

PERSON-ORGANIZATION FIT & EMPLOYEE HIRING PRACTICES IN SUSTAINABLE ORGANIZATIONS

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ABSTRACT

Research on sustainable people management has focused on the macro level, while overlooking methods to implement sustainability at the operational level, specifically, in its employee hiring processes. We argue that when hiring processes assess applicants' sustainability values and behaviors, they determine the degree of values alignment or person-organization (P-O) fit between the applicant and the organization. Thus, they result in the strategic hiring of individuals who will support the organization's sustainability efforts. We focus on how

sustainable organizations can use structured behavioral interviews to assess P-O fit. First, we interviewed 10 hiring managers about the role of P-O fit in their hiring processes and their methods for assessing this alignment. We found that managers described using behavioral interviews to assess applicants' fit with organizational sustainability values. However, while significant evidence supports the idea that a structured interview process is essential to obtain reliable and valid information about job candidates, the majority followed an unstructured interview format. Second, we explored how managers can overcome some of the limitations associated with this approach by drawing from established measures and studies, including the General Ecological Behavior (GEB) scale (Kaiser, 1998) and the Sustainability Mindset Indicator (Rimanoczy & Klingenberg, 2021). We present recommendations for incorporating the former as an assessment test and the latter within a structured interview format.

KEYWORDS

Person-organization fit; selection decisions; staffing; behavioral interviews; sustainable HRM

INTRODUCTION

As organizations have focused on sustainability, they have fostered inclusive environmental and human systems (Gladwin, Kennelly, & Krause, 1995) while supporting individuals' economic and noneconomic aspirations (Savitz & Weber, 2006). While researchers in the early 2000s began to examine how the human resource management (HRM) function can support embedding and maintaining sustainability throughout an organization (Boudreau & Ramstad, 2005; DuBois & Dubois, 2012; Harmon, Fairfield, & Wirtenberg, 2010; Haugh & Talwar, 2010; Jabbour & Santos, 2008), much of the early HRM sustainability research adopted a macro, higher-level view (Taylor, Osland, & Egri, 2012). However, little research has focused on sustainability criteria in hiring practices (Harmon et al., 2010; Renwick, Redman, & Maguire, 2013) despite a strong business case that connects sustainability practices to more micro-level topics, e.g., employee recruitment, retention, and performance improvement (Harmon et al., 2010),

Recent research undertaken in Chinese manufacturing firms (Roscoe, Subramanian, Jabbour, & Chong, 2019) and Malaysian manufacturing firms (Yong, Yusliza, Ramayah, Jabbour, Sehnem, & Mani, 2019) examines the relationships

among sustainable HRM practices (including hiring practices), sustainable organizational culture, and sustainable organizational performance. However, while this research confirms positive relationships among these variables, it fails to examine what intermediary processes, particularly perceptual processes, may contribute to this positive relationship. Since strong organizational values are essential to the economic success of sustainable organizations (Gladwin et al., 1995), here we argue that organizational hiring processes that integrate and select candidates based on sustainability values are crucial for HRM systems that support sustainability goals.

In this study, we contribute to the operationalization of sustainability hiring practices by introducing insight from the well-established field of person-organization fit (e.g., Kristof, 1996; Kristof-Brown, 2000; Caldwell, Chatman, & O'Reilly 1990), which examines alignment between an individual's and an organization's values, and provides a valuable framework for considering the importance of integrating sustainability values into hiring processes. Hiring practices that assess sustainability values and behaviors will assist hiring managers in determining which applicants have a stronger person-organization (P-O) fit with their organization, and thus result in the strategic hiring of individuals who support the organization's sustainability efforts.

Our research objective here is two-fold. First, we sought to understand how hiring managers in organizations with a sustainability focus view the importance of P-O fit for their organizations. To achieve this, we interviewed 10 hiring managers about the role of values in their hiring processes and their methods for assessing how well applicants fit the organization. We then drew from the P-O fit literature to examine why it is important to select applicants whose sustainability values align with the organization. Second, to improve the effectiveness of the selection process, we discuss and provide examples of how established measures of pro-environmental/ecological behavior (Kaiser, 1998) can guide the development of a structured interview format. We draw from the Sustainability Mindset tool (Rimanoczy & Klingenberg, 2021) to develop a series of interview questions that assess P-O fit, specifically sustainability values, for inclusion within a structured interview format. This will lead to more reliable and valid assessments of P-O fit for organizations with a sustainability focus.

