
Antecedents and Outcomes of Experienced Meaningful Work: A Person-Job Fit Perspective

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Meaningful work has become an increasingly valued job outcome for many employees. It is also receiving increased attention in the management and organizational behavior research literatures. In this study, antecedents and consequences of meaningful work are examined. A particular type of person-job fit, self-concept-job fit, is proposed and found to be a significant predictor of meaningful work. Meaningful work is also found to be significantly correlated with intentions to exit the organization. Results indicate that meaningful work is as strongly related to intentions to leave as are the more traditional job attitudes included in many models of employee turnover. This study contributes to the research literature by examining a person-job fit approach to meaningful work, provides evidence for the need to expand the person-job fit construct, and provides empirical support for existing theory.

Key Words: Job attitudes: Meaningful work, Person-job fit, employee turnover

Introduction

Meaningful and challenging work experiences have become increasingly important to individuals in the last few decades (Conger, 1994). Recent surveys suggest that many workers rank significance and meaningfulness of work as a more valued job outcome than most external rewards (Caudron, 1997; Towers Perrin, 2003). As attitudes toward work and employment shift, there is much evidence to suggest that today's workers desire qualitatively different outcomes than workers of past generations and that meaningful work is emerging as one of the most valued job outcomes that individuals expect from work and employment.

A recent study by consulting firm Towers Perrin (2003) indicates that meaningful work experiences are not only valuable to employees, but that experienced meaningful work by employees can also provide value to the organization. The study concluded that meaningful work experiences formed the foundation for employee engagement in organizations. Employee engagement refers to the degree to which employees are involved in their jobs

and committed to their organization. Furthermore, engagement was strongly correlated with both employee retention and the willingness to engage in discretionary pro-social behaviors. As organizations struggle to reduce costs and increase effectiveness, issues of retention management and citizenship behaviors have both received increased attention from management as potential sources of value to organizations. The Towers Perrin study stated that building employee engagement may be the most critical task confronting organizations today. The implication of this study is that organizations must consider how to create meaningful work experiences for employees, especially for purposes of employee retention and motivation to engage in discretionary pro-social behaviors, such as helping behaviors and compliance behaviors.

Although meaningful work is valuable to both employees and employers, the issue has only recently received considerable attention in the management and organizational behavior research literature. The construct has been included in models of job design and empowerment for some time (Hackman & Oldham, 1976; Spreitzer, 1995). However, researchers are giving increased attention to

examining the correlates of meaningful work in an attempt to identify antecedents and consequences of meaningfulness (May, Gilson & Harter, 2004; Pratt & Ashforth, 2003) and examine how meaningful work operates in the work experiences of employees (Wrzesniewski, 2003). The present study adds to the meaningful work research by examining the antecedent role of a particular type of person-job fit for meaningful work. The relationship between meaningful work and worker intent to leave the organization is also examined. This study, therefore, provides insight into one method for creating meaningful work for employees and finds evidence for the value of meaningful work to organizations by providing empirical evidence for the relationship between meaningful work and worker intentions to leave.

The study makes three contributions to the literature. First, as stated above, it examines antecedents and consequences of meaningful work and proposes that meaningful work is an important job attitude that needs further research. A person-job fit approach to creating meaningful work experiences for employees is examined. Secondly, the study proposes expanding the person-job fit domain to include a new type of fit referred to as self-concept-job fit. The role of self-concept-job fit as an antecedent of meaningful work is examined. The study challenges management researchers to expand the person-job fit domain beyond the traditional types of person-job fit (demand-abilities, supply-value) that have been the focus of person-job fit research. Therefore, the study also contributes to the person-job fit literature. Thirdly, empirical support is found for the self-concept based theory of work motivation proposed by Shamir (1991) that will be discussed below. To this author's knowledge, the self-concept based theory has never been empirically tested. This study provides an empirical test of the ideas proposed by Shamir. It contributes to the research literature by providing empirical evidence for the validity of existing theory.

