect effects. The total effect of X on Y is equal to the sum of the indirect effect of X on Y via M,  $a*b$ , and the direct effect of X on Y, 'c'. The total effect of X on Y:

$$c = c' + a*b$$

Hence,

$$a*b = c - c'$$

The test of  $a*b$  (i.e., the indirect effect) is a test of the difference between the effect of X on Y before and after the mediator is considered. There are different approaches to determine whether the  $a*b$  is significantly different from zero. One of the important ones is the Sobel test, in which the standard error of  $a*b$  is calculated, and a z-test is performed.

$$z = (a*b) / SE(a*b)$$

$$SE(a*b) = \text{SQRT}(b^2 * SE(a)^2 + a^2 * SE(b)^2)$$

The assumption of the Sobel test for calculating the formula of the SE is that the sampling distribution of the  $a*b$  is normal (Hayes, 2009). However, the distribution of  $a*b$  can be asymmetric. Given the possibility of false assumptions, the estimated SE and Z-test can be unreliable. In addition, when there are alternative approaches that the normality of the sample is not their assumption and are more potent than Sobel, we should not use a method with potential flaws (Hayes, 2009).

Therefore, this study employed another approach to examine indirect effects through a single test: a bootstrapped estimate of the confidence interval (CI) for the indirect effect  $a*b$ . The Mplus software utilised in this study for SEM analysis enabled me to use bootstrapping, a computer-based method of resampling, representing the sampling distribution of the  $a*b$ . For each sample produced throughout the resampling process, 'a' and 'b' are estimated in the resampled data set, and the results of path coefficients are

recorded. The process is repeated at least 1000 times. I chose 10000 times in this study. Therefore, when the resampling process was completed, the analyst had 10000 estimates of the  $a*b$ . If 0 lies outside the selected CI (typically 95% confidence interval) for  $a*b$ , it can be assumed that the indirect effect is possible, and there is evidence that M mediates the relationship between X and Y.

#### **3.7.4.2 Moderation analysis**

The term 'moderation' refers to models in which the strength and (or) sign of the relationship between a predictor variable (X) and the outcome variable (Y) is varied by levels of moderator variables (W). Whereas the mediation test answers the questions of 'why' or 'how' a predictor variable affects an outcome variable, moderation helps us to explain 'when' or 'for whom' an effect exists. For example, in this study, I was interested in testing whether the regression coefficient indicating the strength of the relationship between recruitment information richness and PO fit differs significantly across individuals with different years of previous work experience. In other words, 'does the relationship between information richness and PO fit differ between quantity (i.e., years) of previous work experience?'. A moderation effect of variable W on the relationship between predictor variable X and outcome variable Y enabled through making an 'interaction' or 'product' variable between X and W (i.e.,  $X*W$ ) is considered in the model as an additional predictor. Mplus enables researchers to test any combination of predictors (i.e., categorical or continuous) and (or) moderators and simultaneously incorporates latent variables through the 'XWITH' syntax code.

Mplus:

All analyses, except for the descriptive statistics, were conducted in Mplus v.8.5. Mplus is a syntax-based software package. Compared to AMOS competitors, Mplus is less efficient at reading data but vastly more efficient and flexible in fitting models. Similar to any software, there are pros and cons with this package. Mplus offers several advantages: testing a theoretical framework with multiple paths simultaneously, calculating indirect paths (such as mediation and moderation tests) and fitting models with combinations of observed and latent variables. However, it has inadequate plotting facilities, and it can be bought only as a single user.

### **3.8 Summary of chapter**

This chapter has presented the methodological approach employed in this study. It explained the reasons for choosing the quantitative data collection methods. Regarding the fieldwork, the study was significantly interrupted due to the Covid-19 pandemic and an ineffective communication among different organisations of the NHS. Therefore, the source of data collection was changed from staff members of two NHS trusts to UK employees registered with the online survey platform—Prolific. The outcome of the pilot study was also presented in this chapter. The last part of the chapter explained the data analysis methods. As an appropriate statistical method for this study, SEM was performed using Mplus statistical software. SEM includes the ‘measurement model’ and the ‘structural model’. Finally, the chapter discussed mediation and moderation analyses within the structural model. In addition, the bootstrapping technique and its preference to

Baron and Kenny's four steps and Sobel's test were discussed. The next chapter provides the results of the descriptive and SEM analysis.



## **Chapter 4: Data analysis and results**

### **4.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, I present the procedure for analysing the quantitative data and the results of SEM which was used to test this study's hypotheses. This chapter is organised into two parts: descriptive (Part I) and SEM (Part II) analyses. The descriptive analysis was conducted using SPSS, whereas Mplus v.8.5 was employed for the SEM analysis.

Part I of this chapter presents descriptive results with the aims of 1) describing characteristics of variables and representing the profile of respondents; 2) checking variables for any violation of the assumptions underlying the SEM technique. Part II of the chapter covers the 1) data preparation for the analysis in Mplus; 2) results of the measurement model (i.e., the results obtained by conducting CFA as well as reliability and validity tests); and 3) the results of the structural model (i.e., the results obtained by testing the hypotheses, including direct relationships, mediation and moderated mediation models). The final two steps of part II represent the vital part of this study's results.

### **4.2 Data analysis Part I – descriptive analysis**

Descriptive statistics are used for different reasons: 1) describing the characteristics of the continuous variables by providing the mean and standard deviation and characteristics of the categorical variables by frequency. Descriptive statistics also describe the profile of respondents by providing frequencies of demographic variables; 2) checking for any violation of assumptions of statistical techniques that will be used for the principal analysis of studies; 3) addressing specific research questions (Pallant, 2001).

Because descriptive statistics did not help to answer this study’s research questions, the descriptive analysis was only employed for the first two purposes mentioned above. In the following sections, I present descriptive statistics for the SEM technique's variables and samples and testing assumptions.

#### 4.2.1 Descriptive statistics of each construct

There were eight constructs measured by continuous variables (i.e., recruitment information richness, recruitment information realism, PO fit, organisational commitment, job satisfaction, intention to quit, organisational image, source credibility) and one construct measured by a categorical variable (i.e., years of previous work experience) in this study. This section provides the descriptive statistics of each construct: the mean and standard deviation of continuous variables and the frequency of the categorical construct. Before conducting descriptive statistics, items with reverse codes were recoded. In this work, only one item of the construct of ‘intention to quit’ was required to be recoded.

#### Recruitment information richness (richness)

Table 4.1 Recruitment information richness: descriptive statistics (n=504)

Variables (items) with statements	Mean	SD
rich1: How much information about the values of the current organisation did you gain at the time of recruitment?	4.72	1.45
rich2: I had an opportunity for two-way communication (e.g., asking questions about the current organisation as my potential working environment and receiving answers) at the time of recruitment).	5.31	1.56
rich3: The information carried symbolic meaning in addition to the actual words.	4.28	1.42
rich4: The information said a lot about the organisation's value beyond what I knew.	4.68	1.45

rich5: The information was transferred through multiple cues such as body gestures, graphics, voice inflexion, physical presence.	4.15	1.60
rich6: The information was transferred to me using various languages, such as natural language and numerical language.	4.41	1.50
rich7: The information was targeted to me personally.	3.74	1.69

## Recruitment information realism (realism)

Table 4.2 Recruitment information realism: descriptive statistics (n=504)

Variables (items) with statements	Mean	SD
realism1: To what extent do you think the information given at the time of recruitment about your current organisation was realistic?	5.40	1.35
realism2: To what extent was the information given at the time of recruitment about your current organisation close to what you are experiencing now?	5.19	1.40

## PO fit

Table 4.3 PO fit: descriptive statistics (n=504)

Variables (items) with statements	Mean	SD
pofit1: The things that I value in life are very similar to the values of my organisation.	4.83	1.41
pofit2: My personal values match with the values of my organisation.	4.88	1.42
pofit3: The values of my organisation provide a good fit with the things that I value in life.	5.03	1.34

## Organisational commitment

Table 4.4 Organisational commitment: descriptive statistics (n=504)

Variables (items) with statements	Mean	SD
orgcmt1: I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with my current organisation.	4.51	1.89
orgcmt2: I enjoy discussing my current organisation with people outside it.	4.89	1.60
orgcmt3: I feel 'emotionally attached' to my current organisation.	4.45	1.79
orgcmt4: My current organisation has a great deal of personal meaning for me.	4.35	1.79
orgcmt5: I feel a strong sense of belonging to my current organisation.	4.52	1.80

## Job satisfaction

Table 4.5 Job satisfaction: descriptive statistics (n=504)

Variables (items) with statements	Mean	SD
jobstf1: I feel fairly satisfied with my job	5.17	1.48
jobstf2: I find real enjoyment in my work	4.97	1.53
jobstf3: I feel enthusiastic about my work	4.95	1.60

## Intention to quit

Table 4.6 Intention to quit: descriptive statistics (n=504)

Variables (items) with statements	Mean	SD
intquitR: If I have my own, I will be working for the current organisation one year from now	2.87	1.82
intquit2: I am planning to search for a new job during the next 12 months	3.66	2.02
intquit3: I am frequently thinking of quitting my job	3.16	1.88

## Organisational image

*Table 4.7 Organisational image : descriptive statistics (n=504)*

Variables (items) with statements	Mean	SD
image1: Achievement-oriented	5.10	1.26
image2: Powerful	4.03	1.65
image3: Stimulating	5.16	1.30
image4: Traditional	4.48	1.55
image5: Self-directed	5.17	1.23
image6: Universal	5.39	1.32
image7: Benevolent	5.03	1.36
image8: Conforming	4.68	1.36

## Source credibility

*Table 4.8 Source credibility: descriptive statistics (n=504)*

Variables (items) with statements	Mean	SD
crdb1: The information was believable.	5.64	0.93
crdb2: The information source seemed credible.	5.75	0.95
crdb3: I am sure I trust this information.	5.51	1.07

## Years of previous work experience

*Table 4.9 Years of previous work experience: descriptive statistics (n=504)*

Categories	Frequency	Per cent	Valid per cent	Cumulative per cent
Less than a year	60	11.90	11.90	11.90
Between one and two years	66	13.10	13.10	25.00
Between two and six years	101	20.00	20.00	45.00
More than six years	277	55.00	55.00	100.00

#### **4.2.2 Profile of respondents**

Following advice from Pallant (2001), 'in studies involving human subjects, it is useful to collect information on the number of people in the sample, the number and percentage of males and females in the sample, the range and mean of ages, education level, and any other relevant background information' (p.51). This study's survey was carried out on 504 employees from three industries in the UK: IT (software, information systems, data processing), scientific or technical services, and education (college, university, adult education), as explained in section 3.4. As shown in Table 4.2, the percentage of women took part in the study was 56.9%, men 42.7%, and other gender identities 0.4%. The age range of 25–34 years formed the largest group (40.1%) among all the age groups, followed by 35–44 (24.2%), 45–54 (16.3%), 18–24 (12.7%), 55–64 (6.2%) and 65 years above (0.6%). The results also indicated that the largest group of participants with qualifications held bachelor's degrees, with an overall percentage of 43.5%. Other participants had master's degrees (28.0%), PhD (12.7%), high school graduates (13.9%) and 2% other degrees. Regarding the industries, nearly half of the participants were working in the education industry (i.e., college, university and adult education) with an overall percentage of 47.8%. In contrast, other participants were in scientific or technical service (18.7%), software industry (14.9%), information services and data processing (11.9%) and other industries (6.7%). It is observed that a high proportion of the sample studied was from the education industry (47.8%) and the 25–34 age group (40.1%). Section 3.4.3 (Chapter 3) mentioned that bias towards specific groups is a common problem with the Prolific platform. A reason that my survey was answered by more people

from the education industry may be due to the fact that Prolific is a platform dedicated to online research which is linked to a key responsibility of the people working in the industry. A reason for more people from the 25–34 age group completing my survey is likely related to the Prolific recruitment tools: social media, posters and campaigns in universities and referrals from researchers and participants. Being aware of the unequal representation from different sampled groups, demographic attributes such as age, gender, education as well as job categories were considered as control variables in this study (see the chapter 4). Regarding tenure, 12.9% of participants had worked in their current organisations for less than a year, 21.6% between one and two years, 35.3% between two and six years and 30.2% for more than six years. 84.1% of the participants were in full-time positions and 15.9% in part-time positions.