PERSON-ORGANIZATION FIT AS A KEY TO ORGANIZATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability research has identified strong values (e.g., sustaincentrism, human development, customer focus, ethics) as a key organizational element (Gladwin et al., 1995; Szekely & Knirsch, 2005). In sustainable organizations, person-organization fit (e.g., Kristof, 1996; Caldwell et al., 1990) may be a strategic employee hiring criteria. Additionally, hiring practices, including both recruitment such as activities that create applicant interest in job openings, and selection such as activities to evaluate individuals' qualifications and select a candidate/s for hire, can signal and communicate to applicants the organization's values (Suazo, Martínez, & Sandoval, 2009; Suazo, Martínez, & Sandoval, 2011). In this paper, we use the term "hiring" to represent both recruitment and selection activities, consistent with recent research in sustainable HRM. For example, Renwick et al. (2013), combine the functions of attraction and selection, and Jabbour, Santos, and Nagano (2010) consider job descriptions, recruiting, and selection together when exploring HRM dimensions and environmental management. These hiring practices signal the importance of a sustainability culture by communicating a preference for employees with environmental management knowledge.

Person-organization fit draws from theories of person-environment (P-E), which argue that congruence between individuals, their job environment, and its requirements can result in more positive employee attitudes. Studies of P-O fit examine how this alignment can relate to positive employee attitudes (e.g., job satisfaction and organizational commitment), lower employee stress (Kristof-Brown, Zimmeran, & Johnson, 2005), lower voluntary turnover (Edwards, 1991; Kristof, 1996), and higher productivity/job performance (Edwards, 1991; Kristof, 1996). A meta-analysis by Kristof-Brown and colleagues (2005) supports P-O fit as a strong predictor of organizational commitment and contextual job performance. Additionally, they argue that using P-O fit to hire and retain employees may provide a competitive advantage, particularly given its strong, negative relationship with turnover.

If indeed P-O fit is a key strategic hiring consideration, sustainable organizations should embed multiple measures of this criterion in their hiring activities. Kristof-Brown et al. (2005) found that when P-O fit is assessed across a variety of dimensions, e.g., values, personality, and knowledge, it better predicts attitudinal

and performance outcomes. Thus, in this context, their research supports integrating multiple measures that assess sustainability values. As a result, our focus is first, understanding how hiring managers in sustainable organizations assess P-O fit, and second, understanding how to improve this current approach. By doing so, the reliability and validity of their hiring process will improve, as will the utility of the hiring process.

METHODOLOGY: HIRING MANAGER FIELD INTERVIEWS

To understand how sustainable organizations assess applicants' person-organization fit, we conducted 10 field interviews of managers and executives who participate in their organization's hiring processes with the assistance of students doing their senior theses and independent study projects. Our questions focused on (a) the importance of P-O fit to the organization, (b) the values that are essential for employees to possess, and (c) their process for determining fit between the organization and an applicant. We obtained a convenience sample through our professional networks and we selected organizations with ecological products or services, such as composting, recycling or "green energy," or those who branded themselves with sustainability values. For smaller organizations, we reviewed their websites and mission statements to confirm their values and mission. We contacted interviewees through email and conducted either phone or in-person interviews. The respondents in the sample are all involved in their organizations' hiring process, either making hiring recommendations for the final slate of candidates or in some cases, making the final hiring decision. The respondents represent a diverse collection of job positions ranging from business unit managers and analysts to C-suite officers. We note that our sample includes organizations that range from small to large, representing a wide spectrum of industries and sectors, but we do not report individual and organization names. Table 1 summarizes information about the organizations including the interviewees' function, the size and industrial sector of each organization, the sustainability focus of the organization, and its key values.

