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Congruence of Person-Group and Person-Vocation Fits towards Career Advancement

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Abstract: the purpose of this study is to examine the congruence of person-group fit and person-vocation fit towards career advancement among Malaysian women engineers. Research data was gathered from a sample of 165 of women engineers in Selangor by using self-report questionnaire. The results indicated that person-group fit generally support the congruence between respondent and her career advancement (objectively and subjectively) with medium effect size. However, her person-vocation fit only congruence towards her subjective career advancement with small effect size. Thus, it becomes necessary to identify the practical implications of the outcomes related to improving women engineers career advancement in order to motivate them and improve their performance.

Key words: *Person-Group Fit, Person-Vocation Fit, Career Advancement*

INTRODUCTION

Malaysian's government open policy to provide education for all her citizen has resulted in both the male and female students being treated equally based on merit. The emergence of women taking technical course started in the seventies and the numbers then was relatively small. However, by the eighties due to increasing number of universities offering technical courses more women began enrolling in engineering courses.

Despite the increasing number of female students in technical fields, the male dominance in the area of engineering is still expected to persist for a long time. Even in the developed nations, the number of women engineers are undeniably low. This scenario may occur due to the issue of career readiness. According to [1], the problem self-career readiness is one issue that is always experienced by students in Malaysia and this problem may cause confusion in their career choices and thus affect the performance of the industry organization.
[2] also noted that female students were found to be lacking in terms of readiness to determine future careers than males. Not only that, women engineers who are in the job industry are also having a hard time in advancing their careers [3] [4].

This may be due to careers in engineering require people who have the specific skills and knowledge related to the technical and mental and physical high. Thus, this study aims to examine the congruence of person-group fit and person-vocation fit towards career advancement among Malaysian women engineers.

LITERATURE REVIEWS

Career advancement (CA) was defined as the chances of getting promoted and obtaining career development experiences, CA prospect is positively an essential source of motivated work behavior. Among the reasons for the lack of advancement opportunities in many companies is a fact about the purpose of CA are vary between perceptions of an employee with another employee [5] [6]. For some individuals, CA means achieving a top position in a particular company and for others it can mean getting experience in various professional fields in order to create unique and versatile role for themselves [7].

This is the reason on why previous researchers had defined CA in variety of dimension. For example, [7] themselves had referred CA as senior management position, [8] defined CA as monetary awards, and [9] discussed it as compensation and career satisfaction. This makes it difficult to meet the needs of everyone. For this study, researchers would like to stress out that CA is related with promotion, salary increment, and career satisfaction where they can be classified as objective CA (promotion and salary increment) and subjective CA (career satisfaction).

The objective careers are generally measured by tangible work-related outcomes that accumulates as a result of one's work experiences (extrinsic visible) like income, promotions, job level/position, power etc. [10]. While subjective CA is defined in terms of the positive psychological outcomes focused on intrinsic aspects like career satisfaction. is intrinsic, intangible, and measured in terms of psychological, related to a person's internal reflection and evaluation across his or her individually relevant dimensions and dispositional factors such as job and career satisfaction, sense of value, learning, self-awareness, etc. [11].

Person-group (P-G) fit has unique norms and values different from organizations in which there are [12]. Therefore, fit between person and subunits will be different from person-organization fit [13]. The effects of local culture and frequent communication among the employees working in the same location mean for person-group fit more than person organization fit [14]. This type of fit is normally based on the principle that many job roles require interpersonal interaction with group members in order to be successfully performed. It also depends on the notion that position in the work requires interaction among employees.

Person-group fit identifies both supplementary and complementary aspects of fit necessary for successfully working with co-workers in a workgroup or a team [15]. Supplementary fit involves employees sharing similar. Because all group members have essential features and some missing affecting group performance, the performance increase the time an employee's lack is complemented by other group members' remarkable properties [16].

[17] conducted an empirical study in which they showed that PO, PG, and PJ forms of fit simultaneously predicted work satisfaction. In a similar vein, study by [18] also indicated that P-G Fit influences the job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and career plans of members. Their finding is in line with [19] who established that the more they perceive that work with the people in their work group is one of the best part of their work group is one of their job, they more they will show their commitment to their CA.

Another construct involved in this study was person-vocation fit. Generally, person-vocation fit represents the broadest fit domain and focuses on the compatibility between an individual and his or her career choice. Based on vocational choice theory, which demonstrates the matching between various career paths and individuals' needs, abilities and interest, person-vocation fit demonstrates that specific types of person are required for different type of vocations. In other word, this fit explains that individuals are best suited to occupations that are congruent with their self-concept. Person-vocation fit also conceptualized as interest congruence or the "degree of match between the individual's vocational interests and aspects of their work environment" [20].