Person-Job Fit and Meaningful Work

Conceptualization of Self-Concept-Job Fit

Shamir (1991) proposed a self-concept based theory of work motivation. It highlights the importance of matching the individual's self-concept with job tasks

for work motivation. Implicit in the theory is the mediating role of "experienced meaningful work." The theory implies that meaningful work is a function of the interaction between work tasks, the context in which the work is performed, and the individual's self-concept. When job tasks match the individual's self-concept, the individual will perceive the work as meaningful. Experienced meaningfulness of work has motivating potential and is related to increased levels of work motivation that underlies numerous work related behaviors. Although this is not a formal theory of meaningful work, the theory does provide insight into a source of meaningful work. The implication is that meaningful work can be created by the fit between worker self-concept and job tasks.

Building on the theory proposed by Shamir (1991), Scroggins (2003) and Scroggins and Benson (in press) introduced the self-concept-job fit (SC-J) construct. They argued that this type of person-job fit was conceptually and empirically distinct from person-organization fit, and from the more traditional types of person-job fit (demand-abilities, supply-value) that have been the focus of person-job fit research. The person-job fit construct was argued to be multidimensional in nature and to consist of the self-concept-job fit, demand-abilities fit, and supply-value fit constructs. Furthermore, it was argued that the three types of person-job fit and person-organization fit were differentially related to particular job attitudes and work behaviors. Scroggins (2003) found empirical support for the distinctiveness of the self-concept-job fit construct, and developed and validated a perceptual self-concept-job fit measure through factor analytic and construct validation studies.

The idea of self-concept-job fit is based on a hierarchical model of the self-concept (Byrne, 1996; Shavelson, Hubner & Stanton, 1976). A substantial amount of construct validity research (Marsh & Hattie, 1996) seems to indicate support for the validity of a hierarchical model of the self-concept. According to the hierarchical model, the self-concept consists of a general self-concept with multiple dimensions. One dimension is composed of the beliefs an individual possesses regarding personal characteristics and traits. A second dimension may consist of values or different roles the individual performs. Another dimension includes the evaluative

component or self-esteem, and reflects the manner in which the individual evaluates the self.

Using this model, self-concept-job fit is proposed to occur when the performance of job tasks produce perceptions and feelings within the individual that are congruent with the individual's self perceptions and/or ideal self. The individual perceives the knowledge, skills, abilities, and behaviors involved in task performance to be consistent with their self-declarative knowledge. Performing the task confirms the characteristics, beliefs, values, and roles the individual perceives to be characteristic of the self. In this way, the individual's sense of self is confirmed through the performance of job tasks and the consequences of task performance (Scroggins & Benson, in press).

Self-concept-job fit also occurs when task performance provides the individual with perceptions and feelings consistent with self-esteem. Since self-esteem is the evaluative component of the self-concept (Campbell, Assanand & Di Paula, 2000; Campbell, Trapnell, Heine, Katz, Lavallee & Lehman, 1996), fit will be achieved when task performance and consequences enable the individual to view self in a manner consistent with their self-evaluation.

Relationship between Self-Concept-Job Fit and Meaningful Work

Social psychological literature supports the propositions that self-concept-job fit is positively correlated with meaningful work, and more strongly related than person-organization fit and the other person-job fit types. Social psychological research suggests that individuals are motivated toward self-consistency. People have a need to maintain a consistent self-image, and prefer information that is consistent with their existing self-concepts. Individuals will also engage in behaviors that help them maintain a sense of consistency (Hoyle, Kernis, Leary & Baldwin, 1999).

