The Relationship Between Perceived Person-Supervisor Fit, Perceived Supervisor

Support and Employment Tenure

Submitted by

Christina Nadine Huff

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GRAND CANYON UNIVERSITY

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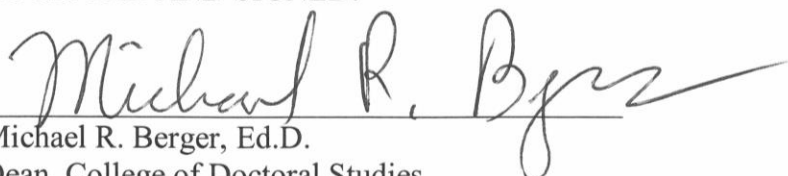Approved

September 20, 2019

DISSERTATION COMMITTEE:

Reginald Kimball, Ed.D., Dissertation Chair

Matthew Stimpson, Ph.D., Committee Member

Frank Larkey, Ph.D., Committee Member

ACCEPTED AND SIGNED:

Michael R. Berger, Ed.D.
Dean, College of Doctoral Studies
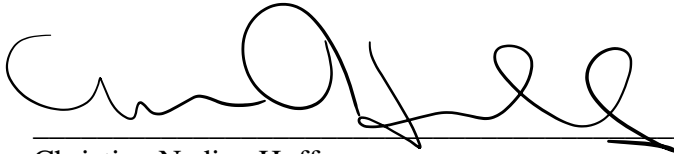
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Abstract

The purpose of this quantitative correlational research study of employees from multiple employers in the Phoenix, Arizona area, was to determine if, or to what extent, there is a correlation between an employee's perceived fit to his or her supervisor, an employee's perception of supervisor support, and an employee's tenure. It is not known if, or to what extent, there is a correlation between an employee's perceived fit to his or her supervisor, an employee's perception of supervisor support, and an employee's tenure. Blau's social exchange theory and Deci & Ryan's self-determination theory served as the theoretical foundation and Schneider's attraction-selection-attrition (ASA) cycle provided a conceptual model for two research questions. An online survey using a convenience sampling of 123 employees employed the Eisenberger, Huntington and Sowa Survey of Perceived Organizational Support and the Cable and DeRue 3-item perceptions scale to study perceived supervisor support and person-supervisor fit, respectively. Demographic data were collected regarding tenure using an ordinal scale. A Spearman correlation analysis observed a significant positive correlation between person-supervisor fit and perceived supervisor support ($r_s = 0.51$, $p < .001$). A Spearman correlation analysis found there is not a statistically significant correlation between an employee's tenure and an employee's perception of supervisor support. The results of this study underscore the importance of the assessment of employee and supervisor fit both at the onset as well as throughout the employment relationship.

Keywords: perceived supervisor support, person-supervisor fit, tenure

Dedication

This study on fit and support is dedicated to my best friend and most faithful supporter, my husband Ivan Huff. Ivan has been the ultimate cheerleader from the beginning and throughout this dissertation journey. His love and belief in me have made all the late nights and long working weekends worthwhile. He has sacrificed time together and never complained – instead, he has continuously commented on how proud and impressed he is with my efforts. Ivan, I am so proud of you and impressed with your spirit. Thank you for all your love and support!

Acknowledgments

This doctoral journey was made possible through the love and support of my dear family, supportive colleagues, and encouraging committee. I want to first thank my husband, wonderful children and parents, and all my sisters and brother and in-laws and extended family. Your continuous questions about how I was coming along with the study and cheers with every success along the way have been amazing. I am truly blessed!

I also want to thank the great work colleagues I've had along the way for your support and fantastic interest and contributions. Finally, to my committee – Dr. Kimball, Dr. Larkey, and Dr. Stimpson – you've kept me on track and provided the guidance needed to reach the finish line. Thank you! I appreciate all your help, and especially have benefited from Dr. Kimball's continuous and timely support throughout the last two years of this journey as my Committee Chair. You are the best!