Table 4.10 Respondent profiles (n=504)

Demographic variables	Category	Frequency	Per cent
Gender	Female	287	56.90
	Male	215	42.70
	Others	2	0.40
Age (years)	18–24	64	12.70
	25–34	202	40.10
	35–44	122	24.20
	45–54	82	16.30
	55–64	31	6.20
	65 and above	3	0.60
Educational level	High-school graduate	70	13.90
	Bachelor’s degree(s)	219	43.50
	Master’s degree (s)	141	28.00
	PhD	64	12.70
	Other	10	2.00
Industry	Software	75	14.90
	Information services and data processing	60	11.90
		241	47.80

	College, university and adult education	94	18.70
	Scientific or technical services	34	6.70
	Other		
Tenure	Less than a year	65	12.90
	Between one and two years	109	21.60
	Between two and six years	178	35.30
	More than six years	152	30.20
Employment status	Full-time	424	84.10
	Part-time	80	15.90

#### 4.2.3 SEM Assumptions

Because SEM is a general form of regression analysis, similar assumptions are required to be considered. The assumptions differ depending on the estimation methods and type of regression: maximum likelihood and linear regression in this study (Hoyle, 2012). Thus, four main issues were considered: missing data, normality of distribution, outliers and collinearity. The missing data were treated before converting the data file to the free format. All the rows with a -99 value, the default value set in the Qualtric for missing data, were filtered in the Excel file. There were only five incomplete responses; respondents answered only demographic questions. According to Hair et al. (2005), when missing data represent less than 10 per cent of observations, and they are random, we can delete them. Hence, their records were deleted before any analysis.



The distribution of data is pictured by assessing skewness and kurtosis. The skewness describes symmetry about the mean. In symmetric distribution, deviations from the mean on each side are the same. However, in a skewed distribution, the deviation from the mean in one tail is larger than the other. In other words, one tail is heavier than the other. The kurtosis shows the peakedness or flatness of the curve. According to Hair et al. (2010), data are considered normal if the skewness value falls between -1 and +1 and the kurtosis of a normal distribution is zero. When the kurtosis value is positive, it shows that the data are more peaked than the normal distribution.

Moreover, when the kurtosis is negative, the distribution is flatter than a normal distribution. In general, if the skewness value is equal to or more than 2 and the kurtosis value is equal to or greater than 7, the construct is not normally distributed. It cannot be used to perform a CFA (West, 1995). Table 4.11 provides the values of skewness and kurtosis for each continuous variable for 504 cases. As shown in the table, the skewness values for all constructs are between -2 and +2, and the kurtosis values lie between -7 and +7. Therefore, the degrees of normality of distributions of all variables were acceptable. The outliers were also checked using boxplots, and I found no outlier that could affect the results of the current study.

Collinearity exists when there is a linear dependence among two or more independent variables. If collinearity occurs, two independent variables measure the same construct (Hoyle, 2014). Lack of collinearity among predictor variables is desirable because we can show that some third construct does not affect the relationship between the predictor and outcome (Hair et al., 2010). Collinearity is checked by measuring the correlation between independent variables. When the correlation is close to unity, there is a possibility of

collinearity. The correlation between richness and realism was checked using Mplus; the results showed a moderate correlation ( $\beta = 0.46$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). There are also tests of the variance inflation factor (VIF) or tolerance values to check collinearity. However, these two statistical tests are used for situations in which a correlation between independent variables is very close to unity (Hoyle, 2014), which was not the case in this study.

Table 4.11 Skewness and kurtosis: descriptive statistics (n=504)

Constructs/ statements	Variables (items) with	Skew	Kurtosis
<b>Recruitment information richness</b>			
rich1: How much information about your current organisation did you gain at the time of recruitment?		-0.35	-0.28
rich2: I had an opportunity for two-way communication (e.g., asking questions about the current organisation as my potential working environment and receiving answers) at the time of recruitment).		-1.11	0.46
rich3: The information carried symbolic meaning in addition to the actual words.		-0.26	-0.33
rich4: The information said a lot about the organisation's value beyond what I knew.		-0.43	-0.40
rich5: The information was transferred through multiple cues, such as body gestures, graphics, voice inflexion, physical presence.		-0.19	-0.84
rich6: The information was transferred to me using various languages, such as natural, written and numerical languages.		-0.42	-0.53
rich7: The information was targeted to me personally.		0.05	-0.97
<b>Recruitment information realism</b>			
realism1: To what extent do you think the information given at the time of recruitment about your current organisation was realistic?		-1.15	0.76
realism2: To what extent was the information given at the time of recruitment about your current organisation close to what you are experiencing now?		-0.96	0.46
<b>PO Fit</b>			
pofit1: The things that I value in life are very similar to the values of my organisation.		-0.79	0.15
pofit2: My personal values match with the values of my organisation.		-0.87	0.36
pofit3: The values of my organisation provide a good fit with the things that I value in life.		-0.86	0.43
<b>Organisational commitment</b>			
orgcmt1: I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with the current organisation.		-0.49	-0.97
orgcmt2: I enjoy discussing my current organisation with people outside it.		-0.80	-0.13
orgcmt3: I feel 'emotionally attached' to my current organisation.		-0.49	-0.74

orgcmt4: My current organisation has a great deal of personal meaning for me.	-0.36	-0.91
orgcmt5: I feel a strong sense of belonging to my current organisation.	-0.59	-0.71
<b>Job Satisfaction</b>		
jobstf1: I feel fairly satisfied with my job	-1.10	0.73
jobstf2: I find real enjoyment in my work	-0.89	0.16
jobstf3: I feel enthusiastic about my work	-0.87	0.04
<b>Intention to quit</b>		
intquitR: If I have my own, I will be working for the current organisation one year from now	0.86	-0.27
intquit2: I am planning to search for a new job during the next 12 months	0.17	-1.28
intquit3: I am frequently thinking about quitting my job	0.57	-0.79
<b>Organisational image</b>		
image1: achievement-oriented	-0.86	0.80
image2: Powerful	-0.12	-0.93
image3: Stimulating	-0.94	0.86
image4: Traditional	-0.46	-0.53
image5: Self-directed	-0.78	0.84
image6: Universal	-1.13	1.43
image7: Benevolent	-0.90	0.72
image8: Conforming	-0.53	-0.04
<b>Source credibility</b>		
crdb1: The information was believable.	-1.11	2.70
crdb2: The information source seemed credible.	-0.94	1.47
crdb3: I am sure I trust this information.	-0.71	0.34
crdb4: I am certain that this information is legitimate.	-0.88	0.87

### 4.3 Data analysis Part II – structural equation modelling

This section presents the findings of the SEM analysis. First, I explain the data preparation required for the Mplus software to analyse the data. As explained in Chapter 3, the SEM

analysis includes two stages: measurement model and structural model. Therefore, the SEM results are presented in two sections: part one is the result of the measurement model, and part two is the result of the structural model.

#### **4.3.1 Data preparation for Mplus**

The data file, which was imported from the Qualtrics platform in an SPSS file format, was converted to an appropriate format for Mplus, which was 'free format' text. To clarify, the data file in Mplus must be in a text file format—either 'free' or 'fixed'. Because the fixed format file requires a more complicated command to be imported into Mplus than the free format, the data file was converted to a free format. Three issues must be attended to before the data file conversion—missing data, reverse coded items and categorical variables. It was explained in sections 4.2.3 and 4.2.1 how missing data and reverse coded items were treated. In terms of categorical variables such as gender, industry and education, dummy variables must be created for them. Although the categorical variables were used only in the description analysis, as explained in section 4.2, and not in the SEM analysis, dummy variables could be included in the SEM data analysis.

#### **4.3.2 Stage 1: the measurement model**

The following section provides the results for the first stage of SEM analysis in Mplus after the preprocessing step (data preparation and conversion) discussed in the previous paragraph (section 4.3.1)

#### 4.3.2.1 Confirmatory Factor Analysis

The measurement model's fit metrics, reliability and validity tests are products of CFA. The model fit metrics, reliability and validity tests were explained in the previous chapter (Chapter 3). The initial measurement model of this study was a simple model in which all indicators are reflective and each loaded on only one factor. The results of the initial model showed that the model was fitted to the data well—SRMR =0.05, RMSEA =0.06, CFI =0.90, TLI =0.89. Tables 4.12 and 4.13 present the initial model results, including standardised factor loadings, AVE, CR and correlation of factors with each other. As Table 4.12 shows, all scales had a CR above 0.70, confirming that all constructs of the initial measurement model were reliable. Table 4.12 shows that convergent validity concerns exist in the measurement model. To be more specific, all factors had AVEs greater than 0.50, and the factor loadings of items of each were significantly greater than 0.50 except for two constructs of richness and organisational image with AVEs of 0.30. The organisational image had three items with significant low factor loadings (i.e., images 2, 4 and 8), but factor loadings of richness items were significantly higher than 0.50. The squared correlation between every two factors was below the AVE of each corresponding factor. Therefore, the discriminant validity was confirmed. The following section explains the modification of the initial measurement model.

Table 4.12 Factor loadings, AVE and CR of the initial measurement model

Scale	Items	Loadings	P-value	AVE	CR
richness	rich1	0.56	0.01	<u>0.30</u>	0.80
	rich2	0.62	0.01		

	rich3	0.65	0.01		
	rich4	0.66	0.01		
	rich5	0.67	0.01		
	rich6	0.54	0.01		
	rich7	0.53	0.01		
Realism	realism1	0.75	0.01	0.67	0.80
	realism2	0.87	0.01		
PO fit	pofit1	0.94	0.01	0.89	0.96
	pofit2	0.96	0.01		
	pofit3	0.93	0.01		
Organisational commitment	orgcmt1	0.69	0.01	0.72	0.92
	orgcmt2	0.78	0.01		
	orgcmt3	0.91	0.01		
	orgcmt4	0.92	0.01		
	orgcmt5	0.92	0.01		
Job satisfaction	jobstf1	0.85	0.01	0.84	0.94
	jobstf2	0.92	0.01		
	jobstf3	0.96	0.01		
Intention to quit	intquitR	0.80	0.01	0.61	0.82
	intquit2	0.71	0.01		
	intquit3	0.83	0.01		
	jobstf2	0.92	0.01		
	jobstf3	0.96	0.01		
Organisational image	image1	0.54	0.01	<u>0.30</u>	0.77
	image2	0.35	0.01		
	image3	0.64	0.01		
	image4	0.44	0.01		
	image5	0.59	0.01		
	image6	0.73	0.01		
	image7	0.67	0.01		
	image8	0.33	0.01		
Source credibility	crdb1	0.83	0.01	0.73	0.91
	crdb2	0.88	0.01		
	crdb3	0.86	0.01		
	crdb4	0.84	0.01		

**Note: Richness=recruitment information richness, Realism=recruitment information realism, CR is composite reliability, AVE is average variance extracted**

Table 4.13 Correlation of factors with each other; Initial measurement model.