Self-Verification Theory (Swann, 1983, 1990) provides one perspective on how individuals seek to maintain self-consistency. According to this theory, individuals are motivated to verify, validate, and sustain existing conceptions of the self (Hoyle et al., 1999). Self-consistency increases the degree to which

individuals feel that they can control and manipulate circumstances in their environment. A stable self-concept enables individuals to negotiate social reality and understand how to behave effectively in a given social situation. For this reason, individuals prefer information that is consistent with their self-concepts and dislike information that is inconsistent with their conception of self (Hoyle et al.). Therefore, it follows that information, roles, or behaviors that are consistent with the individual's self-concept will be experienced as meaningful. When the job tasks provide the individual with feedback or allow the individual to engage in roles or behaviors consistent with individual self-concept, work should be experienced as meaningful and motivational. Self-Verification Theory provides support for a self-concept based theory of work motivation (Shamir, 1991), a self-concept-job fit and meaningful work relationship, and the proposition that self-concept-job fit will be more strongly related to meaningful work than demand-abilities, supply-value, or person-organization fit.

Hypothesis 1: Self-Concept-job fit will be positively correlated with meaningful work.

Hypothesis 2: Because self-concept-job fit involves self-verification, self-concept-job fit will be more strongly related to meaningful work than demand-abilities, supply-value, and person-organization fit.

Relationship between Meaningful Work and Intentions to Quit

The Nature of Meaningful Work

Based on the conceptualization of the self-concept discussed above, work may be said to be experienced as meaningful when it is consistent with an individual's perceptions of who they are. Individuals also experience work as meaningful when it confirms their perceptions of the ideal self, or what they want to become. Work will also be experienced as meaningful when the performance of job tasks enhances the individual's self-esteem. Consistency between work experiences and the individual's perception of self may enhance self-esteem, which will also make the work seem more meaningful. This definition of meaningful work appears to be consistent with the idea of job-self-concept congruence and meaningful work proposed by

Shamir (1991) and the model of self-concept-job fit discussed above.

The Relationship between Meaningful Work and Intentions to Quit

Turnover intention has been defined as the conscious and deliberate willingness to leave the organization, and has been described as the last in a sequence of withdrawal cognitions that also includes thinking of quitting and searching for alternative employment (Tett & Meyer, 1993). Shamir (1991) and Schneider (1987) provide a theoretical basis for the assertion that individuals who do not experience meaningful work will more likely perceive a lack of fit between themselves and the organization. Schneider argues that individuals will leave organizations in which they feel they do not fit. It has been argued above that individuals will perceive fit with a job or organization that provides them with self-confirming information and experiences they consider meaningful. If the individual does not experience job fit, they will not find work meaningful, and will attempt to select themselves out of the organization.

Hypothesis 3: Meaningful work will be negatively correlated with employee intentions to leave.

Many models of employee turnover stress the importance of the role of job satisfaction and organizational commitment in the turnover process (Allen, Shore & Griffeth, 2003; Hom & Griffeth, 1995). In order to argue that meaningful work is an important attitude for employee retention, it will be helpful to show that this attitude is as strongly related to withdrawal as the variables of job satisfaction and organizational commitment that are included in many turnover models. It is argued that Self-Verification Theory (Swann 1983, 1990) and the Attraction-Selection-Attrition Model (Schneider, 1987) provide support for the hypothesis that meaningful work is more strongly correlated with intentions to quit than job satisfaction and organizational commitment. The rationale is that meaningful experiences provide the employee with self-verifying information and make the job and organization attractive to the individual. The other job attitudes do not necessarily involve self-verification and will have lesser impact on attraction, making it more likely that the employee will form an intention to leave.

Hypothesis 4: Meaningful work will be more strongly, negatively correlated with intentions to leave than either job satisfaction or organizational commitment.

Method

Subjects

The sample ($N = 208$) consisted of subjects employed in seven different organizations. The organizations were very diverse and operated in very different types of industries including health care, telemarketing, insurance, accounting, the food and beverage industry, and the sales and retail industry. Data were collected from subjects at various levels within each organizational structure, from entry level positions to senior management positions. The sample consisted of 117 women (56.3%) and 91 men (43.7%). The mean age of subjects was 34.89 years ($SD = 12.53$). Subjects had been employed in their respective job an average of 3.15 years ($SD = 5.30$). Length of employment with an organization ranged from 1 month to 31 years ($M = 3.74$ years; $SD = 5.75$).

