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**An exploration of salesperson job satisfaction in India using P-E fit constructs**

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## **An exploration of salesperson job satisfaction in India using P-E fit constructs**

### **Abstract**

Job satisfaction is an important variable in organization behavior and sales management. This study explored the impact of person-job fit and person-organization fit on the job satisfaction, organization commitment and turnover intentions of salespersons in India. These constructs have hitherto not been explored in emerging market contexts. A survey of pharmaceutical salespersons found that person-job fit had a strong positive relationship with job satisfaction and person-organization fit had a positive relationship with organization commitment. Job satisfaction had a positive influence on organization commitment and a negative influence on turnover intentions. The differences in job satisfaction across age and experience categories were not significant but salespersons with higher educational qualifications reported lower levels of job satisfaction. The study will contribute to the sales management literature by identifying significant direct paths between P-E fit constructs and job satisfaction and its consequent constructs. An implication for managers is the importance of measuring fit and job satisfaction.

**Keywords:** Job satisfaction, salespersons, person-job fit, person-organization fit

## **Introduction**

There is hardly any research about the job satisfaction of salespersons working in emerging markets even though job satisfaction is one of the core constructs in management and is the most extensively studied variable in industrial psychology and organization behavior. This is surprising because of two reasons. First, the enormous business potential in emerging markets is being recognized and addressed by both global and local firms (Gadiesh, Leong and Vestring, 2007). Second, firms from emerging markets are making their presence felt in countries outside their home markets (Khanna and Palepu, 2006). Both developments require the dedicated efforts of salespersons in securing marketplace success for their firms.

Salespersons are important resources for organizations and the overall investment in the sales force for large firms can be of the order of billions of dollars (Zoltners et al, 2001). Salespersons work at the boundary between the firm and its environment and are subjected to uncertainty and incompatible expectations from different groups outside and within the firm. The salesperson's role is critically important in the revenue generation activities of firms and the salesperson performance has a major impact on many positions within the firm (Churchill, Ford and Walker, 1974). Therefore the job satisfaction of salespersons has attracted considerable research attention in the marketing and sales area over the last thirty years (Churchill, Ford and Walker, 1976; Pettijohn, Pettijohn and Taylor, 2007).

Salesperson job satisfaction has been explored both at the global and facet level. Global measurements focus on a person's overall satisfaction with the job, while facet measures look at satisfaction with various aspects of the job such as pay, supervision, etc., (Churchill, Ford and Walker, 1974). A number of antecedents and consequences of salesperson job satisfaction have been identified in the marketing literature. Antecedents have been classified as individual differences, role perceptions, organizational variables, and job/task variables (Brown and Peterson, 1993). Consequences of job satisfaction identified in the literature include organizational commitment, propensity to leave, turnover and organization citizenship behavior (Brown and Peterson, 1993; Donovan, Brown and Mowen, 2004). Although there is rich body of research on salesperson job satisfaction, most of this research has been carried out in developed countries. There is hardly any research on the job satisfaction of salespersons working in

emerging markets. Hence there is lack of clarity on whether the models of job satisfaction which have been validated in developed countries can be generalized to emerging markets and it would be useful to have more studies about salesperson job satisfaction in emerging markets.

Person-environment fit theory has been widely used in the organizational behavior area to study individual and work outcomes like job satisfaction (Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman and Johnson, 2005). The person-environment fit research stream also encompasses consequences of job satisfaction like commitment and turnover intentions. The PE fit constructs are relatively simple to operationalize so this perspective is quite appropriate for exploratory studies in emerging market contexts.

This study aims to further our understanding of salesperson job satisfaction using two important person-environment fit constructs. The study investigates the job satisfaction of pharmaceutical salespersons working in the Indian market. The specific objectives of the study are:

- To examine the relationships between person job fit, person-organization fit and job satisfaction.
- To investigate the relationship between job satisfaction and selected consequences like organizational commitment, and turnover intention
- To determine the level of global job satisfaction among pharmaceutical salespersons in India
- To examine if there are differences in job satisfaction based on age and experience of the sales representative and the types of companies they work for

The findings of the study will be useful for researchers and managers in emerging markets. The remainder of this article is structured as follows. First, the study's conceptual framework and hypotheses are presented. Next, the measures and data collection are described. Then, the results of the study are presented. The paper concludes with a discussion on the study's contributions, limitations and suggestions for further research.

## Literature Review

Job satisfaction indicates the extent to which people like their jobs. Some people really like their jobs while others thoroughly dislike their jobs. The extent of liking people have for their jobs affects not only the concerned individuals, but also affects their work teams and their organizations. Therefore this attitudinal variable has been a major object of study in management research. Hundreds of studies have been carried out in order to understand the nature of job satisfaction and to identify its antecedents and consequences (Petty, McGee and Cavender, 1984; Loher *et al.*, 1985). Job satisfaction has been explored in the context of wide range of occupations ranging from nursing and engineering to teaching and sales (Bacharach, Bamberger and Conley, 1991; Sharma, 2006; Babakus *et al.*, 1996).