Scale	Richness	Realism	PO Fit	Organisational commitment	Job satisfaction	Intention To quit	Organisational image	Source credibility
Richness	1							
Realism	0.46*	1						
PO Fit	0.50*	0.59*	1					
Organisational commitment	0.54*	0.48*	0.70*	1				
Job satisfaction	0.42*	0.55*	0.60*	0.76*	1			
Intention To quit	-0.39*	-0.57*	-0.56*	-0.71*	-0.78*	1		
Organisational image	0.52*	0.41*	0.54*	0.50*	0.50*	-0.46*	1	
Source credibility	0.45*	0.47*	0.43*	0.39*	0.37*	-0.39*	0.54*	1

Note: \*P<0.05, Richness=recruitment information richness, Realism=recruitment information realism

#### Model modification:

Generally, speaking, items with low factor loadings (factor loading < 0.50) were eliminated from the analysis to modify the AVEs. Having said that, all items of richness showed significant high values of factor loadings (factorloading > 0.50) even though their AVEs were low; that is, the richness was potentially convergent. As explained in the previous chapter (section 3.7.3.1), Fornell and Larcker (1981) suggested judging convergent validity based on CR rather than AVE. The CR of richness (0.80) showed high reliability, and it was concluded, therefore, that although the AVE of richness was low, the construct was convergent due to a high CR. Therefore, richness items were kept, and only ‘image2’, ‘image4’, and ‘image8’ were deleted to improve the convergent validity of the image. The AVE of the image was improved from 0.30 to 0.63 after deleting three items. Tables 4.14



and 4.15 depict the standardised factor loadings, AVE and CR of constructs of the improved measurement model. The results show that the validity and reliability of all constructs were confirmed in the reduced final model. Furthermore, the resulting model showed an improved fit: SRMR =0.04, RMSEA =0.07, CFI =0.97, TLI =0.97.

Table 4.14 Factor loadings, AVE and CR; final measurement model

Scale	Items	Loadings	P-value	AVE	CR
richness	richness1	0.67	0.01	0.63	0.82
	richness2	0.71	0.01		
	richness3	0.62	0.01		
	richness4	0.70	0.01		
	richness5	0.64	0.01		
	richness6	0.54	0.01		
	richness7	0.57	0.01		
Realism	realism1	0.80	0.01	0.85	0.84
	realism2	0.91	0.01		
PO fit	pofit1	0.94	0.01	0.89	0.96
	pofit2	0.96	0.01		
	pofit3	0.93	0.01		
Organisational commitment	orgcmt1	0.69	0.01	0.72	0.92
	orgcmt2	0.78	0.01		
	orgcmt3	0.91	0.01		
	orgcmt4	0.92	0.01		
	orgcmt5	0.92	0.01		
Intention to quit	intquitR	0.80	0.01	0.61	0.82
	intquit2	0.71	0.01		
	intquit3	0.83	0.01		
Job satisfaction	jobstf1	0.85	0.01	0.84	0.83
	jobstf2	0.92	0.01		
	jobstf3	0.96	0.01		

Organisational image	image1	0.51	0.01	0.63	0.83
	image3	0.65	0.01		
	image5	0.62	0.01		
	image6	0.72	0.01		
	image7	0.67	0.01		
Source credibility	crdb1	0.83	0.01	0.73	0.91
	crdb2	0.88	0.01		
	crdb3	0.86	0.01		
	crdb4	0.80	0.01		

**Note:** Richness=recruitment information richness, Realism=recruitment information realism, CR is composite reliability, AVE is average variance extracted

Table 4.15 Correlation of factors with each other; final measurement model.

Scale	Richness	Realism	PO fit	Organisational commitment	Job satisfaction	Intention to quit	Organisational image	Source credibility
Richness	1							
Realism	0.55*	1						
PO fit	0.54*	0.60*	1					
Organisational commitment	0.54*	0.49*	0.71*	1				
Job satisfaction	0.46*	0.57*	0.60*	0.76*	1			
Intention to quit	-0.41*	-0.57*	-0.57*	-0.77*	-0.80*	1		
Organisational image	0.53*	0.46*	0.56*	0.50*	0.54*	-0.44*	1	
Source credibility	0.52*	0.53*	0.45*	0.40*	0.44*	-0.42*	0.57*	1

**Note:** \*P<0.05, Richness=recruitment information richness, Realism=recruitment information realism

Table 4.16 Model fit statistics; measurement model.

Metric	Observed value: initial model	Observed value: final model	Idea threshold	Reference
<b>SRMR</b>	0.051	0.04	< 0.08	Hu and Bentler (1999), Hair et al. (2005)
<b>RMSEA</b>	0.065	0.07	Between 0.05 and 0.08	
<b>CFI</b>	0.90	0.97	>0.90	
<b>TLI</b>	0.89	0.97	>0.90	

#### **4.3.2.2 Stage 2: the structural model**

As stated in Chapter 3, a structural equation model consists of both measurement and structural models. The measurement model evaluates correlations between factors (latent variables) and their indicators (observed variables). The measurement model was modified by eliminating items with low factor loadings to have a valid, reliable model that matched the data well. In the structural model, hypotheses related to relationships among latent variables are assessed. Therefore, in this section, the final measurement model was used to test hypotheses H1a to H18c. This study's structural model was a moderated mediation type. There are different types of moderated mediation models. The moderator may affect different relationships; for example, it could affect the relationship between independent and mediator or (and) between mediator and dependant variables. In this study, moderators affected the relationship between the independent variable and the mediator. The moderated mediation model explains whether different values of the moderator change the strength or direction of the indirect relationships of independent

variables with outcome variables. The section below provides a summary of the structural model:

- Recruitment information richness and recruitment information realism (latent variables) were treated as predictors (X1, X2).
- PO fit (latent variable) was treated as a mediator (M).
- Organisational commitment, job satisfaction and intention to quit (latent variables) were treated as outcomes (Y1, Y2, Y3).
- Organisational image (latent variable), source credibility (latent variable) and length of years of previous work experience (observed single item) were treated as moderators (W, Z, V).

#### ***4.3.2.3 Overall Hypothesised Model Fit***

Before the hypotheses testing, it is common to assess the overall fit of the structural model to validate whether the model sufficiently represents a complete set of suggested relationships. The entire model consists of direct relationships, mediation and moderation relationships. The fit indexes, however, were not generated for moderation relationships by Mplus v.8.5. To clarify this issue further, there is a limitation in the calculation of the numerical integration used for the estimation of the fit for moderation relationships.

The structural model includes latent interaction (i.e., latent interaction was used for the moderation relationships), and the type of analysis required to be set to estimate parameters requires numerical integrations, making the estimation difficult. Hence, the fit indices presented in the following belong to the model, including direct and mediation relationships. The direct relationships include relationships between attributes of recruitment information and PO fit and relationships between PO fit and employment

outcomes. The results demonstrated that the model fitted the data well: SRMR =0.07, RMSEA =0.08, CFI =0.95, TLI =0.95.

Table 4.17 Model fit statistics; structural model excluding moderation relationships

Metric	Observed value	Idea threshold
<b>SRMR</b>	0.07	< 0.08
<b>RMSEA</b>	0.08	Between 0.05 and 0.08
<b>CFI</b>	0.95	>0.90
<b>TLI</b>	0.95	>0.90

#### **4.3.2.4 Results of hypothesis testing**

This section uses the constructs and their indicators as shown in the final measurement model in section 4.3.2.1 to perform SEM, test hypotheses H1a to H5a, H1b to H6b and H1c to H18c and answer the research questions in this present study. As aforementioned, the structural model of this study consists of direct, indirect and moderation relationships. H1a to H5a were hypotheses related to direct relationships between the attributes of recruitment information and PO fit and relationships of PO fit with employment outcomes. H1b to H6b were indirect relationships between the attributes of recruitment information through PO fit with employment outcomes. H1c to H18c indicated moderated mediation relationships in which organisational image, credibility and years of previous work experience were moderators of indirect relationships of attributes of recruitment information through PO fit with employment outcomes.

### Results of direct relationships

The result of the structural model indicated that Hypothesis 1a ( $\beta=0.30$ ,  $z=3.16$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) was supported where the richness of recruitment information was positively related to PO fit. Hypothesis 2a, which predicted that the realism of recruitment information is positively associated with PO fit, was also supported ( $\beta=0.50$ ,  $z=6.24$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). The positive relationship between PO fit and organisational commitment was significant ( $\beta=0.55$ ,  $z=9.22$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). Therefore, Hypothesis 3a was supported. The association between job satisfaction and PO fit was satisfactory ( $\beta= 0.24$ ,  $z= 3.66$ ,  $p<0.05$ , thus supporting Hypothesis 4a. The negative relationship between intention to quit and PO fit ( $\beta=-0.24$ ,  $z=-3.43$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) was significant, thus supporting Hypothesis 5a. Table 4.18 summarises the results of hypotheses testing for direct relationships (H1a to H5a).

Table 4.18 Summary of hypotheses testing: H1a to H5a

Hypothesis	Path coefficient	Z-value	P-value	Results
H1a: There is a positive relationship between recruitment information richness and post-entry PO fit.	0.30	3.16	0.01	Supported
H2a: There is a positive relationship between recruitment information realism and post-entry PO fit.	0.50	6.24	0.01	Supported
H3a: There is a positive correlation between post-entry PO fit and organisational commitment.	0.55	9.22	0.01	Supported
H4a: There is a positive correlation between post-entry PO fit and job satisfaction.	0.24	3.66	0.01	Supported
H5a: There is a negative correlation between post-entry PO fit and intention to quit.	-0.24	-3.43	0.01	Supported

### Results of indirect relationships (mediation)

This section highlights indirect relationships (mediation hypothesis) using the bootstrapping method explained in the previous chapter. Regarding the concern about recall bias, the part of the sample that includes employees with a tenure equal to or fewer than two years was analysed separately. Its results were compared with the entire sample to ensure that the result of the mediation model was free of such bias. Comparison of the results of the two samples showed that it is possible to be sure that such bias was not present in the results. Tables 4.19 and 4.20 summarise the findings for the mediations of PO fit.

The results show that recruitment information richness was significantly related to organisational commitment through PO fit ( $\beta = 0.16$ ,  $z = 3.07$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). The PO fit also mediated the positive relationship between recruitment information richness and job satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.07$ ,  $z = 2.40$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Similarly, the PO fit mediated the negative relationship between recruitment information richness and intention to quit ( $\beta = -0.07$ ,  $z = -2.35$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ). The indirect effect of recruitment information realism on organisational commitment through PO fit was accepted ( $\beta = 0.27$ ,  $z = 4.92$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). The indirect relationship between recruitment information realism and job satisfaction through PO fit was supported ( $\beta = 0.12$ ,  $z = 3.35$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). It was also supported that recruitment information realism was related to intention to quit through PO fit ( $\beta = -0.12$ ,  $z = -3.15$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ).



Comparing the results of Tables 4.20 and 4.19 shows that recall bias did not considerably influence the mediation model's results. Table 4.20 shows that the recruitment information richness was significantly related to organisational commitment through PO fit ( $\beta = 0.16$ ,  $z = 2.16$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). The PO fit also mediated the positive relationship between recruitment information richness and job satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.10$ ,  $z = 2.00$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Similarly, the PO fit mediated the negative relationship between recruitment information richness and intention to quit ( $\beta = -0.12$ ,  $z = -2.10$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ). The indirect effect of recruitment information realism on organisational commitment through PO fit was accepted ( $\beta = 0.02$ ,  $z = 2.28$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Recruitment information realism was indirectly related to job satisfaction through PO fit ( $\beta = 0.12$ ,  $z = 1.99$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). It was also accepted that recruitment information realism was related to intention to quit through PO fit ( $\beta = -0.16$ ,  $z = -2.05$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ).