Previous studies on person-vocation fit have mainly focused on career selection theories and have encouraged individuals to choose their careers based on their interests [21]. Other than that, the study conducted by [22] who establish that person-vocational fit generally support the congruence between a person and his or her occupation is related to positive work outcomes such as increased work satisfaction, career stability and persistence, and career success. In the same vein, study by [23] has shown that facilitating the fulfillment of one's needs results in satisfaction with work.

The importance of both objective and subjective CA is likely to be evidenced in this study, given that Malaysian women engineers have a high performance orientation, high collectivism and a strong relationship orientation. Researchers therefore hypothesize that:

H_1: The extent of person-group fit by Malaysian women engineers will be positively related to objective CA.

H_2: The extent of person-group fit by Malaysian women engineers will be positively related to subjective CA.

H_3: The extent of person-vocation fit by Malaysian women engineers will be positively related to objective CA.

H_4: The extent of person-vocation fit by Malaysian women engineers will be positively related to subjective CA.

Figure 1 proposes the research framework which consists of independent variable (person-group and person-vocation fit) and dependent variable (objective CA and subjective CA). There is direct relationship between (1) person-group fit and objective CA; (2) person-group fit and subjective CA; (3) person-vocation fit and objective CA; and (4) person-vocation and subjective CA.

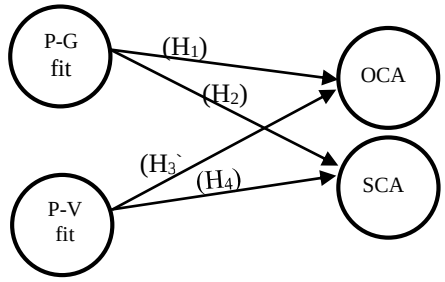

Figure 1: Research Framework

METHODOLOGY

The sample of this study consisted of 165 Malaysian women engineers located at Selangor, Malaysia. The majority of the respondents in the sample, that is 814 respondents were ages between 21-30, 75 represents 31-40, while 9 for 41-50. Concerning marital status of the respondents, 67 account for unmarried, 96 accounts for married, and 2 are divorced. For the job level, majority of them are engineers (116), followed by senior engineers (46) and 3 of total respondents are manager. In terms of respondents' job title, all of them are holding Engr. title.

The data were gathered by using self-report questionnaire. 3-item of objective CA were developed by researchers of this study themselves. While, 5-item regarding subjective CA were adapted from [24]. These items were widely used in previous empirical studies with the consistent reliability result of 0.88. Besides, person-group fit was assessed with a 10-item adapted from [25]. This measurement has demonstrated an internal consistency reliability of 0.89. Participants were asked to respond, along a five-point Likert scale (ranged from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5) to the following questions:

How would you describe the match between your emphasis and your group's emphasis on the following values?

1. Honesty
2. Achievement
3. Fairness
4. Helping others

How would you describe the match between your goals and your group's goals on the following dimensions?

5. Reward
6. The amount of effort expected
7. Competition with other groups

How would you describe the match between you and your group members on the following characteristics?

8. Personality
9. Work style
10. Lifestyle

Meanwhile, 11-item was adapted from [26] to measure person-vocation fit with 0.97 of its an internal consistency reliability. Again, individuals were asked to respond, along a five-point Likert scale which ranged from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5) to the following questions:

1. My profession represents my personal values.
2. My values prevent me from fitting in with my profession because they are different from my profession's values
3. My current profession represents my personal values better than other professions.
4. My values match of fit the values of my profession.
5. My profession accurately represents the qualities of my personality.
6. My profession requires me to be someone I am not.
7. My profession represents my interests.
8. I could not imagine a profession that would fit my interests better than my current profession
9. If I could start over, I would choose a profession that matches my interests better than my current profession.
10. My profession offers me everything I seek from a profession.
11. My profession fulfils my professional desires.

The results of the data that was analyzed using PLS software. This start with the initial screening and preliminary analysis discussion. The descriptive

statistics results study is presented in two components. In first component, the measurement model was assessed with a view to determining the individual item reliability, internal consistency reliability, convergent validity and discriminant validity. In second components, structural model results were reported which included significant of path coefficients, level of R^2 value, and effect size.

RESULT ANALYSES AND DISCUSSIONS

Result of this study suggests that women engineers perceived objective CA moderately (M = 0.52 and SD = 0.530). Thus, the level of perceived objective CA among women engineers is moderate. It means that women engineers derive good promotion and salary. Meanwhile, for subjective CA, the result of this study recommends that women engineers perceived subjective CA relatively high (M = 4.52 and SD = 0.408). Thus, the level of perceived subjective CA among women engineers is high. It means that women engineers derive well-meaning career satisfaction. The person-vocation fit appeared as the highest compared to person-group fit with the score of mean at 4.511 and standard deviation at .440. While for person-group fit, reported the score of means at 4.506 with standard deviation score at .401 each was also in the high range.