Most importantly I want to give thanks to God, my ultimate supporter and cheerleader. God has been my source of strength as well as inspiration in this study, and I give Him all glory and praise. My prayer is for wisdom to use the information gleaned in this study to help people be successful in work and in life.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

The study of the match, or fit, of people to the work environment was driven by the finding that a perceived fit by an employee to their work environment contributes to the employee's intent to stay with a company rather than seek other employment. Understanding fit has been key to retaining valuable human capital, a critical point of competitive advantage for any organization (Dawley, Houghton, & Bucklew, 2010; Zhang, Ling, Zhang, & Xie, 2015). In a similar vein, social support has been found to be an effective coping strategy to mitigate stressors that lead to job burnout and turnover intentions (Choi, Cheong, & Feinberg, 2012; Dawley et al., 2010; Zhang et al., 2015). Employees who perceive a supportive relationship between themselves and their immediate supervisor are more likely to indicate they intend to stay with an organization, compared to employees who perceive a non-supportive supervisor relationship.

Relationships have been found between various fit, support, and tenure variables. Recent research regarding employee perceptions related to fit, supervisor support, and turnover intentions has shown perceived supervisor support and one type of fit, perceived job fit, are related, and both are important variables in employee turnover intention (DeConinck, DeConinck, & Lockwood, 2015). Supervisor support has also been found to have a stronger relationship to an employee's intention to stay with an organization for employees with longer employment tenure (Kraemer & Gouthier, 2014). Much of the research on intention to stay related to fit and support has focused on an employee's stated intention to stay at a given point in time, rather than the employee's actual tenure over a period (Astakhova, 2015; Conway & Coyle-Shapiro, 2012). The relationships

identified between various fit, support and tenure variables highlight the important role both perceived fit and perceived support have in an employee's intention to stay with an organization.

Further study is recommended regarding the relationship between support and fit and tenure variables. DeConinck et al. (2015) recommends future research to study the relationship between perceived supervisor support and other types of perceived fit. Recent studies on the multiple dimensions of fit, including person-supervisor fit, have also called for a further examination of the conditions in which certain dimensions are activated more than others (Boon & Biron, 2016; Chuang, Shen, & Judge, 2016). Multiples studies have identified a need to study the correlation of fit and support dimensions with tenure over time (Astakhova, 2015; Conway & Coyle-Shapiro, 2012), including a call to better understand the theoretical reason for a correlation between tenure and supervisor support specifically (Kraemer & Gouthier, 2014). The present study sought to extend the findings and follow these stated research recommendations by utilizing the theoretical foundation of Blau's (1964) social exchange theory and Deci and Ryan's (1985) self-determination theory to identify whether a correlation exists between perceived person-supervisor fit, perceived supervisor support and employment tenure.

This quantitative correlational study surveyed perceived supervisor support and perceived person-supervisor fit among employees from multiple employers in the Phoenix, Arizona area. The study utilized supervisor support measurement items developed by Eisenberger (Eisenberger, Huntington, & Sowa, 1986; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002) and fit measurement items developed by Cable and DeRue (2002). Additional demographic information, including tenure, age and gender, was also

collected in the survey. The results of this study identified whether an employee's perceived fit to his or her supervisor is correlated to an employee's perception of supervisor support, contributing to the body of knowledge regarding Deci and Ryan's self-determination theory (1985), and whether an employee's perception of supervisor support is related to employment tenure, contributing to the body of knowledge regarding Blau's social exchange theory (1964).

Chapter one of this dissertation introduced the background of this study, identifying the problem statement, purpose of the study, and the research questions and hypotheses to be studied. Chapter one also clarified the significance of the study, introducing the theoretical foundation on which the study is based, and describing the rational for the methodology and nature of the research design for the study. A definition of terms used in the study is included, as well as any assumptions and limitations identified in the research process. Chapter one concludes with a summary, and an overview of the organization of the remainder of the study.

Background of the Study

This proposed quantitative correlational study addressed a gap in research related to an employee's perception of support from their supervisor. This research focused on a recent call for further study of the relationship between perceived supervisor support and perceived fit elements other than job fit (DeConinck et al., 2015). The call for further study on fit elements is echoed in the study by Chuang et al. (2016) recommending an examination of the conditions that activate fit dimensions, as well as by Boon and Biron (2016), to identify whether elements such as supervisor support function as moderators of fit elements. In addition, the proposed study addressed the identified need for a

theoretical reason for the recent finding that perceived employee-supervisor support is related to employees with longer employment tenure (Kraemer & Gouthier, 2014), as well as the call to study the impact of support over time (Conway & Coyle-Shapiro, 2012). The identified gap narrowed the focus of the study to fit, support and tenure variables related to an employee's perception of their supervisor.