Table 4.19 Summary of results of hypothesis testing: H1b–H6b

<b>Indirect path</b>	<b>Effect size</b>	<b>Z-value</b>	<b>P-value</b>	<b>Result</b>
H1b: Post-entry PO fit mediates the relationship between recruitment information richness and organisational commitment.	0.16	3.07	0.01	supported
H2b: Post-entry PO fit mediates the relationship between recruitment information realism and organisational commitment.	0.27	4.92	0.01	supported
H3b: Post-entry PO fit mediates the relationship between recruitment information richness and job satisfaction.	0.07	2.40	0.01	supported
H4b: Post-entry PO fit mediates the relationship between recruitment information realism and job satisfaction.	0.12	3.35	0.01	supported
H5b: Post-entry PO fit mediates the relationship between recruitment information richness and intention to quit.	-0.07	-2.35	0.01	supported
H6b: Post-entry PO fit mediates the relationship between recruitment information realism and intention to quit.	-0.12	-3.15	0.01	supported

Table 4.20 Summary of results of hypothesis testing: H1b–H6b; sample with tenure ≤ 2; n =174

Indirect Path	Estimate	Z-value	P-value	Result
H1b: Post-entry PO fit mediates the relationship between recruitment information richness and organisational commitment.	0.16	2.16	0.01	Supported
H2b: Post-entry PO fit mediates the relationship between recruitment information realism and organisational commitment.	0.02	2.28	0.01	Supported
H3b: Post-entry PO fit mediates the relationship between recruitment information richness and job satisfaction.	0.10	2.00	0.01	Supported
H4b: Post-entry PO fit mediates the relationship between recruitment information realism and job satisfaction.	0.12	1.99	0.01	Supported
H5b: Post-entry PO fit mediates the relationship between recruitment information richness and intention to quit.	-0.12	-2.10	0.01	Supported
H6b: Post-entry PO fit mediates the relationship between recruitment information realism and intention to quit.	-0.16	-2.05	0.01	Supported

## Results of moderated mediation

The moderated mediation analysis was conducted to examine the effects of organisational image, years of previous work experience and credibility of the source of information on the strengths and (or) signs of the relationships between attributes of recruitment information (i.e., richness and realism) and employment outcomes (i.e., organisational commitment, job satisfaction, intention to quit). These relationships were tested by using the interaction variables Richness X Image (interaction between organisational image and recruitment information richness), Richness X Credibility (interaction between credibility and recruitment information richness), Richness X Years of previous work experience (interaction between years of previous work experience and recruitment information richness), Realism X Image (interaction between organisational image and recruitment information realism), Realism X Credibility (interaction between credibility and recruitment information realism) and Realism X Years of previous work experience (interaction between years of previous work experience and recruitment information realism). The interaction variables were created via the 'XWITH' command available in Mplus.

Two investigations are completed to test the moderated mediation model. First, we must determine whether the interaction variable significantly affects the mediator (i.e., PO fit). If it significantly affects PO fit, we will check the effect size by rerunning the model without the interaction variable. The effect size is estimated by calculating the change in the R-Squared statistics. Then, the effects of moderators in different levels (low, medium, high) are estimated. Hence, the initial tests were conducted to determine whether the products of interactions of attributes of recruitment information (i.e., Richness X Image, Richness

X Credibility, Richness X Years of previous work experience, Realism X Image, Realism X Credibility and Realism X Years of previous work experience) were predictors of PO fit in a regression. The results showed that none of the interactions of richness with moderators (i.e., Richness X Image, Richness X Credibility, Richness X Years of previous work experience) had a significant coefficient in regression with the PO fit: Richness X Image ( $\beta = -0.13$ ,  $z = -1.53$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ), Richness X Credibility ( $\beta = 0.13$ ,  $z = 1.68$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ), Richness X Years of previous work experience ( $\beta = 0.08$ ,  $z = 1.32$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ). The coefficients of products of interactions of realism with the three moderators in the regression with PO fit were not significant: Realism X Image ( $\beta = -0.02$ ,  $z = -0.20$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ), Realism X Credibility ( $\beta = -0.08$ ,  $z = -0.97$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ) and Realism X Years of previous work experience ( $\beta = 0.00$ ,  $z = -0.13$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ). Table 4.21 summarises the results.

Table 4.21 Summary of results of moderated mediation hypotheses: H1c to H18c

Hypotheses	Estimate	Z-value	P-value	Results
H1c: Organisational image moderates the indirect relationship of recruitment information richness via post-entry PO fit with organisational commitment in such a manner that the indirect effect will be stronger for those individuals with stronger perceptions of organisational image.				
H2c: Organisational image moderates the indirect relationship of recruitment information richness via post-entry PO fit with job satisfaction in such a way that the indirect effect will be stronger for those individuals with stronger perceptions of organisational image.	-0.13	-1.53	0.12	Not supported
H3c: Organisational image moderates the indirect relationship of recruitment information richness via post-entry PO fit with intention to quit in such a manner that the indirect effect will be stronger for those individuals with stronger perceptions of organisational image.				
H4c: Organisational image moderates the indirect relationship of recruitment information realism via post-entry PO fit with organisational commitment in such a manner that the indirect effect will be stronger for those individuals with stronger perceptions of organisational image.	-0.02	-0.20	0.89	Not supported

H5c: Organisational image moderates the indirect relationship of recruitment information realism via post-entry PO fit with job satisfaction in such a way that the indirect effect will be stronger for those individuals with stronger perceptions of organisational image.

H6c: Organisational image moderates the indirect relationship of recruitment information realism via post-entry PO fit with intention to quit in such a manner that the indirect effect will be stronger for those individuals with stronger perceptions of organisational image.

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H7c: Credibility of source moderates the indirect relationship of information richness via post-entry PO fit with organisational commitment in such a way that the indirect effect will be stronger for those individuals who perceived the source of recruitment information as being more credible.

0.13

1.68

0.09

Not supported

H8c: Credibility of the source moderates the indirect relationship of information richness via post-entry PO fit with job satisfaction in such a manner that the indirect effect will be stronger for those individuals who perceived the source of recruitment information as being more credible.

H9c: Credibility of the source moderates the indirect relationship of information richness via post-entry PO fit with intention to quit in such a way that the indirect effect will be stronger for those individuals who perceived the source of recruitment information as being more credible.

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H10c: Credibility of the source moderates the indirect relationship of information realism via post-entry PO fit with organisational commitment in such a way that the indirect effect will be stronger for those individuals who

perceived the source of recruitment information as being more credible.

-0.08

-0.97

0.33

Not supported

H11c: Credibility of the source moderates the indirect relationship of information realism via subjective PO fit with job satisfaction in such a manner that the indirect effect will be stronger for those individuals who perceived the source of recruitment information as being more credible.

H12c: Credibility of the source moderates the indirect relationship of information realism via post-entry PO fit with intention to quit in such a way that the indirect effect will be stronger for those individuals who perceived the source of recruitment information as being more credible.

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H13c: Years of previous work experience moderates the indirect relationship of information richness via post-entry PO fit with organisational commitment in such a way that the indirect effect will be stronger for those individuals with more years of previous work experience.

0.08

1.32

0.18

Not supported

H14c: Years of previous work experience moderates the indirect relationship of information richness via post-entry PO fit with job satisfaction in such a manner that the indirect effect will be stronger for those individuals with more years of previous work experience.

H15c: Years of previous work experience moderates the indirect relationship of information richness via post-entry PO fit on intention to quit in such a way that the indirect effect will be stronger for those individuals with more years of previous work experience.

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H16c: Years of previous work experience moderates the indirect relationship of information realism via post-entry PO fit with organisational commitment in such a way that the indirect effect will be stronger for those individuals with more years of previous work experience.

H17c: Years of previous work experience moderates the indirect relationship of information realism via post-entry PO fit with job satisfaction in such a manner that the indirect effect will be stronger for those individuals with more years of previous work experience.	-0.00	-0.13	0.89	Not supported
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H18c: Years of previous work experience moderates the indirect relationship of perceived realism via post-entry PO fit with intention to quit in such a way that the indirect effect will be stronger for those individuals with more years of previous work experience.

#### 4.3.2.5 Control variable effects for the hypothesised model

The control variables (tenure, age, gender, education, and job category) were included in the structural model. Tenure was found to add a significant prediction to the results—PO fit ( $\beta = -0.14$ ,  $z = -3.22$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Age was found to add a significant prediction to the results—intention to quit ( $\beta = -0.09$ ,  $z = -2.06$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Gender was significantly correlated with PO fit ( $\beta = -0.12$ ,  $z = -2.67$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) and job satisfaction ( $\beta = -0.08$ ,  $z = -2.04$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Education was significantly correlated with job satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.13$ ,  $z = 3.23$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Job category did not add a significant prediction to the results.

#### **4.4 Summary of chapter**

In this chapter, the SEM analysis was performed to test the hypotheses as presented in Chapter 2. SEM consists of two components: a measurement model and a structural model. CR, AVE and the square of the correlation of each factor with others in the final measurement model were assessed and indicated that all constructs had sufficient reliability and convergent and discriminant validity. In addition, the measurement model resulted in an acceptable best model fit. Therefore, all constructs were used for the structural model.

SEM analysis showed that the recruitment information richness and realism related positively to PO fit, which was correlated significantly with employment outcomes, including organisational commitment, job satisfaction and intention to quit. The results also supported the mediating role of PO fit in the relationships between attributes of recruitment information (i.e., richness and realism) and employment outcomes (i.e., organisational commitment, job satisfaction, intention to quit). The control variable, which was tenure, was also included in the analysis. The results showed that tenure could affect the study results because it had a significant correlation with PO fit. The results did not support the moderation role of any suggested moderators, including organisational image, credibility and years of previous work experience in indirect relationships between attributes of recruitment information and employment outcomes.

## Chapter 5. Discussion

### 5.1 Introduction

Having analysed the gathered data and tested the hypotheses, this chapter aims to discuss why my findings are different from, or consistent with, the existing research findings and theoretical assumptions. The focus is to discuss the results of the hypotheses testing rather than research questions and objectives. These latter areas will be commented upon in the next chapter. The current chapter comprises three main sections. Section 5.2 discusses the findings of the direct relationships, including the relationships between recruitment information richness and realism with post-entry PO fit and the relationships between post-entry PO fit and employment outcomes (i.e., organisational commitment, job satisfaction, intention to quit). Section 5.3 discusses the indirect relationships between recruitment information richness and realism through post-entry PO fit with employment outcomes. Section 5.4 comments upon the moderation relationships that include the roles of the organisational image, source credibility and previous work experience. Section 5.5 provides a summary of this chapter.

### 5.2 Discussion of the direct relationships

#### 5.2.1 Relationships between recruitment information richness and realism with post-entry PO fit

Hypothesis 1a: There is a positive relationship between recruitment information richness and post-entry PO fit.

The results indicate that there is a positive relationship between recruitment information richness and post-entry PO fit. The finding suggests that individuals who obtained richer information at the time of recruitment have a higher perception of fitting with organisation values. Hence, the results indicate that the richness of recruitment information is positively related to post-entry PO fit.

As argued before, ASA theory states that individuals are attracted to and staying with organisations they perceive fit with their values. Put differently; ASA proposed a bridge between pre-entry variables and post-entry outcomes. The current study also showed that employees who obtained rich information about organisation values at recruitment have high fit perceptions. Hence, this study's findings can support such a correlation between pre- and post-entry variables proposed by ASA theory. From this perspective, the result is similar to Saks and Ashforth (2002) study, which also supported the effect of recruitment variables on post-entry PO fit. As the title of the paper by Saks and Ashforth (2002) (i.e., 'Is Job Search Related to Employment Quality? It All Depends on the Fit') suggested, the relationship between recruitment variables and post-entry outcomes depends on the fit perception, which is pre-developed at the time of recruitment. The question that may be raised is how long would the fit perception be stable? Saks and Ashforth (2002) observed that fit perception is stable for at least four months after organisational entry. In addition, as reviewed in chapter 2, values have the characteristic of stability and are not prone to be changed. Therefore, the result of this study suggests that there is a possibility that fit perception will be stable, provided that the organisation's values also persist.