Measures

A self-report questionnaire was administered that assessed the perceptual fit and attitudinal variables in the study. The questionnaire contained perceptual measures of the four fit types developed and validated by Scroggins (2003). It also contained a measure of experienced meaningful work, affective organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and intentions to quit the organization.

Perceptions of self-concept-job fit Employees' perceptions of self-concept-job fit were measured by a five-item measure developed by Scroggins (2003). Scroggins provides a detailed account of the development and construct validation of each of the perceptual fit scales used in this study. Evidence of the construct validity of the self-concept job fit scale was established through confirmatory factor analytic and nomological validation procedures. Scroggins reports a coefficient alpha of .74 for the scale.

Perceptions of demand-abilities fit Employees' perceptions of demand-abilities fit were measured with a six-item measure. Construct validity evidence

for the scale was established through confirmatory factor analytic and nomological validation methods. Coefficient alpha of the scale was reported to be .70.

Perceptions of supply-value fit Employees' perceptions of supply-value fit were measured with a seven-item measure. Confirmatory factor analysis and nomological validation procedures provided evidence for the construct validity of this scale. Scroggins (2003) reports a coefficient alpha of .84 for the scale.

Perceptions of person-organization fit Employees' perceptions of person-organization fit were measured with a 10-item measure. Construct validity evidence was established using confirmatory factor analysis and nomological validity procedures. Scroggins (2003) reports a coefficient alpha of .85 for the scale.

Meaningful work Meaningful work was measured by the 10-item Engagement in Meaningful Work Scale (EMWS, Treadgold, 1999). Treadgold reports good psychometric properties for the scale. Coefficient alpha is reported at .87 and the scale has been found to correlate well with measures of stress, depression and clarity of self-concept.

Organizational commitment Affective organizational commitment was measured by the Affective Organizational Commitment Scale (Allen & Meyer, 1990). Good psychometric properties for the scale have been reported. Allen and Meyer (1990, 1996) report a coefficient alpha of .87 and median reliability of .85 for the scale. Jaros (1995) reports a coefficient alpha of over .70 and found the scale to correlate with turnover intentions at -.37.

Job satisfaction Job satisfaction was measured by the Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS; Spector, 1985). Spector (1997) reports a coefficient alpha of .91 for the total scale. The scale has also been found to correlate with the Job Descriptive Index (JDI; Smith et al., 1969).

Intentions to quit Intention to quit was measured using three items that assessed employees' tendencies to continue as an organizational member (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Jaros, 1995). Good internal reliability coefficients for the scale have been reported. Allen and Meyer report a coefficient alpha of .83 and Jaros reports a coefficient alpha above .70.

Results

Table 1 contains the correlations among the variables. Coefficient alphas for each measure for this sample are in parentheses along the diagonal. Standard regression and hierarchical multiple regression analyses were conducted to test the proposed hypotheses. Hypotheses 1 and 2 involved the relationships between the fit variables and meaningful work. Results of a hierarchical multiple regression analysis (Table 2) of meaningful work on the fit variables and zero-order correlations (Table 1) indicated support for these hypotheses. Hypothesis 1 stated that self-concept job fit will be positively correlated with meaningful work. Both the zero-order correlation ($r = .62$) and step 4 of the hierarchical regression analysis indicate a strong significant positive relationship, even when the effects of the other fit types have been accounted for. The sr^2 indicates the amount of unique variance in the criterion variable that is associated with a particular predictor variable. Self-concept-job fit was a significant predictor of meaningful work and contributed approximately 14% in unique variance to the prediction of meaningful work (see Table 2). Hypothesis 1 was supported.