Salespersons are organizational employees or agents who work in the sales function and use personal communication to inform, persuade and build relations with prospects, clients and customers with the aim of convincing them to purchase the firm's products and services. Millions of people are engaged in personal selling for firms and organizations globally. Salespersons contribute to their organizations by bringing in revenue. They represent the company in public and manage the firm-customer relationship (Zoltners *et al.*, 2001). Job satisfaction of salespersons has been an important research topic in marketing and sales management literature.

Emerging markets are high growth countries that present attractive opportunities for firms (Cavusgil, 1997). They may have inadequate communication and transportation facilities, political instability, a weak legal system, and limited personal income. Emerging markets present huge challenges for marketing because of inadequate market data, poor distribution systems, and regulatory barriers (Arnold and Quelch, 1995). Due to these challenges, salespersons operating in emerging markets may face unique pressures in the performing their tasks. Hence the nature, antecedents and consequences of salesperson job satisfaction in emerging markets may be different as compared to developed markets.

Pharmaceutical salespersons are an important source of information that doctors use in deciding which drugs to prescribe to their patients (Andaleeb and Tallman, 1996). Several research studies

have explored the antecedents and consequences of job satisfaction of pharmaceutical salespersons but these studies have all been carried out in the developed countries.

India is one of the most attractive emerging markets with a population of over one billion people. The liberalization of the India economy which commenced in 1991 has resulted in the unshackling of private enterprise. A new generation of entrepreneurs, managers and technically qualified workers is transforming business and industry. The pharmaceutical industry in India has benefited from the historical patent regime and developed strong capabilities in the manufacturing of generic drugs at competitive prices. India accepted the validity of product patents in 2005 and since then the market has become very competitive (Kumra, 2008). Some of the larger Indian pharmaceutical firms also manufacture and market generics in developed countries. Given its competitive profile, the pharmaceutical industry in India appears to offer a good setting for exploring salesperson job satisfaction in an emerging market context.

### **Person-Environment Fit**

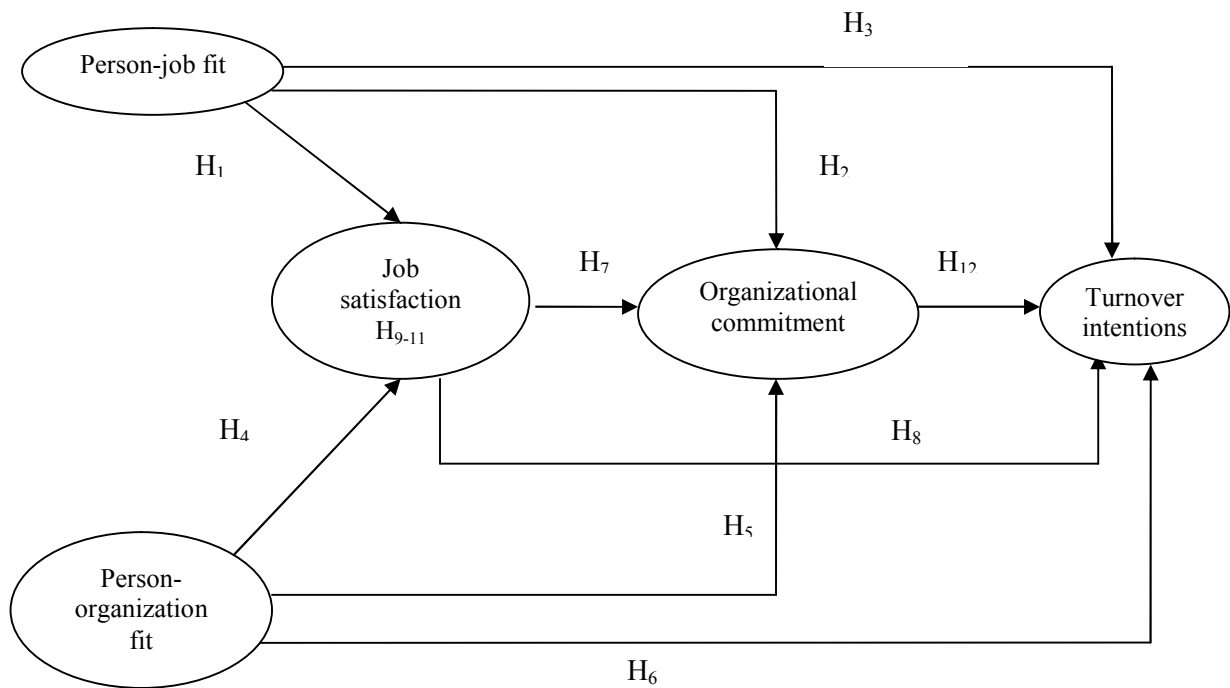
Person environment fit is an important construct within organization behavior research. Theories of person-environment fit are not new. Person-environment fit is defined as the compatibility between people and their work environment (Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman and Johnson, 2005). P-E fit is supposed to cover four domains: person-job (PJ), person-organization (PO), person-group (PG) and person-supervisor (PS) fit. Prior research in organizational behavior has identified relationships between these types of fit and individual outcomes such as job satisfaction, performance, withdrawal behaviors and tenure (Caldwell and O'Rielly, 1990; Saks and Ashforth, 1997). Within marketing, PE fit theory has used to explore relationships between customer orientation and job variables (Donovan, Brown and Mowen, 2004).