One element measured in the study of employees and their perceived fit to other people in the organizational environment was perceived person-supervisor fit. Person-supervisor fit is the employee's perceived similarity to their supervisor's values, attitude, and personality (Jackson & Johnson, 2012; Zhang et al., 2015). Perceived person-supervisor (PS) fit has been an underexplored area of fit (Edwards & Billsberry, 2010; Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005). Early research found that the more compatible an employee's lifestyle and match is to the supervisor's interpersonal needs, the more favorably the employee is viewed by the supervisor (Di Marco, 1974). Recent studies demonstrate that employee-perceived PS fit combined with employee commitment to the supervisor leads to an employee's commitment to the organization, and the same study found that similar personality styles between a leader and the employee lead to stronger self-identity and performance in the workplace for both employee and supervisor (Jackson & Johnson, 2012). Employee engagement is also a by-product of personal identification with the supervisor (Matta, Scott, Koopman, & Conlon, 2014; Zhang et al., 2015; Zhu, Wang, Zheng, Liu, & Miao, 2013). Followers who identify with their leaders display innovativeness, affective organizational commitment, and a stronger intention to stay with the organization.

Perceived supervisor support is another element studied related to the employee supervisor relationship. Perceived supervisor support (PSS) describes how deeply an employee believes their supervisor appreciates their work and is concerned about their wellbeing (Dawley et al., 2010). PSS helps employees feel important and motivated to contribute more effort towards the organization (Hsieh, 2012). PSS is directly related to increased perceived organizational support, which in turn, is an important factor in employee intention to stay (DeConinck et al., 2015). Supervisory support does affect the satisfaction of psychological needs and an employee's intention to leave or stay (Gillet, Forest, Benabou, & Bentein, 2015), especially when the need for autonomy is met (Rothmann, Diedericks, & Swart, 2013). PSS has been found to be related to the fit element perceived person-job fit (DeConinck et al., 2015), and PSS has been found to function as a moderating factor on links between person-organization fit, job satisfaction and job stress (Boon & Biron, 2016; Chen, Sparrow, & Cooper, 2016). PSS, like PS fit, has shown a correlation with employee engagement, performance, and organizational commitment.

The relationships found between PSS and PS fit and other fit and support variables has led to the identification of additional research gaps. Considering the relationship between person-job fit and PSS, DeConinck et al. (2015) identify a gap in the research with a recommendation to understand what other fit elements are related to PSS. Understanding the drivers behind PSS is recommended by Gillet et al. (2015) as well because, although PSS was found to indirectly contribute to an employee's intention to stay, little is yet known regarding the instigating factors creating PSS. A gap is also identified by Chen et al. (2016) as well as by Boon and Biron (2016), who provide a

recommendation for further research to understand how supervisor support functions as a moderator of fit and other outcomes over a period of time. The proposed study regarding whether there is a difference in PSS between people with shorter employment tenures and people with longer employment tenures answered a gap in the research identified by Kraemer and Gouthier (2014) and echoed in further studies (Yang, Shen, Zhu, Liu, Deng, Chen, & See, 2015). These studies provide a recommendation for further study on the theoretical reason behind intention to stay differences by tenure and the study of PSS over time. This recommendation stems from finding that employees with shorter employment tenures elect perceived support from coworkers as a more important driver for intention to stay than PSS, and PSS is elected to be more important for employees with longer employment tenures.

This study was particularly significant for employers seeking to increase employee retention in their organizations. The significance of this study resided in the presentation of quantitative data that linked an employee's perception of fit to their supervisor, and an employee's tenure, to the employee's perception of supervisor support, an element that has been found to affect an employee's intention to stay with an organization (Gillet et al., 2015; Van Vianen, Shen, & Chuang, 2011). Both findings underscored the importance of assessment of fit between an employee and his or her supervisor prior to job placement and promoted the importance of communication regarding fit between an employee and his or her supervisor throughout the life cycle of the employee-supervisor relationship.