Hypothesis 2 stated that self-concept-job fit would be more highly related to meaningful work than the other fit types. An examination of the regression weights and correlation coefficients indicated that self-concept-job fit was more strongly related to meaningful work than demand-abilities, supply-value, and person-organization fit. The hierarchical regression analysis reported in Table 2 was conducted, not only to test this hypothesis, but also to examine whether self-concept-job fit would add significant incremental validity to the prediction of meaningful work beyond the other fit types. The significance of the effect of self-concept job fit on meaningful work after accounting for the effects of the other fit types would make a stronger case for the importance of self-concept job fit for meaningful work. Demand-abilities fit was entered on the first step. Person-organization fit was entered on the second step and supply-value fit on the third step. Self-concept-job fit was entered on the fourth step after the effects of the other fit variables had been accounted for. The Multiple R was .69 and the Multiple R^2 was .47, indicating that the fit variables accounted for 47% of the variance in meaningful

work. The amount of variance accounted for was significantly different from zero, $F(4, 199) = 45.39, p < .001$. As expected, self-concept-job fit added a significant amount of incremental validity to the prediction of meaningful work ($sr^2 = .14$) after the effects of demand-abilities, supply-value, and person-organization fit had been accounted for. The hierarchical regression analysis provided support for hypothesis 2 and for the importance of self-concept-job fit for meaningful work. The analysis also provided support for the importance of multiple fit perceptions for meaningful work, as the fit variables did have significant additive effects.

However, an examination of the zero-order correlations indicated that not all the correlations between the fit types and meaningful work were significantly different from one another. The formula and procedure outlined by Cohen and Cohen (1983) was used to determine whether self-concept-job fit was a significantly better predictor of meaningful work than the other fit types based on the zero-order correlations. There was not a big difference in the correlations between self-concept-job fit and meaningful work and supply-value fit and meaningful work ($r = .62$ and $.56$, respectively).

These correlations were not significantly different, $t(261) = 1.27, p > .05$. The difference in the correlations between self-concept-job fit and meaningful work and person-organization fit and meaningful work was larger ($r = .62$ and $.41$, respectively). The difference between these correlations was statistically significantly different, $t(261) = 3.71, p < .01$. The difference in the correlations between self-concept-job fit and meaningful work and demand-abilities fit and meaningful work was large and also statistically significant ($r = .62$ and $.11$, respectively). Self-concept-job fit was a significantly better predictor of meaningful work than person-organization fit and demand-abilities fit, but not significantly better than supply-value fit. These results suggest that self-concept job and supply-value fit, when taken together, each provide enough unique variance to the prediction of meaningful work for both to be significant, and their effects to be additive (see Table 2). However, taken individually, it cannot be said that self-concept job fit will result in higher levels of meaningful work than supply-value fit. Therefore, hypothesis 2 was only partially supported.

Table 1: Correlations among Fit Measures and Attitudinal Variables

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1 Demand-abilities fit	(.68) ^a							
2 Supply-value fit	.08	(.79)						
3 Person-organization fit	.14*	.59**	(.84)					
4 Self-concept-job fit	.19**	.52**	.36**	(.70)				
5 Meaningful work	.11	.56**	.41**	.62**	(.79)			
6 Affective organizational commitment	.10	.56**	.53**	.56**	.67**	(.87)		
7 Job satisfaction	.10	.72**	.58**	.51**	.59**	.59**	(.87)	
8 Intention to quit	.02	-.53**	-.35**	-.56**	-.59**	-.60**	-.52**	(.88)

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

^a Numbers in parentheses along the diagonal are coefficient alphas.

Table 2

Hierarchical Regression for Fit Variables Predicting Meaningful Work

Fit variables	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	<i>sr</i> ²
Step 1				
Demand-abilities fit	.13	.08	.11	.01
Multiple <i>R</i> = .11 <i>R</i> ² = .01 <i>R</i> ² change = .01				
Step 2				
Demand-abilities fit	.06	.07	.05	.002
Person-organization fit	.45	.07	.41*	.16
Multiple <i>R</i> = .42* <i>R</i> ² = .18 <i>R</i> ² change = .17*				
Step 3				
Demand-abilities fit	.06	.07	.05	.002
Person-organization fit	.14	.07	.13	.01
Supply-value fit	.48	.07	.48*	.15
Multiple <i>R</i> = .57* <i>R</i> ² = .33 <i>R</i> ² change = .15*				
Step 4				
Demand-abilities fit	-.01	.06	-.008	.0006
Person-organization fit	.11	.07	.10	.007
Supply-value fit	.26	.07	.26*	.03
Self-concept-job fit	.45	.06	.44*	.14
Multiple <i>R</i> = .69* <i>R</i> ² = .47 <i>R</i> ² change = .14*				