I also compared the results with the findings of studies that examined the effect of information richness on individuals' understanding of organisations' attributes (e.g., value) in the context of recruitment. As explained in Chapter 2, the positive relationship between information richness and post-entry PO fit was assumed based on richness's effect on improving an individual's understanding of information (i.e., channel expansion theory). From this perspective, the result is congruent with that of Cable and Yu (2006), who studied how information richness improves an individual's understanding of organisational information during recruitment. However, Cable and Yu (2006) examined the role of recruitment information richness by measuring its effect on only pre-entry variables; that is, they measured the effect of recruitment information richness on correspondence between job seekers' image beliefs and companies' projected images. In other words, we both hypothesised that recruitment information richness plays a positive role in the recruitment process by enhancing the understanding of individuals of recruitment information. Cable and Yu (2006) showed that recruitment information richness plays a positive role in individuals' understanding of recruitment information. My study went even further than Cable and Yu (2006) and found that the positive role can improve outcomes beyond pre-entry.

Hypothesis 2a: There is a positive relationship between recruitment information realism and post-entry PO fit.

The current study, which collected data from a significant number of employees in the UK (sample size: 504), found evidence that supports the positive association between the realism of recruitment information and post-entry PO fit, which provides support for Hypothesis 2a. The results suggest that as much as people perceive their recruitment

information as being realistic, they feel that they fit more with organisational values after hiring. Similar to Hypothesis 1a, the results of Hypothesis 2a is consistent with the relationship between pre- and post-entry variables proposed by ASA theory.

Generally, the results of Hypothesis 2a could not be appropriately compared with the findings of the previous research. To the best of my knowledge, all previous works that examined the effectiveness of recruitment information realism were conducted using laboratory designs, under which, researchers provided one booklet with realistic information including negative and positive information and another with only positive information. In that case, participants may be less likely to quit or choose an alternative booklet (i.e., the variable of attrition from the recruitment process) when they feel that they do not fit with the organisation described in their booklet because they would probably lose course credits (e.g., when students are research participants) or pay due to quitting. Whereas in field design, the consequence of accepting a job that is not perceived as being fit would be working in an unpleasant organisation. Therefore, individuals are more likely not to accept job offers if they feel that they do not fit the organisations. As Philips (1998) suggested, it is better to consider the study setting when assessing the effectiveness of information realism. In other words, the study setting ought to be considered when comparing the results of different studies. Therefore, it was better to compare the results of this study with research conducted in the field rather than the laboratory. However, the number of studies performed in the field design is very limited due to the cost and difficulties of this type of research design. Thus, the results of Hypothesis 2a could not be appropriately compared with that of similar studies as they were conducted in laboratories.

### **5.2.2. Relationships between post-entry PO fit and employment outcomes (organisational commitment, job satisfaction, intention to quit)**

H3a: There is a positive relationship between post-entry PO fit and organisational commitment.

It was hypothesised that post-entry PO fit positively correlates with organisational commitment. The abovementioned finding supports this prediction. The result of Hypothesis 3a is congruent with the findings of most previous studies, such as Saks and Ashforth (2002), Cable and Judge (1996), Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman and Johnson (2005) and Greguras and Diefendorff (2009). Such a result is not surprising because affective commitment, the form of organisational commitment utilised in this study, is a psychological attachment to the attributes of an organisation, such as value, and psychological attachment is the product of identification with attributes such as values. The intrinsic relationship between affective organisational commitment and value congruence explains why such a finding appears consistent across studies. The results are not only broadly consistent in terms of the significance of the correlation but also in relation to size effect. The effect size observed by this study ( $\beta=0.55$ ) is very close to the mean of effect sizes of previous studies measured by the meta-analysis of Verquer, Beehr and Wagner (2003) ( $\beta=0.50$ ). Furthermore, the result fits well with the concepts outlined in ASA theory, precisely the notion that individuals who feel that they fit have positive attitudes towards an organisation.

I also compared the effect size of the relationship between PO fit and organisational commitment with effect sizes of relationships of PO fit with job satisfaction (i.e., Hypothesis 4a) and intention to quit (i.e., Hypothesis 5a). In the following, I discuss the

results of Hypotheses 4a and 5a in further detail. The effect size related to Hypothesis 3a ( $\beta=0.55$ ) was considerably more remarkable than the effect sizes of Hypotheses 4a ( $\beta=0.24$ ) and 5a ( $\beta=0.24$ ). In light of the consistent findings in the relationship between PO fit and organisational commitment among my and other studies and the high association found in my study, I regard that organisational commitment can be considered as the most significant outcome variable for PO fit.

H4a: There is a positive relationship between post-entry PO fit and job satisfaction.

Consistent with ASA theory, this study's result supports Hypothesis 4a and is congruent with that of the previous works (see, e.g., Saks and Ashforth, 2002; Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman and Johnson, 2005; Hoffman and Woehr, 2006; Leung and Chaturvedi, 2011; Bretz and Judge, 1994; Cable and Judge, 1996; Verquer, Beehr and Wagner, 2003). Although the theoretical justifications used by researchers to explain the positive relationship between PO fit and job satisfaction vary, findings generally seem consistent.

The effect size observed ( $\beta = 0.24$ ) was lower than the mean of effect sizes measured by the meta-analysis of Verquer, Beehr and Wagner (2003) ( $\beta = 0.57$ ) but very close to that of Cable and Judge (1996) ( $\beta = 0.26$ ) and Saks and Ashforth (2002) ( $\beta = 0.27$ ). Verquer, Beehr and Wagner's (2003) result, however, may not be appropriate for comparing with that of mine because they did not consider different job satisfaction definitions throughout their meta-analysis. As argued in Chapter 2, job satisfaction is defined in two ways; attitudes towards a job and cognitive evaluation. As the measurement of job satisfaction is susceptible to the definition of the concept (Wanous & Lawler, 1972), the effect size of a regression that includes job satisfaction defined as an affective reaction to a job are



likely to be different from the effect size of a regression that includes job satisfaction defined as cognitive evaluation. In other words, results from different studies are likely to vary if job satisfaction was not defined and measured in the same way. The similar effect size found in this study and that of Cable and Judge (1996) and Saks and Ashforth (2002) may be due to the fact that we all defined job satisfaction as attitudes towards a job.

H5a: There is a negative relationship between post-entry PO fit and intention to quit.

The negative relationship between post-entry PO fit and intention to quit, which is the main discussion of the attrition component of ASA theory, was supported by the findings of this study. The results of Hypothesis 5a are congruent with most previous studies' findings.

The effect size of correlations of PO fit with the intention to quit was considerably smaller than the means of previous studies obtained by Verquer, Beehr and Wagner (2003). Such smaller effect size was expected as the study's data collection occurred during the Covid-19 pandemic when uncertainty for both people and organisations about the future was particularly high, which may lead individuals not to consider changing organisations. Regarding the psychological process, for those considering leaving an organisation, the advantages of staying in the organisation in an uncertain situation may be perceived as higher than its disadvantages. Throughout the pandemic, many people in the UK lost their jobs, working conditions in organisations frequently changed, and a large number of businesses closed or merged. The UK also faced Brexit, which was another source of

uncertainty for employees. All these situations made people unwilling to make further changes in their lives.

### **5.3 Discussion of the indirect relationships**

H1b: Post-entry PO fit mediates the relationship between recruitment information richness and organisational commitment.

H2b: Post-entry PO fit mediates the relationship between recruitment information realism and organisational commitment.

H3b: Post-entry PO fit mediates the relationship between recruitment information richness and job satisfaction.

H4b: Post-entry PO fit mediates the relationship between recruitment information realism and job satisfaction.

H5b: Post-entry PO fit mediates the relationship between recruitment information richness and intention to quit.

H6b: Post-entry PO fit mediates the relationship between recruitment information realism and intention to quit.

In general, the mediation model, which shows the indirect relationships of recruitment information richness and realism through PO fit with organisational commitment, job satisfaction and intention to quit, was supported. The results indicate that post-entry PO fit plays a bridging role in the relationships between richness and realism of recruitment of information and employment outcomes that connects pre-entry variables to post-entry

outcomes. The findings provide support for the propositions of the ASA theory that individuals are attracted to and join organisations that they perceive as fitting with their values and that they stay with organisations as long as they feel that they fit with those organisations' values. As aforementioned, ASA theory refers to a link between pre-entry variables and post-entry outcomes and also highlights the role of PO fit from recruitment to post-hire. In other words, individuals pre-developed their post-entry PO fit by obtaining recruitment information, and then the developed PO fit affects employment outcomes.

From the perspective explained above (i.e., post-entry PO fit as a bridge links recruitment variable to employment outcomes), I compared the results of this study with the work of Cable and Judge (1996) and Saks and Ashforth (2002). Both studies examined the mediation role of post-entry PO fit between variables related to recruitment time and employment outcomes. Cable and Judge (1996) examined the indirect relationship of value congruence through post-entry PO fit with employment outcomes, and Saks and Ashforth (2002) investigated the indirect relationship of pre-entry PO fit through post-entry PO fit with employment outcomes. In terms of effect size, the results of this study on the indirect relationships of richness and realism of recruitment information through post-entry PO fit with organisational commitment and job satisfaction, (H1b,  $\beta=0.16$ ; H2b,  $\beta=0.27$ ; H3b,  $\beta=0.07$ ; H4b,  $\beta=0.12$ ) were similar to that of Cable and Judge (1996) (organisational commitment,  $\beta=0.31$ ; job satisfaction,  $\beta=0.16$ ). In terms of significance, the results of this study on the indirect relationships with the intention to quit (H5b and H6b) was significant which differed from the insignificant result found in Cable and Judge's (1996) study. A possible explanation for the different results may be due to the different external situations in which the respondents found themselves. Intention to quit involves evaluating the pros

and cons of leaving an organisation; hence, situations such as economic circumstances can affect individuals' thoughts about leaving. For example, when the unemployment rate is high and when the external job market is uncertain (e.g., when impacted by covid 19), it is expected that the respondent's intention to quit would stay low even if their PO fit is also low because people are unsure about the consequences of leaving the organisation. Because there is no information about the external situation in which previous studies were conducted, it is not possible to compare the results related to the intention to quit.

The mediation model may also not be supported in countries with high unemployment rates and poor economic situations. To clarify, concern about fit and employment outcomes is necessary when the economic situation is relatively healthy and the unemployment rate is low because individuals would be able to find jobs (Saks & Ashforth, 2002). According to Saks and Ashforth (2002), in a healthy economy, people attempt to select organisations that provide a pleasant working environment for them rather than choose any organisation simply to be employed. When the quality of working life is not important for a person, he/she will not care about information obtained about the values of an organisation. In other words, the ASA (or self-selection mechanism), which is the foundation of the mediation model of this study, depends on the economic situation and unemployment rate.

It is to be noted that I am aware that the results of this study need to be presented with cautions as there are many job opportunities for some job categories in the country over the pandemic, while others may have been limited. In addition, I am aware that the result of the mediation model may be different after the pandemic. The data of this study were collected during the Covid-19 pandemic and after Brexit when the country's economic

situation was uncertain, respondents were, however, asked not only to answer questions related to their present (e.g. intention to quit) but also questions related to their past (e.g., recruitment information they were given) when the economic situation may be more certain. The current uncertain situation may have affected their perceptions about past and current events and, in turn, their answers to the questions.

Moreover, as explained in Chapter 4, regarding the concern about recall bias, the mediation model was analysed twice; once for the entire sample, in which discussion about its results was presented above and once for part of the sample that includes employees with a tenure of equal to or fewer than two years. The comparison of results showed that they are matched with each other in terms of significance. This study thus is likely not affected by recall biases. The accuracy of remembering depends on the degree of required detail about the experience, quality of the questionnaire and, to some extent, the characteristics of the research participants (Hassan, 2006). Hence, the possible explanation for such a result in this study may be that the questions related to the past (i.e., items measured recruitment information richness and realism) did not go into substantial detail and that the questionnaire was designed in a way that was clear to the respondents.

## **5.4 Discussion of the moderated mediation model**

### **5.4.1 Organisational Image**

H1c: Organisational image moderates the indirect relationship of the recruitment information richness via post-entry PO fit with organisational commitment in such a

manner that the indirect effect will be stronger for those individuals with stronger perceptions of organisational image.