This study investigates the influence of person-job fit and person-organization fit on job satisfaction of pharmaceutical salespersons in India. The research model used in the study is shown in Figure 1. First, the literature on the constructs in the model is reviewed and then the hypotheses linking the constructs are presented.

## Person-Job fit

Person-job (PJ) fit has been defined as the degree to which an individual's preferences, knowledge, activities, skills, needs and values match the job requirements (Brkich, Jeffs and Carless, 2006). An employee may experience good PJ fit when she enjoys the work she does and finds it interesting, and when she has the skills and experience to perform well in her job (Kristof-Brown, Jansen and Colbert, 2002). Several studies in organization behavior research have found a relationship between PJ fit and job satisfaction. Lauver and Kristof-Brown (2001) found using a sample of non-sales employees that PJ fit had a positive impact on job satisfaction. Other studies that have found a positive relationship between PJ fit and job satisfaction include Arvey, Carter and Buerkley, (1991), Caldwell and O'Reilly (1990), O'Reilly, Chatham and Caldwell (1991), and Saks and Ashworth (1997).

**FIGURE 1**  
**Research Model**



Pharmaceutical salespersons have to call on doctors and detail existing and new products. While this seems straightforward, it is not easy. Doctors are very busy and usually provide salespersons

with a very limited amount of face to face time per call. Salespersons often have to endure long waiting times before they can see doctors and hence need a good deal of patience. They are required to build relationships with doctors and ensure that the doctors prescribe their products. However, previous research (Andaleeb and Tallman, 1996) has found that doctors often do not value the salespersons highly and believe that they can get information on drugs from other sources. Such beliefs may present challenges for salespersons in building relationships with doctors. Pharmaceutical salespersons need to believe that their work is important even if doctors do not readily acknowledge this. . They need to have emotional intelligence to get along with doctors who may have a much higher level of status in emerging market contexts compared to the salespersons. In addition, salespersons have to absorb a vast amount of technical information and convey it in a succinct way. They need to be interested in the material they have to memorize, and should be able to understand the information and answer the queries that doctors may pose. Hence they need a considerable amount of technical knowledge to function effectively. These factors suggest that job satisfaction depends in part, on a good match between the attitudes, skills and knowledge of the salesperson; and the requirements of the job. Hence:

H<sub>1</sub>: Person-job fit is related positively to job satisfaction

Previous research suggests that person-job fit is also related to organization commitment and turnover intentions. Caldwell and O'Reilly (1990) found that higher levels of person-job fit were related with lower levels of turnover intentions. Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman and Johnson (2005) found via meta-analysis that PJ fit has a strong positive relationship with organizational commitment and a strong negative relationship with intent to quit. Saks and Ashforth (1997) found a significant positive relationship between PJ fit and organization commitment and a significant negative relationship between PJ fit and turnover intentions. Hence based on previous research:

H<sub>2</sub>: Person-Job fit is related positively to organizational commitment

H<sub>3</sub>: Person-Job fit is related negatively to turnover intentions



## **Person-Organization fit**

Person-organization (PO) fit occurs when there is compatibility between people and the organization in which they work in (Kristoff, 1996). Compatibility may exist when the people and organizations are similar in some way. The similarity can be expressed in four ways. First, there can be similarity between individuals and the organization in terms of values or culture (Box, Odom and Dunn, 1991; O'Reilly, Chatham and Caldwell, 1991). Second, there can be similarity of goals (Vancouver and Schmitt, 1991). A third way of conceptualizing PO fit is in terms of a match between the needs and desires of individuals and the organization's structures and processes (Cable and Judge, 1994). Finally, there can be congruence between the individual's personality and the organization's climate (Bowen et al, 1991).