**p* < .001. *SE B* is the standard error of the regression coefficient. *sr*² is the percentage of variance in the criterion variable uniquely associated with the predictor variable.

Hypothesis 3 stated that meaningful work would be negatively related to intentions to leave. This hypothesis was important because it involves the direct effects of meaningful work on a variable that has been strongly associated with turnover behavior. Standard regression analysis was performed to test the hypothesis. Table 3 contains the un-standardized regression coefficient (B), standard error (SE), and standardized regression coefficient (β) for meaningful work. Results indicated that meaningful work had significant direct effects on intentions to leave. The Multiple R was .59 and Multiple R^2 was .35, indicating that meaningful work accounted for 35% of the variance in intentions to leave. Multiple R was significantly different from zero, $F(1, 203) = 111.61, p < .001$. Hypothesis 3 was supported by the analysis.

Hierarchical multiple regression was also performed to examine whether meaningful work added to the prediction of intentions to leave after accounting for important job attitudes such as job satisfaction and affective organizational commitment. Evidence that meaningful work adds significantly to the prediction of intentions to leave beyond that of these other job attitudes is essential for the argument of the importance of meaningful work for retention. Table 4

contains the results of the two-step hierarchical regression analysis. Job satisfaction and affective organizational commitment were entered on the first step, and meaningful work was entered on the second step. The three predictors combined accounted for approximately 43% of the variance in intentions to leave ($R = .65$). Multiple R was significantly different from zero, $F(3, 195) = 48.92, p < .001$. Meaningful work contributed approximately 4% in unique variance to the prediction of intentions to quit after job satisfaction and affective organizational commitment had been accounted for. Although this increase in the incremental validity was small, it was statistically significant. Furthermore, meaningful work was more strongly related to intentions to leave than was job satisfaction ($\beta = -.28$ and $-.18$, respectively). However, meaningful work was similarly related to intentions to leave, as was affective organizational commitment ($\beta = -.28$ and $-.29$, respectively). These results indicate that while meaningful work may be equally or more effective at reducing turnover intentions than these more traditional job attitudes, it may not add much to the reduction of turnover intent for those workers who already experience positive levels of job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Hypothesis 4 was partially supported.

Table 3

Regressions for Meaningful Work Predicting Criterion Variables

Variables	B	$SE B$	β	sr^2
Meaningful work predicting Intentions to leave	-.70	.06	-.59*	.35
Multiple $R = .59$ $R^2 = .35$				

* $p < .001$. $SE B$ is the standard error of the regression coefficient. sr^2 is the percentage of variance in the criterion variable uniquely associated with the predictor variable.

Table 4

Hierarchical Regression for Variables Predicting Intentions to Leave

Variables	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	<i>sr</i> ²
Step 1				
Affective organizational commitment	-.46	.07	-.43**	.11
Job satisfaction	-.33	.08	-.26**	.04
Multiple <i>R</i> = .62** <i>R</i> ² = .39 <i>R</i> ² change = .39**				
Step 2				
Affective organizational commitment	-.31	.08	-.29**	.04
Job satisfaction	-.23	.09	-.18*	.01
Meaningful work	-.33	.09	-.28**	.03
Multiple <i>R</i> = .65** <i>R</i> ² = .42 <i>R</i> ² change = .03**				

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .001$. *SE B* is the standard error of the regression coefficient. *sr*² is the percentage of variance in the criterion variable uniquely associated with the predictor variable.