H2c: Organisational image moderates the indirect relationship of the recruitment information richness via post-entry PO fit with job satisfaction in such a manner that the indirect effect will be stronger for those individuals with stronger perceptions of organisational image.

H3c: Organisational image moderates the indirect relationship of the recruitment information richness via post-entry PO fit with intention to quit in such a manner that the indirect effect will be stronger for those individuals with stronger perceptions of organisational image.

The current study results do not support Hypotheses 1c, 2c and 3c. In other words, the findings do not support that organisational image moderates the indirect relationships of recruitment information richness through PO fit with employment outcomes (i.e., organisational commitment, job satisfaction, intention to quit).

Such results are inconsistent with the theoretical assumption of the current study that considers organisational image as a knowledge-building experience that strengthens the effects of information richness. As explained in Chapter 2, such a theoretical assumption originated from the channel expansion theory. A possible reason for the inconsistency between the theory and findings may be that not all individuals had a perception of the image of their organisations in their minds at the time of recruitment. For example, individuals may have never even heard the name of a small company located in one of the UK counties, but everyone in the UK has heard of the NHS and has used its services.

It is noteworthy to mention that the general image that was the focus of this study is only formed in individuals' minds if a person had a personal interaction with an organisation prior to recruitment. For instance, if someone applied for an organisation unknown to him/her, that person's only information was related to recruitment. Hence, there was no information other than recruitment information, which could enhance understanding of the person of the recruitment information. In that case, there would be no interaction between organisational image and recruitment information richness.

Furthermore, such results are not consistent with previous studies such as Allen, Mahto and Otondo (2007) and Gatewood, Gowan and Lautenschlager (1993), both of which supported the role of organisational image in building additional knowledge about organisations for individuals at the time of recruitment. The different results of the current work with the two mentioned studies may be due to differences in samples. In studies by Allen, Mahto and Otondo (2007) and Gatewood, Gowan and Lautenschlager (1993), the organisations for which the organisational image was measured were selected from the Fortune 500 list (i.e., well-known organisations). In the study by Cable and Yu (2006), which also supported the role of organisational image in developing knowledge at recruitment, organisations including IBM, JP Morgan and General Electronic were employed. It was very likely, therefore, that research participants had a clear perception of their organisations' image at the time of recruitment.

H4c: Organisational image moderates the indirect relationship of recruitment information realism via post-entry PO fit with organisational commitment in such a way that the indirect effect will be stronger for those individuals with stronger perceptions of organisational image.

H5c: Organisational image moderates the indirect relationship of recruitment information realism via post-entry PO fit with job satisfaction in such a manner that the indirect effect will be stronger for those individuals with stronger perceptions of organisational image.

H6c: Organisational image moderates the indirect relationship of recruitment information realism via post-entry PO fit with the intention to quit in such a way that the indirect effect will be stronger for those individuals with stronger perceptions of organisational image.

The results do not support Hypotheses 4c, 5c and 6c. Hence, the current study could not find evidence that supports the moderating role of the organisational image, which was formed based on an individual's interaction with an organisation, in indirect relationships of recruitment information realism and employment outcomes. Similar to H1c, H2c and H3c, the inconsistency of the results with theoretical assumptions related to sampling (i.e., individuals may not have a clear perception of their organisations' images) is the possible reason for such results.

#### **5.4.2 Source credibility**

H7c: Credibility of source moderates the indirect relationship of information richness via post-entry PO fit with organisational commitment in such a way that the indirect effect will be stronger for those individuals who perceived the source of recruitment information as being more credible.

H8c: Credibility of the source moderates the indirect relationship of information richness via post-entry PO fit with job satisfaction in such a manner that the indirect effect will be stronger for those individuals who perceived the source of recruitment information as being more credible.



H9c: Credibility of the source moderates the indirect relationship of information richness via post-entry PO fit with intention to quit in such a way that the indirect effect will be stronger for those individuals who perceived the source of recruitment information as being more credible.

The results are not in support of H7c, H8c and H9c. In the assumption of the moderating role of credibility in the relationship between recruitment information richness and post-entry PO fit, it was hypothesised that individuals who perceive the source of information as more credible put increased value on that. Hence, it was hypothesised that credibility moderates the effects of information richness. A possible reason for the inconsistency of the findings with the theoretical assumption may be related to the measurement tool of credibility. More specifically, because individuals obtain information from various sources at the time of recruitment, they may not properly evaluate the credibility of a particular source from which they gained recruitment information. In a laboratory experiment, it is possible to maintain a situation so that an individual obtains information from only one source. However, people are likely to acquire information from multiple sources in real life.

H10c: Credibility of the source moderates the indirect relationship of information realism via post-entry PO fit with organisational commitment in such a way that the indirect effect will be stronger for those individuals who perceived the source of recruitment information as being more credible.

H11c: Credibility of the source moderates the indirect relationship of information realism via subjective PO fit with job satisfaction in such a manner that the indirect effect will be

stronger for those individuals who perceived the source of recruitment information as being more credible.

H12c: Credibility of the source moderates the indirect relationship of information realism via post-entry PO fit with intention to quit in such a way that the indirect effect will be stronger for those individuals who perceived the source of recruitment information as being more credible.

The results do not support Hypotheses 10c, 11c and 12c. Hence, the current study could not find evidence that supports the moderating role of the credibility of the source of information in indirect relationships of recruitment information realism and employment outcomes. Such a result was surprising. Theoretically, the source's credibility enhances an individual's perception of the realism of information because individuals trust a credible source. Hence, it was expected that credibility interacts with recruitment information realism in such a way that enhances its effects. Similar to H7c, H8c and H9c, the inconsistency of results with the theoretical assumption is related to the measurement tool of credibility. As aforeargued, due to the fact that individuals obtain information from various sources at the time of recruitment, they may not correctly assess the credibility of a certain source from which they attained recruitment information.

#### **5.4.3 Years of previous work experience**

H13c: Years of previous work experience moderates the indirect relationship of recruitment information richness via post-entry PO fit on organisational commitment in such a way that the indirect effect will be stronger for those individuals with more years of previous work experience.

H14c: Years of previous work experience moderates the indirect relationship of recruitment information richness via post-entry PO fit on job satisfaction in such a manner that the indirect effect will be stronger for those individuals with more years of previous work experience.

H15c: Years of previous work experience moderates the indirect relationship of recruitment information richness via post-entry PO fit on intention to quit in such a way that the indirect effect will be stronger for those individuals with more years of previous work experience.

The results did not support H13c, H14c or H15c. As argued in Chapter 2, the previous work experience was assumed to provide two types of additional knowledge for individuals. Based on channel expansion theory, this extra knowledge affects an individual's perception of the richness of information obtained. That is the justification used for explaining the moderation effect of years of previous work experience on the indirect relationship between recruitment information richness through PO fit and employment outcomes. The results of H13c, H14c and H15c are not consistent with the theoretical assumptions. However, they are congruent with Zedeck's (1975) finding, who also could not find evidence to show that experienced people have better knowledge than less experienced people to use during the recruitment process.

Such results raise the question of why previous work experience may not add anything to the knowledge of employees of organisational value or their personal value. Is this because employees relate unsatisfactory work outcomes to factors other than PO fit? Or to fitting with attributes other than value? As mentioned in Chapter 2, PO fit is crucial for

work outcomes. The concept of PO fit is defined based on similarity and a complementary approach. The content of PO fit may also be attributes other than value (e.g., goal). In other words, people may have experienced unpleasant feelings at work because their organisations did not support what they expected (e.g., they did not receive bonuses or promotion after their achievements), rather because their values were not similar. In this situation, their previous experience does not add anything to their knowledge related to organisational values or personal values. This assumption is congruent with the results of Feldman and Arnold (1978), who found that people with more work experience emphasise aspects such as pay and benefits other than factors related to values.

H16c: Years of previous work experience moderates the indirect relationship of recruitment information realism via post-entry PO fit on organisational commitment in such a way that the indirect effect will be stronger for those individuals with more years of previous work experience.

H17c: Years of previous work experience moderates the indirect relationship of recruitment information realism via post-entry PO fit on job satisfaction in such a manner that the indirect effect will be stronger for those individuals with more years of previous work experience.

H18c: Years of previous work experience moderates the indirect relationship of recruitment information realism via post-entry PO fit on intention to quit in such a way that the indirect effect will be stronger for those individuals with more years of previous work experience.

The findings of this study did not support H16c, H17c or H18c. The assumption upon which these hypotheses were developed was that previous work experience generates such knowledge for individuals that helps them correctly evaluate recruitment information in terms of realism. Such a result raised a question of whether the knowledge gained by previous work experience did not provide such knowledge, which helps individuals evaluate recruitment information in terms of realism. Similar to the discussion created for H13c, H14c and H15c, previous work experience may provide knowledge appropriate for another form of PO fit (e.g., complementary approach) or PO fit with content other than value (e.g., goal).

## **5.5 Summary of chapter**

The chapter discussed the results of three main parts—direct relationships, indirect relationships and moderations. Firstly, there were significant relationships between recruitment information richness and realism and post-entry PO fit as well as between post-entry PO fit and employment outcomes (i.e., organisational commitment, job satisfaction, intention to quit), which are consistent with the existing literature and ASA theory. Secondly, the mediation model that includes the mediation role of post-entry PO fit in the relationships of recruitment information richness and realism with employment outcomes was supported. Such results are congruent with previous similar studies that examined the mediation role of post-entry PO fit in the relationships between pre-entry and post-entry variables. The results of the mediation model also fit with ASA theory. Thirdly, the moderation relationships of the organisational image, credibility of the source of information and previous work experience are not supported by the findings of this

study. The results related to moderation relationships of organisational image and previous work experience are not consistent with the channel expansion theory.

## Chapter 6: Conclusion

### 6.1 Introduction

This chapter provides conclusions for the entire study concerning the three research objectives and questions, the contributions and limitations of the study, and suggestions for future studies. First, I summarise the findings in relation to each objective and justify how the three research objectives were achieved. Second, I discuss the theoretical, methodological and practical contributions of the study. Third, I point out the limitations of this study, leading to relevant recommendations for future research. Finally, I provide a summary of the chapter.

### 6.2 Findings in relation to each research objective

The results from the empirical sections presented that the hypothesised direct relationships, including relationships between recruitment information richness and realism and post-entry PO fit and relationships between post-entry PO fit and employment outcomes (i.e., organisational commitment, job satisfaction, intention to quit), were significant and supported. The hypothesised indirect (mediation) relationships between recruitment information richness and realism through post-entry PO fit with employment outcomes were also significant and supported. However, the hypothesised moderating roles of organisational image, information source credibility and years of previous work experience in the relationships between recruitment information richness and realism and post-entry PO fit were not significant.

### **6.2.1 Relationship between the richness and realism of recruitment information and post-entry PO fit (Research Objective 1)**

The first objective of this study was to examine whether the richness and realism of recruitment information obtained by individuals during recruitment have relationships with their post-entry PO fit. These relationships were examined by analysing data collected through the survey (see Chapter 4). The statistical results demonstrated that both richness and realism of recruitment information had significant positive relationships with post-entry PO fit; which answer the first research question of this study. The findings related to research objective 1 and research question 1 are aligned with ASA theory's proposition that states that individuals are attracted to and staying with organisations they perceive fit with their values. In other words, ASA proposed a bridge between pre-entry variables and post-entry outcomes. The current study also showed that employees who obtained rich information about organisation values at recruitment have high fit perceptions. Hence, this study's findings can support such a correlation between pre- and post-entry variables proposed by ASA theory. The results related to the correlation of information richness with post-entry PO fit were compared with the results of two groups of studies. One, studies examined the correlation between pre- and post-entry variables and two, studies investigated the effectiveness of information richness in individuals' understanding in the context of recruitment. Compared with the first group, the result was similar to that of Saks and Ashforth (2002); and compared with the second group, the result was similar to that of Cable and Yu (2006). The results of correlation of information realism with post-entry PO fit could not be compared with an appropriate previous finding as most previous research was conducted in laboratories.