Various studies have found that PO fit is correlated positively with job satisfaction and organization commitment, and negatively with turnover intentions. Boxx, Odom and Dunn (1991) found that employees were more satisfied with their jobs and had higher commitment to the organization when excellent fit existed between employees and organization,. Moynihan and Pandey (2008) found that PO fit was negatively correlated to turnover intentions. A meta-analysis carried out by Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman and Johnson (2005) found that PO fit had a strong positive correlation with job satisfaction and organizational commitment and a strong negative correlation with intent to quit. Similar results have been obtained by Scroggins (2007) using survey methodology. Another meta-analysis by Verquer (2003) found that PO fit had a correlation in the range of mid to high 0.20s with satisfaction and commitment, while the mean correlation between PO fit and turnover intentions was -.18. The influence of PO fit has also been studied in a non Western context. Liu, Liu and Hu (2010) explored the relationship between PO fit, job satisfaction and turnover intentions using a sample of Chinese public sector managers. They found while PO fit directly influenced job satisfaction and turnover intentions, the best model fit was obtained when job satisfaction fully mediated the PO fit-turnover intentions relationship.

Pharmaceutical salespersons in India may perceive a PO fit with their firms for several reasons. There may be value fit between salesperson's value for diligent application of her knowledge in her sales calls, and the firm's value for effective product communication to doctors. The

salesperson may perceive a good fit with the firm in terms of culture. There may be similarity of goals between salesperson and the firm when goals are stated in terms of increasing product sales and building strong relationships with doctors. The salesperson's needs for status in society may be met if the firm has a good reputation. This will be particularly true in the case of employees of multinational firms and well known Indian firms. Finally, the salesperson's needs for career growth may be met by the firm's policies that encourage promotion from within. Salespersons who are comfortable with the firm they work for, may be more satisfied with their jobs, more committed to the firm, and less likely to entertain thoughts of leaving the firm. Hence:

H<sub>4</sub>: Person-organization fit is related positively to job satisfaction

H<sub>5</sub>: Person-organization is related positively to salesperson organizational commitment

H<sub>6</sub>: Person-organization is related negatively to turnover intentions

### **Job satisfaction**

Job satisfaction is the attitudinal variable which indicates the extent to which people like their jobs (Spector, 1997). This variable is important both for people and for organizations in which they work in. It affects the quality of work-life and may also influence important work related behaviors and attitudes. There has been a vast amount of research in the organization behavior area on job satisfaction, its antecedents and its consequences. Within marketing and sales, early job satisfaction studies carried out by Churchill, Ford and Walker (1974 and 1976), Bagozzi (1978), Teas and Horrell (1981), and Teas (1983) explored the antecedents of job satisfaction. More recent studies like those of Brown and Petersen (1993), Schwepker (2001), and Donovan, Brown and Mowen (2004) have explored the consequences of job satisfaction.

Job satisfaction can be conceptualized as a global feeling about a job, or as a set of attitudes about various facets of a job. Global measurements of job satisfaction are used when we want to understand the impact of job satisfaction on other work related attitudes or behaviors. Facet measurements are used when we want to understand which aspects of a job produce good feelings and which aspects produce bad feelings. The facets of job satisfaction explored in the

literature include satisfaction with benefits, coworkers, nature of the work itself, pay, promotion, recognition, security, supervision etc. (Spector, 1997).

Several antecedents of job satisfaction have been identified in the organization behavior literature. These can be broadly classified as job characteristics, role variables, work schedules and personal antecedents. Person-job fit and person-organization fit constructs belong to the personal antecedent category. Consequences of job satisfaction identified in the literature include life satisfaction, performance, organization citizenship behavior, organization commitment, withdrawal, burnout, health impacts, and counterproductive behavior (Spector, 1997).

Within the marketing-sales literature, job satisfaction has been found to influence organization commitment, life satisfaction, and withdrawal behavior. Brown and Petersen (1993) used a meta-analysis to understand the antecedents and consequences of salesperson job satisfaction. They found that job satisfaction had a strong positive influence on organization commitment. Johnston *et al.*, (1990) developed and tested a model of antecedents and consequences of job satisfaction in which they found that job satisfaction positively influences organization commitment and has a negative influence on propensity to leave. Similar results were obtained by Babakus *et al.*, (1996) with regard to the influence of job satisfaction on organization commitment and propensity to leave.

India is a populous country whose economy is growing rapidly. The pharmaceutical industry in India is also developing rapidly. If a pharmaceutical salesperson wants to switch to another firm, this should be relatively easy, and attrition rate of salespersons employees can be expected to be high. In practice however, this is not the case. Indian society values security of service and continuous service with a single employer and people who switch jobs too often may be seen as rolling stones. Hence if salespersons are happy with their jobs, they are likely to be committed to the firm for which they work for, and are less likely to have turnover intentions. In line with previous research in other markets:

H<sub>7</sub>: Job satisfaction is positively related to organizational commitment

H<sub>8</sub>: Job satisfaction is negatively related to turnover intentions

## **Organization commitment**

Many people believe that their organization is a great place to be in. They also believe that the goals of the organization are worth striving for and the values of the organization are worth upholding (Mowday et al., 1979). People who have high levels of organization commitment tend to remain with the organization and are willing to put in considerable efforts on behalf of the organization. Previous research has indicated that higher levels of organization commitment are associated with lower turnover intentions (Mathieu and Zajac 1990, Brown and Petersen, 1993).