Organization	Respondent (Job Function: Gender)	Industry/ Sector	Size/ # of employees	Organization Sustainability Focus	Importance of P-O Fit
A	Senior Business Analyst: Male	Electric utility	Large > 1000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committed to sustainable and clean energy practices, having adopted multiple new, sustainable technologies over recent decades Long-term goal to produce carbon-free energy Assists customers to improve their energy efficiency and adopt renewable energy sources Responsibility to combat climate change while also adapting their operations to respond to current effects of climate change Essential Values: Integrity, teamwork, eco-friendliness, & drive 	Extremely Important
B	Chief Operating Officer: Female	Composting	Small < 100	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offers a holistic, ecological, and ethical approach to farming, gardening, food, and nutrition Committed to efficient farm management and biologically harmonious environments Supports customers' biodynamic farming through customer education videos and blogs Essential Values: Stewardship of earth, respect, & business as tool for social change. 	Imperative
C	President: Male	Consulting	Small < 100	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Works with clients (including solar energy firms) to improve customer relations and market share Employee-focused and recognized as a "best company to work for" in local area Essential Values: Integrity, teamwork, leadership, & service 	Extremely Important
D	President: Male	Consumer services	Small < 100	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitates local-based purchasing of goods and services Gives back a share of its profits to community schools and nonprofit organizations Essential Values: Drive, community, & entrepreneurship 	Extremely Important
E	Customer IT Support Manager: Male	Education (School district)	Large > 1000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fosters partnership between educators, students, parents, and community members. Encourages employees to further their educational development. Work to improve energy efficiency and sustainability of their facilities. Essential Values: Education, teamwork, future-orientation, & sustainability 	Very Important
F	Corporate Manager: Male	Aerospace	Large > 1000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrates safety and sustainability goals (including decreasing waste, greenhouse gas emission, and water usage) into the production process. Essential Values: Integrity, collaboration, innovation, & social impact 	Very Important
G	IT Department Manager: Male	Information technology	Large > 1000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides global customers tools and education on environmental, social, and governance (ESG) criteria to evaluate socially responsible investment. Essential Values: Global responsibility, drive, future orientation, social sustainability (diversity, equity & inclusion), & innovation 	Very Important
H	Human Resource Manager: Male	Software development	Medium < 500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improves supply chain management for sustainable organizations by centralizing information and communication. Offers wellness programs, time off, and work-from-home options. Essential Values: Efficiency & social sustainability (employee wellness) 	Very Important
I	Executive: Male	Professional services	Medium < 500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supports small businesses to create wealth and reach their full potential through talent optimization Essential Values: People and communities, small business and nonprofits, & goodwill 	Very Important
J	Human Resource Manager: Female	Consumer products	Large > 1000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creates healthy and sustainable foods Contributes to community Essential Values: Collaboration & health of people and planet 	Priority

Table 1: Interviewee Sample Description

RESULTS

While these organizations represent a broad cross-section of industries, sectors, and organizational size, we found two general commonalities in their values that extend beyond their emphasis on environmental sustainability. For example, most organizations describe an awareness of the holistic, systemic nature, and interconnectedness that is central to sustainable organizations. Organization A states a felt responsibility to combat climate change, Organization G views itself as a responsible member of a global community, and Organization B's business model is based on the biodynamic farming industry, whose philosophy includes interdependence.

Some view this interconnectedness specific to the communities where they operate. This includes Organization C and J (emphasis on charitable giving to their communities), Organization D (supporting an integrated system of stronger communities and local businesses), and Organization I (supporting the growth and viability of small businesses and nonprofits). Others discuss social impact from the perspective of equity, diversity, and inclusion (e.g., Organization G and F) and employee wellness (Organization H).

Finally, several organizations believe that they fulfill an important purpose in supporting customers' goals to improve their sustainability, whether they are individual consumers or businesses (Organizations A, B, C, G, and H).

Interviewees described organizational values related to their industry, such as innovation, entrepreneurship, drive, and integrity. However, they also discussed the importance of values that are common among sustainable organizations, such as "eco-friendly," "stewardship of the Earth," "service-driven," "passion for communities... giving back," "future-oriented," "social impact," "people and communities," and "impact on people and planet." Next, we summarized the primary themes related to hiring practices from these interviews. We conducted a thematic content analysis of the interview data related to these organizations' hiring strategies, coding specific themes, combining similar ones, and identifying broad categories for these clusters. The main emerging themes included: (a) P-O fit as central to hiring decisions; (b) hiring decisions are often compensatory such that strong P-O fit makes up for some skill deficits; (c) interviews are a primary tool to assess P-O fit.

THE ESSENTIAL ROLE OF P-O FIT

Hiring managers unanimously believe that P-O fit is essential, ranging from “very important,” and “extremely important,” to “a priority,” and “imperative” (see Table 1). The following quotes illustrate the importance of P-O fit.

Manager E stated, “We will hire the best [organizational fit]....” Manager I described this priority as “Our focus is on character first. Will the candidate fit [with others].” Manager G stated, “We prioritize organizational fit. The benefit is a great [employee] willing to take on any challenge.” Others explicitly referred to *cultural fit*: “Our hiring decisions are more so dictated by relevant experience and a *cultural fit* for the company (Manager E),” and “We hire based on experience and cultural fit....” (Manager H).