### **6.2.2 Mediating effect of post-entry PO fit in the relationship between the richness and realism of recruitment information and employment outcomes (Research Objective 2)**

The second research objective of this study was to examine the mediating role of post-entry PO fit in the relationships of recruitment information richness and realism with employment outcomes (i.e., organisational commitment, job satisfaction, intention to quit). To achieve this research objective, the mediation analysis was conducted using the structural equation modelling (SEM) technique. The results presented that the post-entry PO fit mediates all the relationships of recruitment information richness and realism with employment outcomes; which answer the second research question of this study. The findings are consistent with ASA theory which, as explained in previous chapters, focuses on the role of PO fit in forming individuals' attitudes towards organisations and jobs from recruitment to post-hire. Put differently, individuals pre-develop their post-entry PO fit by obtaining recruitment information. Then, they join those organisations that they feel fit with them. Finally, their post-entry PO fit affects employment outcomes. Therefore, it helps explain why the post-entry PO fit plays a role of a mediator that connects the richness and realism of recruitment information with employment outcomes. Furthermore, the results of indirect relationships of richness and realism of recruitment information through post-entry PO fit with organisational commitment and job satisfaction, in terms of both significance and effect size, were similar to the finding of Cable and Judge (1996). However, the results of indirect relationships with the intention to quite differed with that of Cable and Judge (1996) because their results were insignificant.

### **6.2.3 Moderators (i.e., organisational image, source credibility, years of previous work experience) in the relationship between the richness and realism of recruitment information and post-entry PO fit (Research Objective 3)**

Research objective 3 examined the moderating roles of three potential moderators of organisational image, credibility of the source of information and years of previous work experience in relationships of recruitment information richness and realism with post-entry PO fit. However, the hypothesised moderating effects were not significant. In terms of moderating role of organisational image, the results were inconsistent with the theoretical assumption of the study that considered organisational image and previous work experience as knowledge-building experiences that strengthen the effects of richness and realism. In terms of hypotheses related to moderating effect of organisational image, the sampling is the possible reason for such a result. Because there was no information about the type of organisations where participants work, there is concern over whether all organisations had a high profile of the organisational image. Put differently, not all individuals had a strong perception of the image of their organisations in their minds at the time of recruitment.

The result also was inconsistent with the theoretical assumption that individuals who perceive the source of information as more credible put increased value on that. A possible reason for the inconsistency of the findings with the theoretical assumption may be related to the measurement tool of credibility. In other words, because individuals obtain information from various sources at the time of recruitment, they may not properly evaluate the credibility of a particular source from which they gained recruitment information.

The inconsistency of the results related to moderating role of previous work experience raised a question of if the knowledge provided by previous work experience would be appropriate for another form of PO fit (e.g., complementary approach) or PO fit with content other than value (e.g., goal).

## **6.3 Contributions**

### **6.3.1 Theoretical contribution**

This research makes the following theoretical contributions to the recruitment literature. Firstly, my work contributes to the literature of recruitment, particularly recruitment information richness by focusing on the subjective dimension of information richness, one of the aspects of richness that has yet to be investigated. Whereas most of the previous studies focused on nominal media richness (i.e., the richness of a particular media), no study has considered the information richness from the perspective of perceptions of different individuals about the actual capacity of media used in their communications during their recruitment. The subjective form of richness came through reviewing the channel expansion theory, which is the reformulation of media richness theory. Previous studies in the area of recruitment focused only on media richness theory and disregarded the channel expansion theory as a theory that extended the concepts of nominal media richness.

In this work, the positive effects of perceived information richness on post-entry outcomes presented the importance of considering the distinctive role of the perceived richness in the recruitment process. In nominal media richness, researchers considered media richness as an inherent feature. From an objective perspective, media such as job advertisements with a low capacity of two-way communication, personal focus, multiple

cues or even language variety are regarded as inefficient channels in enhancing individuals' understanding of recruitment information. However, is job advertisement a weak channel? The subjective perspective about the overall information richness does not depend on the attributed attribute of media which may undervalue the effectiveness of a particular media but on the perception of individual of information received during a particular communication.

The organisational study is categorised under social science, and examining a social science subject without considering its social dimension results in a poor understanding of the subject (Carlson, 1995). As aforementioned, the concept of richness could be represented in a 'technology-driven' (i.e., objective) or 'socially-driven' approach (i.e., subjective) (Carlson, 1995, p.14). So far, previous studies in the field of recruitment have examined only nominal media richness (i.e., objective dimensions of richness) (e.g., Allen, Scotter and Otondo, 2004; Cable and Yu, 2006; Baum and Kabst, 2014; Frasca and Edwards, 2017). In general, this study highlighted a new perspective in studying richness.

Secondly, this research contributes to the recruitment literature by developing a new domain in studying the concept of realism of recruitment information.

This work is the first to focus on the realism of information about organisational value. The focus of previous researchers was only on the realism of job information. The realism of information has been studied under the realistic job preview (RJP) concept, a recruitment strategy used mainly to attract job applicants to organisations. Furthermore, this study is the first to consider providing realistic recruitment information to improve employment outcomes rather than attracting job applicants. Moreover, realism was

examined only as an objective attribute of information. Previous works considered information realism an inherent quality of information that is the same for all people. However, the realism of information is attached to the experience of individuals. In other words, realism can also be studied from a subjective approach. People evaluate the realism of recruitment information after being exposed to the organisation.

Thirdly, this study examines and enhances our understanding of the relationships between pre- and post-entry variables and the relationships of richness and realism of recruitment information with the post-entry PO fit. No prior study has examined the relationships of recruitment information richness and realism with post-entry outcomes, such as post-entry PO fit. So far, previous studies have only focused on the relationships between richness and realism of recruitment information and pre-entry outcomes such as attraction and job acceptance but neglecting post-entry outcomes.

Fourthly, this study contributes to the attraction-selection-attrition (ASA) theory. To the best of my knowledge, only relatively few empirical studies have focused on the relationships between pre-entry variables and post-entry outcomes by using a mediation model. This study considered the mediating role of post-entry PO fit in the relationships between two variables related to recruitment (i.e., recruitment information richness and realism) and employment outcomes (i.e., organisational commitment, job satisfaction, intention to quit). By adopting a complex mediation model, this thesis sought to enhance and deepen our understanding of the relationships of recruitment information richness and realism as the two variables related to recruitment with post-entry outcomes. Indeed, this approach came about by reviewing the previous ASA theory. Although ASA is one of

the most critical theories in the human resource management field, particularly the recruitment domain, cited over 7000 times, its use has been limited to examine pre-entry outcomes, such as attraction and job acceptance. Indeed, the ongoing role of PO fit from recruitment to post-entry, which is the main subject of the theory, has been overlooked by previous researchers. In other words, this study explored the hidden angels of the ASA theory.

### **6.3.2 Methodological contribution**

Methodologically speaking, the SEM analysis conducted in this study contributes to the field of recruitment by using advanced statistical software such as Mplus and testing a complex model including both mediator and moderator. Previous studies mostly utilised path analysis to test mediation relationships (e.g., Saks & Ashforth, 2002; Cable & Yu, 2006). Whereas path analysis assumes that all variables are measured without error, SEM uses latent variables to consider measurement error. The hypothesised relationships were tested in this study through an SEM with latent variables to reduce measurement errors.

Compared to previous studies in this field (e.g., Saks & Ashforth, 2002; Leung & Chaturvedi, 2011; Cable & Judge, 1996; Allen, Scotter & Otondo, 2004), I utilised the best method to analyse the mediation relationship (i.e., bootstrapping method, a computer-based method of resampling). Most previous studies employed the Baron and Kenny (1986) method of mediation analysis, and this approach often results in an incorrect decision due to using multiple hypothesis tests.

### **6.3.3 Practical contribution**

In practice, this study could help raise human resource professionals' awareness of the importance of attributes of recruitment information, particularly information about organisational value for post-entry PO fit and employment outcomes. This information could help adopt new recruitment strategies that focus on providing richness and realism of recruitment information to increase job applicants' understanding of the organisations' values during recruitment. So far, many organisations still provide broad information about their values, which does not help people know the organisation. Most organisations deliver only positive information and hide parts that seem unappealing for job applicants (i.e., unrealistic information). Furthermore, most of the focus of recruitment information has been on job information, and the information about organisational values has been disregarded. The traditional view on recruitment information (i.e., providing general and positive information about values and mainly focusing on job information) may originate from the common opinion about the recruitment information function, that is, practitioners design recruitment information with the purpose of enhancing attraction and job applicants pool rather than helping candidates make informed decisions about the organisation.

Recruitment professionals should consider the importance of PO fit for an individual's self-selection through providing more realistic and transparent information about organisational values. Given that provision of negative information about an organisation could be an unrealistic expectation, it is suggested to deliver information about various aspects of organisational value to convey a realistic picture of the organisation to job

applicants. To clarify, different aspects of organisational value may be meant differently for different individuals (i.e., whereas one dimension of value may be favourable for someone, it may be unpleasant for the other person).

Human resource professionals consider PO fit as one of their criteria for the selection stage but not for candidates' criteria for self-selecting organisations. In other words, they design recruitment information to attract people to the organisation and then use PO fit as a criterion of the selection stage. Practitioners evaluate each candidate's fit with organisational values based on what they know about an organisation and their limited knowledge about the applicant (e.g., the knowledge they gain through reviewing the applicant's CV and interviews). Nevertheless, do job applicants know the organisation's values? In general, this study raises practitioners' awareness of the importance of the self-selection stage for post-entry outcomes. It highlights the vital nature of delivering rich and realistic information to candidates to help them make informed self-selection decisions.

Although the moderation effects of organisational image, source credibility and previous work experience were not supported in this study possibly due to the limitations discussed in section 6.4.2, theoretical grounding for the effects of these variables were strong. Hence, practitioners are suggested to pay attention to the three elements (i.e., organisational image, source credibility and previous work experience) that may affect the efficacy of recruitment information.



One is images of their organisations; this is a critical element, particularly for organisations with a weak public image. When job applicants apply for such organisations, the recruitment information is the only source of information for them. Hence, it is essential to provide rich and realistic information for job applicants to help them make informed decisions. Well-known organisations may need less rich and realistic information than less-known organisations, as people have pre-knowledge about them that can assist them in making an informed decision.

Organisations should also consider the attributes of people (e.g., previous work experience) who are potential candidates for a job when developing recruitment information. To clarify, experienced people have knowledge from their past experiences that help them interpret recruitment information better than people with fewer years of work experience. Organisations need to provide richer and more realistic information about the organisation for jobs that require candidates with few years of work experience (e.g., graduate jobs).

Moreover, organisations need to evaluate the source of recruitment information in terms of credibility. The organisations may provide rich and realistic information to enhance post-entry outcomes, and an unreliable source may diminish the effect of recruitment information on post-entry outcomes.

## **6.4 Limitations and recommendation for future studies**

This section presents the limitations of the current study. The results of this study should be interpreted with these limitations in mind. In particular, the limitations are related to theoretical and methodological (i.e., sampling and research design) issues, as presented below. This study's findings are expected to be influenced by the Covid-19 pandemic because data collection was carried out during this pandemic. Due to changes in working conditions in many organisations in the UK, it is likely that the feelings and attitudes of employees towards their organisations have also been influenced. Hence, the results of this study should be interpreted considering this specific situation.

### **6.4.1 Theoretical limitations and recommendation for future studies**

1. This research only considered post-entry PO fit as the mediator in the relationships of recruitment information richness and realism with employment outcomes. However, at the time of recruitment, perception about fitting is not the only perception formed in an individual's mind; individuals' expectations of the organisation may also be developed by acquired recruitment information. If the expectations of individuals of the organisations are met after entry, they are likely to have positive attitudes towards that organisation. This mechanism can be derived from the met-expectation theory (Earnest, Allen & Landis ,2011). The concept of met expectation had been considered by some scholars such as Colarelli (1984), Earnest, Allen and Landis (2011) and Meglino, Ravlin and DeNisi (2000) as another possible mediator for the effect of information realism on employment outcomes. Hence, another potential mediator in the relationships of recruitment information richness and realism with employment outcomes can be met expectation.