Pharmaceutical salespeople in India who have high levels of involvement and commitment to their firms presumably identify with the goals and values of their firm and are less likely to want to leave and join another firm. Hence

H9: Organization commitment has a negative relationship with turnover intentions

Job satisfaction has been found to vary with age. There is no clarity about the exact nature of the relationship between satisfaction and age. Some studies have found a linear relationship while other studies have found a curvilinear relationship. A meta-analytic study carried out by Brush, Moch and Pooyan (1987) found that the relationship was linear, so in general, older employees are expected to have higher levels of job satisfaction.

Within the pharmaceutical salesperson community, one can expect to find a wide distribution in age and experience. Salespersons often join pharmaceutical firms soon after completing their undergraduate degree in science or pharmacy. They may continue in a field sales job until they are promoted to managerial responsibilities. This period of field work as a professional representative could last anywhere from a few years to a couple of decades. Pharmaceutical selling is quite difficult, and new recruits may find the going tough in the first few years. In the initial period of getting used to the job, satisfaction may be low. Job satisfaction may increase after a few years and then decline as the work becomes monotonous and devoid of new challenge. While the relation between age and satisfaction is difficult to predict, based on the previous discussion, we can hypothesize that:

H<sub>10</sub>: Job satisfaction will vary across age categories. There will be significant differences in job satisfaction between younger and older salespersons.

H<sub>11</sub>: Job satisfaction will vary with experience. There will be significant differences in job satisfaction across salespersons with more and less number of years of experience.

Pharmaceutical salespersons in India can have undergraduate (called graduate in India) or graduate (called post-graduate) qualifications. Given the routine nature of the work which involves detailing of existing and new products to doctors within a pre-specified territory, one can expect that salespersons with post-graduate qualifications may perceive themselves to be overqualified and would find the job to be less challenging. Hence:

H<sub>12</sub>: Job satisfaction will differ between salespersons with undergraduate vs graduate qualifications.

## **Methodology**

### **Sample**

This study is an empirical one and is based on a questionnaire survey of pharmaceutical salespersons in India. The survey was carried out in Bangalore, a major metropolitan city in South India which is considered to be quite cosmopolitan and is supposed to be a good representation of urban India. Care was taken to ensure that the final sample contained an adequate representation of salespersons across different age, experience, and educational brackets and that salespersons working with both Indian and multinational firms were represented in the survey. Over a two week period of data collection, 140 salespersons agreed to participate in the survey and the data collection yielded 121 complete questionnaires with no missing data. Since there is no data available on age, experience and educational distribution of the population of pharmaceutical salespersons in India, it was not possible to confirm if the sample characteristics were in line with population characteristics, hence the sample may be considered a convenience sample. The characteristics of salespersons in the sample are shown in Table 1.

**TABLE 1**  
**Characteristics of salespersons in the sample**

	Frequency	%		Frequency	%
<u>Age of salesperson</u> (age in years)			<u>Experience</u> (number of years)		
21-30	75	62.0	1-5	51	42.1
31-40	38	31.4	6-10	37	30.6
41-50	5	4.1	11-15	25	20.7
51-60	3	<u>2.5</u>	16-20	2	1.6
		100.0	21 and more	6	<u>5.0</u>
					100.0
<u>Firm type</u>			<u>Educational level</u>		
Indian	68	56.2	Graduate	94	77.7
Foreign	53	<u>43.8</u>	Post graduate	27	<u>22.3</u>
		100.0			100.0

### Measures

The constructs in this study are person-job fit, person-organization fit, job satisfaction, organization commitment and turnover intentions. These constructs already exist in the organization behavior literature. The scales used to measure these constructs were taken from published studies. A questionnaire was developed using between two and four items per construct and the final questionnaire had a total of 13 items. PJ fit had 2 items from Donovan, Brown and Mowen (2004), PO fit had three items from Peters, Jacofsky and Salter (1981), job satisfaction was measured using three items from Brown and Petersen (1993). Organization commitment had three items based on Speir and Vishwanath (2002) and turnover intentions were measured with four items from Bluedorn (1982) and Brashear et al., (2003). Seven-point Likert type scales were used for measuring the items. Appendix 1 provides the details of the individual measurement items, their source and the reliability statistics. The scale was checked for face

validity by getting comments from a marketing professor and a sales manager from a reputed pharmaceutical firm. The questionnaire was pretested with 15 pharmaceutical salespersons.