Some equated perceived P-O fit with other benefits, including applicants having greater adaptability to attitudes that will further strengthen organizational fit. Manager J stated, “We hire for organizational fit... employees tend to be more willing to be coached... and are open to new ways of doing things.” Similarly, Manager G stated, “If they have the education or are fresh out of school, it is easier to train, tailor for the company. [It] happens quite often,” and Manager E stated, “[It] can be easier to train.”

A COMPENSATORY VIEW OF P-O FIT

Managers emphasized a compensatory hiring model, where the selection of job candidates depends upon a composite evaluation of multiple predictors (e.g., job knowledge tests, structured interviews with standardized evaluation scores). They reported weighting P-O fit more heavily, thus the model is compensatory because higher evaluation of heavily weighted predictors will compensate for lower evaluation of other predictors (Ock & Oswald, 2018). While interviewees did not use the term “compensatory model,” their examples clearly illustrate this. Manager H stated, “[A] hiring decision does not come down to education. We may find candidates who have more education... but our hiring decisions are more so dictated by relevant experience and a cultural fit....” Furthermore, managers described a willingness to hire applicants with skill deficiencies as long as they possessed key

organizational values, *and* the deficient skills were ones on which they could be trained. As these quotes illustrate, “trainability” was a common feature.

“We will hire the best fit [for the organization], not necessarily [the best fit for] education... we are willing to train [them]” (Manager F). “We are willing to hire them [if they are a bit underqualified], if they are a good fit... [we are] really big on training the employee, not really a big deal [because] internal training is a focus” (Manager G).

Some specifically referred to an attitude that was trainable: “We can teach skills, unfortunately... we cannot change or teach attitude” (Manager H). “[We’d] rather have coachable attitude and average skills fit” (Manager I) and “A person can learn the job quickly if you have the right character” (Manager J).

DETERMINING P-O FIT THROUGH HIRING INTERVIEWS

Managers described the job interview as the method of choice to assess P-O fit, yet their format varied including situational, behavioral/past experience interviews, panel interviews, and full-day interviews. Manager I stated, “The most important method (for determining P-O fit) is the interview process,” and similarly, Manager E stated, “[We figure out who will fit the role of the job through the interview.” Both Manager A and Manager C described interviews almost identically, stating that they use “deeper-level questions” such as “How does business intersect with society?” and “How are you a steward [to] the earth?” Furthermore, Manager C stated that if candidates express an interest in sustainability and compatible values, but do not have this background, he would “still consider them... but with deeper questioning.”

While most managers did not use the term “behavioral interviews,” their descriptions clearly articulated the use of this method. Behavioral interview questions parallel the work setting in order to determine whether an anticipated behavior will be appropriate for that particular position and organization (Mello, 2014). They can also assess values match, which is essential for a successful service business model (Berry, 1999).

However, only one of the interviewees discussed using *structured* behavioral interviews, in which all applicants receive the same set of questions from a standardized script, which results in a format that is more reliable and valid. The

failure of these managers to use the structured interview format in our sample is consistent with Dipboye, Wooten, and Halverson's (2004: 312) observation that while several decades of research support the psychometric properties and effectiveness of structured interviews, "given the subjective and casual manner in which applicants are typically interviewed, ... we suspect that most employers are far from this." Similarly, Roulin and Bangerter (2012) lament that despite the significant evidence supporting the increased validity of structured interview, managers do not commonly use it.

In sum, managers articulated a clear relationship between their organization's sustainability values and the importance of P-O fit; this criterion was a priority. They also described a compensatory view in which they were willing to waive some skills or experience criteria (which applicants could acquire through training) in favor of hiring someone who was a very strong cultural fit. Our study supports the importance of P-O fit for managers in sustainable organizations and we find that they most often evaluate this through unstructured behavioral interviews. Since research suggests that due to its weak reliability, this approach is less effective for evaluating candidates, we explore how organizations can strengthen the reliability and validity of their hiring practices by first, integrating measures of applicants' sustainability values and pro-environmental/ecological behaviors, and second, developing structured interview questions to assess P-O fit.

APPROACHES TO STRENGTHEN ASSESSMENT OF P-O FIT

As sustainable organizations seek to hire applicants whose personal values align with and support the organization's values, written selection tests focused on P-O fit can support strategic and effective hiring decisions. As previously noted, when organizations assess P-O fit across several dimensions, they can better predict an applicant's future job attitudes and performance (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005), and in high turnover jobs, P-O fit can better predict retention (McCulloch & Turban, 2007). Thus, we examine current approaches to assess P-O fit and how sustainability-oriented measures can supplement these.