Before any relationship analysis is performed, there are some checks that need to be done in advance to ensure that the data used will be consistent with the minimum acceptable level suggested by [27]. In assessing individual item reliability, it was assessed by examining the outer loading of each construct's measure. In line with laid rule of thumb for retaining items with loading between .40 and .70 [27], all 20 items in this study have loading between .499 and .811.

Next, the results for composite reliability coefficients of the latent construct was ranged from .799 and .894. Other than that, the AVE of each latent construct for this study has ranged from .513 until .601. Whereas, the composite reliability coefficients of the latent construct ranged from .841 and .880. All of these results are in line with the minimum acceptable level and based on the results, all constructs passed the threshold suggested by [27].

After ascertained the measurement model, then the next step is to assess the structural model of the study with a view to get the results. In doing that, standard bootstrapping procedure with adequate number of 5,000 bootstrap samples were used to assess the significance of the path coefficients. The evaluation results of structural model of the study are summarized in Table 2. According to the table, the outcome of the analysis revealed that person-group fit is significantly related to objective CA (β= .192, t= 1.814, p≤ .05) and subjective CA (β= .168, t= 6.092, p≤ .05). Thus hypotheses H_1 and H_2 are supported. This finding of this study is consistent with the study of [19] who established that the more they perceive that work with the people in their work group is one of the best part of their work group is one of their job, they more they will show their commitment to their CA. The foregoing also consistent with the earlier study conducted by [18] who indicated that person-group fit influence the job satisfaction and career growth of members.

However, the result also revealed that person-vocation fit is not related to objective CA (β= .019, t= .192, p≥ .05). It is mean that the hypothesis H_3 is not supported. While, person-vocation fit is related to subjective CA (β= .145, t= 5.169, p≤ .05). Thus, hypothesis H_4 is supported. In the same vein, this finding is supported by the study conducted by [22] who establish that person-vocational fit generally support the congruence between a person and his or her occupation is related to positive work outcomes such as increased work satisfaction, career stability and persistence, and career success.

Table 1: Results of relationships

Relationship	Beta Value	Std. Error	T Value	P value
P-G -> OCA	.192	.106	1.814	.035
P-G -> SCA	.168	.028	6.092	.000
P-V -> OCA	.019	.101	.192	.424
P-V -> SCA	.145	.028	5.169	.000

As shown in the Table 2, the effect sizes for the perceived person-group fit and perceived person-vocation fit on objective CA, were 0.036 and 0.001 respectively. Hence, in line with Cohen's guideline [28], the effect sizes of these two latent variables can be considered as small and none respectively. Also, Table 2 indicates the effect sizes for the perceived person-group fit and perceived person-vocation fit on subjective CA were 0.184 and 0.176 separately. Following Cohen's guideline [28], the effect sizes of these two latent variables can be considered as medium respectively.

Table 2: Effect size of relationships

		R^2 Included	R^2 excluded	f^2	Effect size
OCA	P-G	.248	.221	.036	Small
	P-V	.248	.247	.001	None
SCA	P-G	.506	.415	.184	Medium
	P-V	.506	.419	.176	Medium

It confirms that person-group fit had created it positive effect on objective and subjective CA. This study found that person-group fit significantly

related to both dimension of women engineers' CA (objective and subjective CA). Without a doubt, if a women engineers has a good person-group fit, this can lead to good promotion, salary and satisfaction in their career.

With regards to the women engineers 'view, this study also found that person-vocation fit is not congruence towards objective CA. This is because in the view of women engineers, they do not expect person-vocation fit to relate to their personal career expectation in the number of promotion or salary increment. In their view, person-vocation fit had been displayed without the expectation to gain its benefits, particularly towards their personal convenience (e.g. objective CA) such as the number of promotion and salary increment; but person-vocation fit was only performed to satisfy their career internally (subjective CA) such as meeting their goals for advancement new skills or their overall career goals.

In addition, this study also successfully carried out the suggestion proposed by [29] in which they proposed a nested view for incorporating person-vocation fit into an integrative multidimensional theory of person-environment fit. This is a string from the empirical study conducted by [30] showed that fit was perceived to result primarily from interactions with the organization, job and groups of co-workers, with person-vocation fit seemingly being less important.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on findings of the study, it can be said that this study has provided evidence to the body of knowledge concerning the investigation on direct effect on the relationship between person-group fit, person-vocation fit and CA. Moreover, these fits are highly needed especially as regards women engineers' career success. Such policies as to trying to encourage more women into the engineering profession should be encouraged i.e. critical mass which has to do with more training, recruitment and retention of women into the engineering profession.

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