Discussion

The roles of self-concept-job fit and meaningful work for decreasing intentions to leave were examined. Results of bivariate and hierarchical regression analyses supported the hypotheses and the argument for the importance of self-concept-job fit and meaningful work for organizational retention management initiatives. The results have several implications for models of employee retention and the management of turnover in work organizations. The study suggests that current models of turnover may be underspecified and that new, additional correlates of job attitudes and turnover variables need to be included in turnover and retention models. It has been argued that employees stay with an organization due to self-concept-job fit and experienced meaningful work. Since meaningful work is highly related to the decreased likelihood of forming intentions to exit the organization, it is

important for human resource professionals to create meaningful work for employees if they are to help the organization reduce attrition rates. The concept of self-concept-job fit and perceptual fit in general is one method in which human resource professionals may facilitate the development of meaningful work in employees. This is the implication of the self-concept-based theory of work motivation (Shamir, 1991). Organizations can attempt to increase levels of meaningful work among employees by seeking to match job tasks with individual self-concepts. Organizations often attempt to retain employees by offering extrinsic incentives (Allen & Meyer, 1996). They hope employees will see the drawbacks of leaving as outweighing the benefits of staying. This study focuses attention on intrinsic factors such as perceived fit and meaningful work that motivate individuals to stay. Individuals stay with the organization because they feel they fit and experience meaning through the performance of job tasks. The inclusion of perceptual fit and meaningful work in

models of turnover may increase the validity of turnover theories and provide a more complete assessment of the turnover process.

The lack of attention given to meaningful work in the turnover literature is unfortunate. Researchers that have included meaningful work in their models and theories (Hackman & Oldham, 1976; Spreitzer, 1995) have not made this construct the focus of their research. The results of this study indicate that meaningful work is a significant predictor of worker intentions to leave. They also indicate that a self-concept job fit approach to the development of meaningful work experiences for employees may provide organizations an alternative and less expensive approach to the management of employee turnover. Due to the outcomes associated with experienced meaningful work, more attention must be given to this construct in organizational research. More research must be conducted to further understand the role of meaningful work in employee perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors.

Results also support the argument for the need to expand the current conceptualization of the person-job fit construct. Empirical evidence was provided for the importance and value of the self-concept-job fit construct. Perceptions of self-concept-job fit were strong predictors of meaningful work. Perceptions of self-concept-job fit accounted for more variance in meaningful work than did perceptions of demands-abilities, supply-value, and person-organization fit. This finding stresses the importance of self-concept-job fit for certain job attitudes and behaviors. Perceptual self-concept-job fit needs to be recognized as a legitimate type of perceptual fit that has implications for the way in which individuals think and feel about their work and organization. Management needs to consider the degree that job tasks and behaviors fit an individual's self-concept in attempts to create good person-job fit. This research indicates that perceptions self-concept-job fit may be the most important fit perceptions to impact certain job attitudes and withdrawal cognitions. The failure to consider these perceptions may result in the failure to properly manage and facilitate the development of desirable job attitudes and behaviors, especially the willingness to remain an organizational member.

Another contribution of this study is that it provides support for the self-concept-based theory of work

motivation proposed by Shamir (1991). To the knowledge of the author, this theory has never been empirically tested. This research is the first to provide an empirical investigation into the validity of the theory. The results of this study not only provide support for the existence of a self-concept-job fit construct, but also provide support for the proposed relationships between a self-concept-job match, experienced meaningfulness, and attitudinal and behavioral outcomes. Therefore, this study contributes to the literature by examining and supporting existing organizational behavior theory.

One limitation of this study is the possibility of common method variance that can occur when variables are measured with the same method. This is especially relevant when self-report measures are used, as was the case in this study. All the variables included in the study were measured using a self-report questionnaire. This can result in biased or inflated correlations between the variables due to the fact that they were measured using a common method. The internal validity of the study would have been stronger if the variables had been measured using multiple methods. However, the variables were measured using the common method in part due to the constraints of research and data collection. Future research should include multiple measurement methods that might result in more accurate estimates of the true correlations between the variables.

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