The most common approach to assess how well a job applicant fits an organization's culture is a direct approach using the organizational culture profile (OCP) instrument (O'Reilly, Chatman, & Caldwell, 1991). Moreover, while

organizations commonly use interest inventories, which report individuals' stated career or job interests, they do not necessarily consider them methods for assessing P-O fit. However, when individuals score high on an interest that overlaps with the organization's culture and stated values, and the organization uses this data to evaluate these candidates for hire, they are essentially using an *indirect* approach to assess the fit between the applicant and the organization. Here we will briefly discuss both approaches and highlight how their utility for sustainable organizations could be strengthened when applicants complete survey instruments that specifically focus on sustainability.

Marmenout (2007) notes that the organizational culture profile (OCP) (O'Reilly et al., 1991) is the most commonly used measure for P-O fit and that according to the OCP, every organization falls under one of these profiles or values orientation: (1) innovation; (2) stability; (3) people orientation; (4) outcome orientation; (5) easygoing; (6) detail orientation; and (7) team orientation. Measuring P-O fit involves first, developing an *organizational profile*. Researchers provide the OCP standard survey, consisting of 54 value statements representing these seven profiles, to a sample of organizational members. Respondents then rate their organization's culture according to these dimensions. When researchers aggregate these responses, they produce the organization's specific OCP.

Thus, if current organization members rate the values statements related to innovation the highest, this results in the identification of innovation as the organization's culture profile. The second step is to assess *individual preferences* by asking a larger set of individuals to rate the 54-items according to "How important is it for this characteristic to be a part of the organization you work for?" The third and final step is to calculate a P-O fit score for each respondent by correlating their *individual preference profile* with the *organizational profile*. After organizations develop their OCP, they can administer these measures to applicants and select those who best match the OCP. However, as noted, the OCP items do not measure sustainability values, but rather, much broader concepts such as innovation and team orientation.

Another possibility for assessing P-O fit is to customize interest inventory assessments, where applicants complete a series of questions about their interests and they receive feedback on relevant career paths. The Strong Interest Inventory, a widely used tool, was recently updated to "reflect a work landscape reshaped

by technological revolution and social evolution" (CPP Inc., 2012). While it now incorporates measures of sustainability career *interests*, it does not measure individual *behaviors* nor *motives*. Why do behaviors and motives matter? A strong P-O fit involves individual values *and* behaviors aligning with the organization's values. Organizational success depends on creating and delivering sustainable products and services, which in turn relies upon the employees' ability to continue the cycle of sustainable processes. Thus, there is clearly an opportunity to adopt selection test measures that assess sustainability and ecological behaviors.

One example of a scale to measure ecological behavior is Kaiser's (1998) General Ecological Behavior (GEB) scale, which recognizes that some ecological behaviors are more difficult to carry out than others and that ecological behaviors are not only influenced by concern for the environment, but also by the specific context in which behavior occurs. Thus, the context may facilitate or impede ecological behavior. Kaiser's (1998) GEB scale includes six domains: ecological garbage removal, water and power conservation, ecologically conscious consumer behavior, garbage reduction, volunteering in nature protection activities, and ecological automobile use (for scale items see Kaiser, 1998). By asking applicants about a broad set of ecological behaviors, hiring managers are more likely to assess accurately an individual's pro-environmental/sustainable behavior because they are more likely to capture the contextualized connection between the individual's concern for the environment and their behavior. Additionally, the GEB Scale was developed for cross-cultural comparisons; it is generalizable, as its validity has been established in different national contexts (Kaiser & Biel, 2000).

Additionally, managers might look to research in other fields that use assessment methods to evaluate individuals' orientations to sustainability, including methods that cultivate sustainability education. For example, the Sustainability Mindset Indicator (Rimanoczy & Klingenberg, 2021) allows individuals to develop an awareness of their own sustainability orientation. Educators and coaches use the Sustainability Mindset Indicator to help students to develop a mindset to act for the good of people and the planet. This work has a focus on holistic human development toward sustainability, and it considers an ecological worldview, a systems perspective, spiritual intelligence, and emotional intelligence.