More specifically, the self-selection and met-expectation mechanism are two possible mediation paths for the effect of attributes of recruitment information on employment outcomes. Future studies could examine the mediating effects of post-entry PO fit and met expectations and compare their effectiveness.

2. This study followed the theories and findings of previous works to select value as the content of PO fit and did not consider the point that people's priorities about dimensions of attributes of organisations might have been changed throughout the years. However, value is the element that is emphasised by the ASA theory, and many scholars such as Chatman (1989) and Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman and Johnson (2005) emphasise it as the most appropriate content for the PO fit (e.g., due to its stability over time). However, do people in 2021 emphasise organisational value as much as those in 1989? Indeed, no empirical study, particularly in recent years, has compared the effects of different contents of PO fit on pre- or post-entry outcomes. Hence, value might not be the only factor people consider when evaluating their fitting with organisations. For example, as discussed in Chapter 5 (i.e., section 5.4.3), the results of this study regarding the insignificant moderation effect of previous work experience on the relationships of richness and realism of recruitment information with post-entry PO fit raise the concern regarding whether value is an appropriate content for PO fit. Hence, future research could re-examine the theoretical framework of this study, applying different content of PO fit.

3. This study examined the overall effect of information richness but did not investigate the effects of each dimension separately. As discussed in Chapter 2, the concept of information richness includes five dimensions: amount, two-way communication, multiple cues, language variety and personal focus. Examination of each dimension's effect may

provide a more significant contribution, particularly for human resource professionals, because it enables them to design recruitment information in a way that would be richer. Future research could investigate the theoretical framework of this study for each dimension of richness.

4. In this work, I did not specify the type of recruitment source (e.g., job advertisement, referrals, social media) from which individuals acquired information. Hence, there is a concern regarding whether the credibility of the source of information was appropriately measured. Because people may have obtained information from various sources, it might be challenging to distinguish sources when evaluating source credibility. It is suggested that future studies re-examine the theoretical framework for different recruitment sources separately.

#### **6.4.2 Methodological limitations and recommendation for future studies**

1. In this study, there was no information about the organisations in which people were working (e.g., if the organisation is well known, such as the NHS or a small firm). Regarding the moderator variable of the organisational image, it may be helpful to select respondents from well-known organisations. To clarify, whereas people have a clear perception of the general image of well-known organisations (such as the NHS) due to their interactions with them, they may not have a distinct perception of the general image of a small firm, potentially because they have not interacted with it before recruitment. It is suggested that future studies collect data from employees who have prior interactions with the organisations they are currently working.

2. The data were collected at a single moment in time, in 2020. Ideally, a study should conduct a longitudinal design to examine whether the recruitment information richness and realism through post-entry PO fit correlate to employment outcomes. However, the interruptions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and the time limitation to the end of the PhD study did not allow me to expand the current work to a longitudinal study. Quantitative researchers are strongly advised to incorporate longitudinal data to investigate mediation relationships. Generally speaking, mediation is a process that reveals over time (O'Laughlin, Martin & Ferrer, 2018). According to these latter authors, the basic assumption of a mediation relationship is that time must pass between each variable. Moreover, the cross-sectional design is prone to common method bias due “to the fact that measures of different constructs measured at the same point in time may produce artifactual covariance independent of the content of the constructs themselves” (Lindell & Whitney, 2001, p.882). Common method bias influences relationships between constructs (Lindell & Whitney, 2001). Hence, further research could gather longitudinal survey data; for instance, collect data related to pre-entry variables from job applicants of an organisation in Time 1 (i.e., richness and realism of recruitment information), then collect data related to the mediator (i.e., post-entry PO fit) from the job applicants whom the organisation has hired in Time 2 (e.g., similar to Saks & Ashforth (2002) at four months after entry), and finally collect data related to employment outcomes in Time 3. However, previous studies such as Saks and Ashforth (2002) used a longitudinal design and simultaneously collected data related to post-entry variables. Cole and Maxwell (2003) referred to this type of design as ‘half-longitudinal’ because only two data waves are collected sequentially.

3. As mentioned in chapter 3, research participants of the study recruited through the online recruitment platform, Prolific, may be non-naive. According to Chandler et al. (2015), non-naivety may influence the result of a study in a way that reduces effect size. Hence, the result of the current study should be evaluated considering the potential non-naivety among respondents. It is recommended for future studies to examine the model by collecting data from naiver participants.

## **6.5 Summary of chapter**

This chapter has provided the key conclusions reached by this study, illustrated its main research contributions and limitations, and provided suggestions for future studies. The study has achieved the three research objectives and answered the research questions stated in the first chapter.

This study makes a significant theoretical contribution to the recruitment literature, particularly the subjects of information richness and information realism and ASA theory. Whereas all previous research in the field of recruitment presented the positive effects of nominal media richness (i.e., objective dimension of richness) during recruitment, this study showed the positive effect of the subjective dimension of information richness for the first time. This work stressed that the objective perspective towards richness might limit our understanding of the actual effectiveness of recruitment channels.

This study is the first to examine the concept of realism of information about organisational value. Whereas the literature focused on realism of job information (i.e., realistic-job information), this study highlights the importance of realistic information about organisational value. In addition, this work helps understand the effectiveness of the

realism of information in improving employment outcomes. Previous studies stressed only the role of realism of job information in attraction and job acceptance; that is, pre-hire outcomes. My work contributes to ASA theory by adopting a complex mediation model that deepens our understanding of the relationships between pre-entry variables (i.e., richness and realism of recruitment information) and post-entry outcomes (i.e., organisational commitment, job satisfaction, intention to quit) through post-entry PO fit. This chapter also addressed the methodological contributions of this study to the field of recruitment by using advanced statistical software, such as Mplus, and testing a complex model including both mediator and moderator. The chapter also proposed some suggestions regarding more attention to attributes of recruitment information and the self-selection stage to human resource professionals. The chapter also outlined the theoretical limitations related to alternative mediation paths, the content of PO fit, the type of recruitment source and the dimensionality of the concept of richness. The potential methodological limitations of the study were also discussed.

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## Appendix. The questionnaire

### Section A: Demographic Information

Please enter your Prolific ID.	
Please specify your country of residency.	
What is your gender?	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Others <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say
How old are you?	<input type="checkbox"/> 18-24 <input type="checkbox"/> 25-34 <input type="checkbox"/> 35-44 <input type="checkbox"/> 45-54 <input type="checkbox"/> 55-64 <input type="checkbox"/> 65 and above
What is your marital status?	<input type="checkbox"/> Single <input type="checkbox"/> Married <input type="checkbox"/> Others <input type="checkbox"/> Single and parental <input type="checkbox"/> Married and parental
What is your highest education degree?	<input type="checkbox"/> High school <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor degree(s) <input type="checkbox"/> Master degree(s) <input type="checkbox"/> PhD <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify): .....
How long have you been working with the current organisation?	<input type="checkbox"/> Less than a year <input type="checkbox"/> Between one and two years <input type="checkbox"/> Between two and six years <input type="checkbox"/> More than six years
Please specify your industry.	<input type="checkbox"/> Software <input type="checkbox"/> Information services and data processing <input type="checkbox"/> College, University, and adult education <input type="checkbox"/> Other
What is your employment status?	<input type="checkbox"/> Full time <input type="checkbox"/> Part time
Please specify the total number of years you had worked <b>prior to joining the current organization</b> (It includes any type of job in any organization)	<input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Less than two years <input type="checkbox"/> Between two and six years <input type="checkbox"/> More than six years

### Section B: Your perceptions about attributes of recruitment information

1. To what extent do you think the information given at the time of recruitment about the current organisation was realistic? **(Please note: the information is about the current organisation, not the job)**

The information was absolutely unrealistic	The information was unrealistic	The information was slightly unrealistic	The information was neutral	The information was slightly realistic	The information was realistic	The information was very realistic
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7

2. To what extent the information given at the time of recruitment about the current organisation was close to what you are experiencing as its employee? **(Please note: the information is about the current organisation, not the job).**

Very far from what I am experiencing	Far from what I am experiencing	Somewhat far from what I am experiencing	Neutral	Somewhat close to what I am experiencing	Close to what I am experiencing	Very close to what I am experiencing
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7

3. How much information about the current organisation did you gain at the time of recruitment? **(Please note: the information about the current organisation, not about the job)**

Not much at all	Little	Somewhat Little	Average	Somewhat much	Much	A great deal
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7

4. Please specify to what extent you agree or disagree with with the following statements.

5.

**Please note: The information mentioned in the statements is the information about the current organisation (not about the job) that you gained from different sources (e.g. from recruitment advertisement, social media, friends/family who was working in the current organisation etc) at the time of recruitment.**

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I had opportunity for two-way communication with source of information at the time of recruitment (e.g. asking questions about the current organisation (the current organisation as my potential working environment) and receiving answers).	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
The information carried symbolic	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7

meaning in addition to the actual words.							
The information told a lot about the current organisation's values beyond what was said	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
The information was transferred to me through multiple cues such as body gestures, graphics, voice inflection, physical presence.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
The information was transferred to me using various languages such as spoken language, written, numerical language.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
The information was targeted at me.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7

### Section C: Your perception of fitting with values of organisation

5. Please specify to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
The thing that I value in life are very similar to the current organisation's values.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
My personal values match with the current organisation's values.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
The current organisation's values provide a good fit with the thing that I value in life.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7

### Section D: Your feelings about working in the current organisation

6. Please specify to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with the current organisation.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7

I enjoy discussing the current organisation with people outside it.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
I feel 'emotionally attached' to the current organisation.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
The current organisation has a great deal of personal meaning for me.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
It feels a strong sense of belonging to the current organisation.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
If I have my own way, I will be working for the current organisation one year from now.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
I am planning to search for a new job during the next 12 months.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
I frequently think about quitting my job.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
I feel fairly satisfied with my job.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
I find real enjoyment in my work.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
I feel enthusiastic about my work.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7

### Section E: Image of current organization

7. Please rate each value of the current organisation in terms of its relevance for describing the image of your current organisation that you had in mind at the time of recruitment (**Please note: these questions ask the image of the current organisation you perceived before joining it not after recruitment**)

values	Completely irrelevant	Mostly irrelevant	Somewhat irrelevant	Neither relevant nor irrelevant	Somewhat relevant	Mostly relevant	Completely relevant
Achievement-Oriented: Personal success through demonstrating competence according to social standards (ambitious, successful, capable, influential)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
Powerful: social status and prestige, control or dominance over people and resources	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
Stimulating: excitement, novelty, and challenge in life	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
Traditional: respect, commitment, and acceptance of the customs	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7

and ideas that one's culture or religion provides							
Self-directed: independent thought and action--choosing, creating, exploring	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
Universal: understanding, appreciation, tolerance, and protection for the welfare of all people and for nature	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
Benevolent: preserving and enhancing the welfare of those with whom one is in frequent personal contact	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
Conforming: Complying with directions and conforming to rules	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7

### Section F: Credibility of source of information

8. Please specify to what extent you agree or disagree with each statement.

**Please note: The information mentioned in statements is the information about the current organisation (not about the job) that you gained from different sources (e.g. from recruitment advertisement, social media, friends/family who was working in the current organisation etc) at the time of recruitment.**

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
The information (about <b>the current organisation</b> , not the job) was believable.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
The information (about <b>the current organisation</b> , not the job) source seemed credible.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
I am not sure if I trust this information (about <b>the current organisation</b> , not the job).	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
I am uncertain if this information (about <b>the current organisation</b> , not the job) is legitimate.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7