In line with the two-step approach suggested by Anderson and Gerbing (1988), a measurement model was specified and evaluated using confirmatory factor analysis in AMOS for assessing the convergent and discriminant validity. CFA results indicated that the measurement model had good fit. All the indicators loaded on the respective latent factors. The values of standardized loadings, average variance extracted, and construct reliability are shown in Appendix 1. The standardized loadings for the indicator variables ranged from 0.72 to 0.97. Since all loadings were above the level of 0.7 there is evidence of good convergent validity. The average variance extracted for each of the five constructs ranged from 0.79 to 0.92 which is another indication of good convergent validity. Construct reliability was calculated for each construct and was found to range from 0.7 to 0.87 which suggests a good level of discriminant validity. The average variance extracted for each construct was higher than the squares of the inter construct correlations associated with each construct suggesting further evidence of discriminant validity. The  $\chi^2$  value for the measurement model was 80.9 with 55 degrees of freedom. The fit indices were GFI=0.913, TLI = 0.965, and CFI = 0.975 which indicate a good fit. Finally the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) was 0.063 which is within the acceptable range.

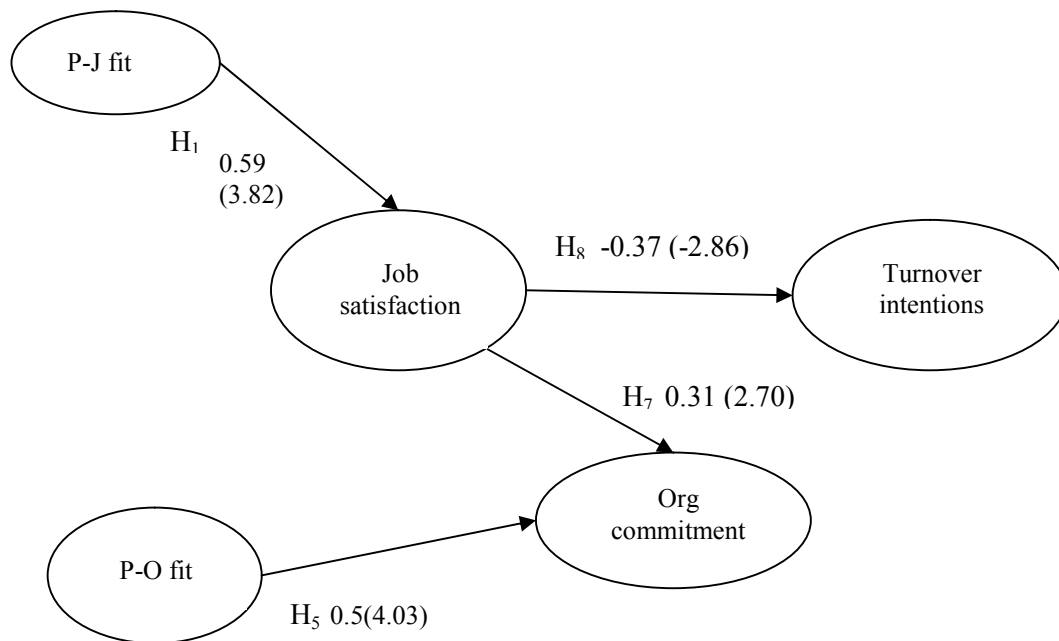
## **Results**

In the second stage of testing, the structural model described in Figure 1 was estimated using AMOS. The results of estimation with respect to the model are shown in Figure 2 and the standardized path coefficients and t values are shown in Table 2. The model had a good overall fit with  $\chi^2$  of 80.9 with 55 degrees of freedom. The model fit indices were GFI=0.91, TLI = 0.97, CFI = 0.98 which are in the acceptable range. Finally, the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) was 0.057 which is also within the acceptable range.

Hypothesis 1 predicted a positive relationship between P-J fit and job satisfaction. This hypothesis was supported and the standardized path coefficient was 0.59 with  $t=3.82$  and  $p < .001$ . As predicted by hypotheses 2 and 3, P-J fit was linked positively with organization commitment and negatively with turnover intentions, but these relationships were not statistically significant and thus there was no support for hypotheses H<sub>2</sub> and H<sub>3</sub>. In line with the prediction

of hypothesis H<sub>4</sub>, the path between P-O fit and job satisfaction had a positive coefficient of 0.146 but this was not significant. Hypothesis H<sub>5</sub> had predicted that person-organization fit would have a positive relationship with organization commitment. The path between P-O fit and commitment was positive and significant with a path coefficient of 0.50 and  $t = 4.03$ ,  $p < .001$ , supporting hypothesis H<sub>5</sub>. Hypothesis H<sub>6</sub> predicted a negative relationship between P-O fit and turnover intentions. Results showed that a negative but non-significant relationship between P-O fit and turnover intentions, hence there was no support for H<sub>6</sub>.

**FIGURE 2:**  
**Results of structural model**  
 Standardized path coefficients with  $t$  values in parenthesis



As hypothesized in H<sub>7</sub>, the relationship between job satisfaction and organization commitment was positive and significant with a path coefficient of 0.31 and  $t = 2.70$ ,  $p = .007$ , and thus hypothesis H<sub>7</sub> was supported. Additionally, job satisfaction had a significant negative relationship with turnover intentions with  $\beta = -0.37$  and  $t = -2.86$ ,  $p = .004$  providing support to



H<sub>8</sub>. Finally, the path between organization commitment and turnover intentions was negative but was not significant and hence there was no support for H<sub>9</sub>.