Given that researchers developed various instruments to assess individuals' values, beliefs, and purpose relating to environmental sustainability, Rimanoczy and Klingenberg (2021) conducted a detailed review of sustainability assessment instruments starting with scales developed in the 1970s. This includes the new environmental paradigm (Dunlap & Van Liere, 1978) and the scale for the measurement of ecological attitudes and knowledge (Maloney, Ward, & Braucht, 1975). These instruments were developed for research and pedagogical applications. As we advocate for the need to ensure P-O fit in hiring decisions, we propose using existing instruments to assess the job applicants' orientation toward the environment, and that these guide the development of a structured interview format.

Rimanoczy and Klingenberg (2021) describe a sustainability focus that is both internal, for example, sustainability values and beliefs, and external, for example, sustainable behaviors and habits. This approach is consistent with our earlier discussion highlighting the importance that organizations not only assess values but also behaviors. We suggest that hiring managers integrate structured interview questions that assess both applicants' internal and external sustainability focus. Drawing from Rimanoczy and Klingenberg's (2021) work, which assesses individual's sustainability mindset and values, below we begin to develop a set of suggested structured interview questions.

Managers can assess sustainability values by asking applicants clear open-ended questions that invite them to discuss how they understand the current state of environmental and social challenges. As part of a structured interview format, managers should ask each applicant the same set of questions. For example, they might ask the following:

- *What do you see as the most significant challenges affecting our planet right now?*
- *What do you see as the most significant challenges affecting our society right now?*
- *Do you see a relationship between those?*
- *How do you see your actions at work and at home contributing to the problems facing our planet and society?*

- *How do you see your actions at work and at home helping to reduce the problems faced by our planet and society?*

LIMITATIONS, PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS, AND FUTURE DIRECTION

Our findings suggest that hiring managers value and prioritize P-O fit in the hiring process and that their primary assessment tool is the behavioral interview, which can highlight sustainability values. We also found that the managers' reliance on an unstructured format limits the reliability and validity of their process. The fact that only one of the interviewees discussed using structured interviews is consistent with Dipboye et al.'s (2004) observation that this practice is strikingly absent. This study begs the question: if hiring managers firmly believe in and see the value of assessing P-O fit through behavioral interviews, but they rely primarily on an unstructured format, how can they improve their process? The literature suggests that managers should adopt a *structured format* for all interviewees. By developing a standardized script, all interviewees would receive the same questions, thus, increasing the reliability of the process. An important outcome of a structured interview process is to decrease the potential bias that can enter their hiring process, which only highlights its value.

However, we also reviewed current approaches to measuring P-O fit using established scales and noted that the most widely adopted instruments fail to include sustainability values. As a result, we urge managers to consider adopting established scales that measure ecological behaviors, such as Kaiser's (1998) GEB Scale, to assess P-O fit related to sustainability behavior. A strength of the GEB Scale (Kaiser, 1998) is that it allows managers to capture job applicants' sustainability behavior profile across different contexts. A final consideration as to how these recommendations can strengthen the validity of the interview process is the extent to which recent studies of corporate sustainability (CS) include measures of pro-environmental behaviors. While Antolín-López, Delgado-Ceballos, and Montiel (2016) found divergence among the corporate sustainability (CS) dimensions measured, they found consensus about the inclusion of environmental performance (e.g., use of renewable resources and water and energy conservation issues). If external stakeholders judge organizations' CS performance according to these dimensions, sustainable organizations should measure a job candidate's behaviors and values in this area as well.

From a person-environment perspective, while a good P-O fit relates to more positive job attitudes, a P-O mismatch can relate to job dissatisfaction. When individuals identify with an organization, they will have greater engagement because they support sustainability goals (Fairfield, 2019). However, when a P-O fit mismatch occurs, it may lead to stress or other negative psychological outcomes spilling into non-work situations (Kalleberg, 2007), and which encourage individuals to leave the organization to find one that is a better fit.

In closing, the HRM function can support sustainability goals at the operational level through its hiring practices. When used during the hiring stages, these methods will provide data that assist managers in strategically selecting the candidates with the best P-O fit. In this study, we summarized literature that supports a link between P-O fit, organizational culture, and sustainability performance. By measuring P-O fit and including sustainability values as a strategic, employee hiring criteria, managers can ensure values alignment between individuals and organizations. More specifically, by using survey measures of ecological behaviors, followed by structured behavioral interviews, hiring managers increase the likelihood of achieving a strong P-O fit. In doing so, they will minimize hiring mismatches, supporting the goal of creating a workforce that experiences greater levels of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and lower voluntary turnover.

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