Problem Statement

It is not known if, or to what extent, there is a correlation between an employee's perceived fit to his or her supervisor, an employee's perception of supervisor support, and an employee's tenure. It is known that employees who perceive positive supervisor support have positive intentions to stay within an organization; however, little is known about the drivers behind perceived supervisor support (Gillet et al., 2015). An employee's perceived fit to job has been found to be related to perceived supervisor support, and a call was issued for further research on the relationship between perceived supervisor support and perceived fit elements other than job fit (Boon & Biron, 2016; Chuang et al., 2016; DeConinck et al., 2015). Employers and employees alike have a need to understand what drives an employee's satisfaction, productivity, and tenure at work.

Employees are recognized world-wide as a critical resource. A key challenge for companies world-wide is to attract and retain skilled employees who are trained in the business of the organization (Rothmann et al., 2013). The desire to retain valued human capital has led to a sustained interest in how person-organization fit is related to employee behavior (Chen et al., 2016). Employees want to know that the leaders of the organization care about their well-being and appreciate their contributions (Kurtessis, Eisenberger, Ford, Buffardi, Stewart, & Adis, 2017). Employee perception of fit to an organization and its leaders has been an area of significant focus related to employee retention.

The study of fit has identified multiple related outcomes. An employee's happiness at work was found to be directly related to perceived organizational and job fit with their organization (Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005). In fact, fit has

been found to precede an employee's affect or happiness and job satisfaction – without fit, employee happiness or job satisfaction is unlikely (Gabriel, Diefendorff, Chandler, Moran, & Greguras, 2014). Studies show a better person-supervisor fit leads to strong employee performance and creativity (Lee & Tan, 2012). Employers by their very nature need employees and are affected by employee fit perceptions.

Both employees and employers also benefit from understanding the role of and the factors that may be related to supervisor support in the life cycle of an employee within an organization. Employee performance and employer fulfillment of the employee's perceived psychological contract with the employer have both been found not only to be reciprocally linked, but also to be moderated by a supportive relationship (Conway & Coyle-Shapiro, 2012). For employees, perceived supervisor support has been found to enhance employee job satisfaction (Chen & Chiu, 2008). For employers, perceived supervisor support is linked favorably to greater employee efforts at work (Hsieh, 2012), and employees see their employer as responsible for the support they receive from their supervisors (Eisenberger, Shoss, Karagonlar, Gonzalez-Morales, Wickham, & Buffardi, 2014). In fact, employees with a high level of supervisory support increase their job performance as the challenge of their job increases (Mushtaq, Raja, & Khan, 2017). Employers are affected by employee supervisor support perceptions.

However, questions remained related to the various types of supportive relationships in the workplace. Further study was recommended related to the supervisor support relationship, whether it moderates the relationship between employee performance and the psychological contract fulfillment, and whether the importance of that relationship changes over time (Conway & Coyle-Shapiro, 2012). This quantitative

correlational study addressed this gap in research by focusing on the correlation between an employee's perceived supervisor support and the employee's perceived supervisor fit. The recent finding that perceived employee-supervisor support is related to employees with longer tenures (Kraemer & Gouthier, 2014) lead to the inclusion of the demographic element of tenure in the study, addressing the identified need for a theoretical reason for the unexpected finding. The setting for this study was Maricopa County, the fourth largest and fastest growing county in the United States by population (United States Census Bureau, 2018), situated in the Phoenix, Arizona area. The unit of analysis was employees.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this quantitative correlational research study of employees from multiple employers in the Phoenix, Arizona area, was to determine if, or to what extent, there is a correlation between an employee's perceived fit to his or her supervisor, an employee's perception of supervisor support, and an employee's tenure. This research study was conducted with a convenience sample of approximately 300 employees representing multiple industries. The target population corresponded to employees with various job types, including management employees, technical and administrative employees, and operational or skilled labor employees from multiple employers based in the Phoenix, Arizona area.

To measure the variable of employee perception of supervisor support, and the variables of employee perception of fit to supervisor and employee tenure, a survey instrument was administered via the internet to each participant. The survey included the Eisenberger et al. (1986) perceived support instrument, and the Cable and DeRue (2002)

perceived fit instrument. Employees were also asked to provide demographic information regarding tenure, age, and gender on an ordinal scale. See Appendix D for the full instrument content.

Research Questions and/or Hypotheses

Because it is not known if, or to what extent, there is a correlation between an employee's perceived fit to his or her supervisor, an employee's perception of supervisor support, and an employee's tenure, this study focused on the following variables, research questions and hypotheses:

1. Variable: employee perception of supervisor support. Data were collected using the Eisenberger et al. (1986) Perceived Supervisor Support questionnaire. The variable was measured continuously, and possible scores ranged from 1 to 7.