An examination of the descriptive statistics was done to understand levels of job satisfaction among the salesperson surveyed. On a scale of 1 to 7, with 1 representing very low satisfaction and 7 representing very high satisfaction, the job satisfaction of the Indian pharmaceutical salespersons in the sample was found to have a mean of  $M=4.73$ , and  $SD = 1.63$ . Hypotheses H<sub>9</sub> through H<sub>11</sub> relating to the variation in job satisfaction on the basis of demographics were tested using t-tests and ANOVA. A one-sample t-test suggests that the mean value for job satisfaction is significantly better than the neutral mid-point value of the scale,  $t(120) = 8.29, p < .001$ .

**TABLE 2**  
**Standardized parameter estimates from Structural Model**

	Standardized estimate	t value	Hypothesis supported
PJ fit → Job satisfaction H <sub>1</sub>	+0.595	3.837	.001
PJ fit → Org Commitment H <sub>2</sub>	+0.074	0.511	NS
PJ fit → Turnover intentions H <sub>3</sub>	-0.299	-1.809	NS
PO fit → Job satisfaction H <sub>4</sub>	+0.146	1.100	NS
PO fit → Org commitment H <sub>5</sub>	+0.496	4.029	.001
PO fit → Turnover intentions H <sub>6</sub>	-0.037	-0.244	NS
Job satisfaction → Org Commitment H <sub>7</sub>	+0.306	2.702	.007
Job satisfaction → Turnover intentions H <sub>8</sub>	-0.374	-2.864	.004
Org commitment → Turnover intentions H <sub>9</sub>	-0.044	-0.299	NS

ANOVA analysis suggests that the differences in job satisfaction across age are not statistically significant. Thus there was no support for H<sub>10</sub> which had stated that job satisfaction would vary across age. Hypothesis H<sub>11</sub> had predicted that there would be differences in job satisfaction across people with different levels of experience. The results did not support H<sub>11</sub> as the

differences in satisfaction across salespersons with different levels of experience were not statistically significant. However there is a significant difference in job satisfaction ( $F = 5.85, p = .017$ ) for salespersons who have graduate qualifications ( $M = 4.92, S.D = 1.64$ ) and those who have post-graduate qualifications ( $M = 4.07, S.D = 1.46$ ). Hence there was support for hypothesis  $H_{12}$ .

## **Discussion**

There is increasing focus on emerging markets these days. The economies of the larger emerging markets such as China and India have been growing rapidly over the last decade and have attracted large amounts of foreign direct investment. Firms from China and India have started operating in the developed markets as well. There is need for more research in emerging market contexts on the key variables in management and organization behavior. Job satisfaction is one of the variables which have been extensively studied in developed country contexts but sparsely studied in emerging market contexts.

This study explored the job satisfaction of salespersons working in the pharmaceutical industry in India. It investigated the influence of person-job fit and person-organization fit on job satisfaction, organization commitment and turnover intentions. It is the first study to use constructs from person-environment fit theory to investigate job satisfaction of salesperson in an emerging market, and is one of few that have explored job satisfaction in emerging markets. The study will therefore contribute to the literature on sales management and organization behavior in emerging markets.

**Summary of findings:** The results of this study suggest that person-job fit has a positive and significant relationship with job satisfaction. These findings are consistent with results of similar research carried out in developed countries (Lauver and Kristof-Brown, 2001; Saks and Ashforth, 1997). In line with previous research by Boxx, Odom and Dunn (1991), and Kristof-Brown, Zimmermann and Johnson (2005), results of this study suggest that person-organization fit had a strong positive relationship with organization commitment. This finding supports the idea that when there is similarity between an employee and the organization in terms of values, goals, needs and processes, personality and climate, the employee may perceive a better fit with

the organization and hence be more agreeable to exert considerable efforts on behalf of the organization. Earlier research (Johnston *et al.*, 1990; Babakus *et al.*, 1996) has found a positive relationship between job satisfaction and commitment and negative relationship between job satisfaction and propensity to leave the organization. Similar results were found in this study. Job satisfaction had a moderately, positive relationship with organization commitment and a reasonably strong, negative relationship with turnover intentions. These findings support the notion that when an individual is satisfied with her job, she is more likely to also like the organization which employs her, and is less likely to entertain thoughts of leaving the organization. These relationships which have been discovered in the developed countries also apply in emerging market contexts.

Prior research by Saks and Ashforth (1997) has found that person-job fit has a strong positive relationship with commitment and a strong negative relationship with turnover intentions. In this study, the path between person-job fit and organization commitment was positive but not significant. It appears that in emerging market contexts, perception of fit with the job does not simultaneously result in identification and attachment with the organization. One possible reason for this could be that the employee perceives a good fit with the job on account of a match between his knowledge and skills and the requirements of the job, but there may be a lack of similarity between the employee and the organization on other dimensions like values and goals. In this study the relationship between person-job fit and turnover intentions was negative but not significant. It seems that in the Indian context, a pharmaceutical salesperson may perceive a good fit with a job but would be open to searching for a similar job in another firm that offers better remuneration and working conditions.

Verquer (2003) found via meta-analysis that person-organization fit had a moderately positive relationship with job satisfaction and a moderate negative relationship with turnover intentions. In this study, the relationship between person organization fit and job satisfaction was positive but not significant. It appears that in the Indian context, a salesperson may perceive a good fit with the organization on parameters like values, goals and personalities but may not find the job to be equally satisfying. In India, certain types of organizations like multinational firms and government departments have a considerable amount of prestige associated with them. An

individual who joins such organizations because of the prestige may tolerate a job that does not offer much by way of job satisfaction.

Another finding in this study was that the relationship between person-organization fit and turnover intentions was negative but not significant. This finding differs from the conclusion of Verquer (2003) with respect to the impact of PO fit. The reason for this difference may be that in India, a person may find a similarity between himself and the organization but this would not preclude a search for a job with another organization which has a similar profile in terms of reputation, prestige, values, goals and climate.

This study did not find a significant negative relationship between organization commitment and turnover intentions. A possible explanation for this is that job satisfaction may mediate the relationship between organization commitment and turnover intentions. More research will be required to examine this mediating relationship. There is evidence in the literature of different and unique effects of P-J fit and P-O fit on job satisfaction and turnover intentions (Lauver and Kristof-Brown, 2001). The results of the present study in India with respect to the non significant impact of person-job fit and person organization fit on turnover intentions underscore the need for more research on person environment fit and its impact in emerging market contexts.

Prior research has found a linear relationship between age and job satisfaction. In this study, there were some differences in satisfaction across age and experience categories, with salespersons who were older and had more experience reporting slightly higher levels of satisfaction, but these differences were not significant. However one finding from this study is that salespersons with graduate educational qualifications reported significantly lower job satisfaction as compared to salespersons who had undergraduate qualifications. It appears that the more highly educated salespersons do not find sufficient challenge in the work.

**Managerial implications:** Job satisfaction and organization commitment are important variables. In the context of pharmaceutical salespersons in India, there seem to be strong linkages between person-job fit and job satisfaction; and between person-organization fit and organization commitment. Firms can therefore undertake scientific measurements of fit and use these measurements in selection and job assignments. Job satisfaction should be monitored both in

global terms as well as in terms of facets since job satisfaction is strongly linked to organization commitment and negatively to turnover intentions. In this way, firms will be able to engage the salespersons to remain with the firm for longer periods and to exert dedicated efforts on behalf of firms.

**Limitations and suggestions for further research:** This study was based on a survey undertaken in only one city in India. Although this city is a cosmopolitan one and is representative of metropolitan cities in India, the country itself is diverse with large differences in infrastructure. Future studies must use samples from across the country. Even though care was taken in the sampling to obtain a sample that has representation from various age categories and types of firms, the final sample obtained was a convenience sample limited to just one industry. Hence the results of this study may not be generalizable to other populations. Future studies may use random sampling methods. More research is required in emerging market contexts to understand the link between person job fit with organization commitment and the relationship between person-organization fit and job satisfaction. It is also necessary to examine the relationship between organization commitment and turnover intentions and check if job satisfaction mediates this relationship.

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**Appendix 1**  
**Individual Measurement Items**

	Standardized Loadings	Average Variance Extracted	Construct Reliability
<u>Person-Job fit</u> (Donovan, Brown and Mowen, 2004) There is a good fit between my job and me My skills and abilities perfectly match what my job demands	0.914 0.675	0.795	0.7
<u>Person-Organization fit</u> (Peters, Jacovsky and Salter, 1981) Taking everything into account, the company is a complete fit for me The company I work for is a total fit for me I fit right into the company I work for	0.877 0.879 0.812	0.856	0.76
<u>Job satisfaction</u> (Brown and Petersen, 1993) I feel fairly well satisfied with my present job I feel a great sense of satisfaction from my job	0.881 0.972	0.927	0.87
<u>Organization commitment</u> (Donovan, Brown and Mowen, 2004) The relationship my company has with me is something I am committed to The relationship my company has with me is important to me	0.864 0.864	0.864	0.77
<u>Turnover intentions</u> (Adapted from Bluedorn, 1982) I think often about quitting my present job I am constantly searching for a better alternative I am actively seeking a new role (an activity different from my present job) I am thinking of quitting this job	0.863 0.885 0.725 0.725	0.799	0.7