2. Variable: employee perception of fit to supervisor. Data were collected using the Cable and DeRue (2002) Person-Supervisor Fit questionnaire. The variable was measured continuously, and possible scores ranged from 1 to 7.

3. Variable: Employee tenure was measured as length of employment, ordinal scale (less than 6 months, 6 months to less than 1 year, 1-5 years, 6-10 years, 10+ years).

RQ1: Is there a statistically significant correlation between an employee's perceived

fit to their supervisor and an employee's perception of supervisor support?

H10: There is not a statistically significant correlation between an employee's

perceived fit to their supervisor and an employee's perception of supervisor

support.

H1a: There is a statistically significant correlation between an employee's perceived

fit to their supervisor and an employee's perception of supervisor support.

RQ2: Is there a statistically significant correlation between an employee's tenure and

an employee's perception of supervisor support?

H20: There is not a statistically significant correlation between an employee's tenure and an employee's perception of supervisor support.

H2a: There is a statistically significant correlation between an employee's tenure and an employee's perception of supervisor support.

The results of this study identified whether an employee's perceived fit to his or her supervisor is correlated to an employee's perception of supervisor support, contributing to the body of knowledge regarding Deci and Ryan's self-determination theory (1985). The study of these research questions and hypothesis also identified whether an employee's perception of supervisor support is related to employees with longer tenure, contributing to the body of knowledge regarding Blau's social exchange theory (1964). Schneider's (1987) attraction-selection-attrition (ASA) cycle provided a conceptual model for the study of person-supervisor fit in this research.

Advancing Scientific Knowledge and Significance of the Study

This study increased the body of knowledge regarding both perceived person-supervisor fit and perceived supervisor support, particularly as they relate to each other. Although certain support and fit elements have been studied together (Cable & DeRue, 2002; Chen & Chiu, 2008; Dawley et al., 2010; DeConinck et al., 2015), this is the first study found by this researcher to include perceived person-supervisor fit and perceived supervisor support in the same research endeavor. This proposed quantitative correlational study addressed a gap in research related to an employee's perception of support from their supervisor, by focusing on a recent call for further study of the relationship between perceived supervisor support and perceived fit elements other than job fit (DeConinck et al., 2015). The call for further study on fit elements is echoed in the

identified the perception of supervisor fit as an opportunity for an employee to meet the need of relatedness. This fit-relatedness connection was confirmed with a correlation of perceived person-supervisor fit to the perception of supervisor support, a tested contributor to filling the need of relatedness (Rothmann et al., 2013). Perceived supervisor support in turn has an indirect relationship to affective commitment (Flint, Haley, & McNally, 2013; Gillet et al., 2015). Affective commitment is a key component in the intention to stay with an organization.

This study was particularly significant for employers seeking to increase employee retention in their organizations. The significance of this study resided in the presentation of quantitative data that linked an employee's perception of fit to their supervisor, and an employee's tenure, to the employee's perception of supervisor support, an element that has been found to affect an employee's intention to stay with an organization (Gillet et al., 2015). Both findings underscored the importance of assessment of fit between an employee and his or her supervisor prior to job placement and promoted the importance of communication regarding fit between an employee and his or her supervisor throughout the life cycle of the employee-supervisor.

The results of this study increased theoretical knowledge by extending our understanding of Deci and Ryan's (1985) self-determination theory. This study answered the call for further research of the employee perceived fit to supervisor and perceived supervisor support dynamic (Boon & Biron, 2016; Chuang et al., 2016; DeConinck et al., 2015). This study also had the potential to provide a theoretical underpinning for the impact of perceived supervisor support on an employee's tenure, as requested by Kraemer and Gouthier (2014), by using Blau's social exchange theory (1964). An

understanding of the tenure impact of supervisor support had the potential to demonstrate another example of Blau's (1964) social exchange theory, by indicating an employee provides a company with his or her continued presence in exchange for the company providing a supervisor that is perceived by the employee to be supportive.

Rationale for Methodology

This study utilized a quantitative method, which is appropriate when research is focused on using statistical analysis to identify whether there is a numerically measurable correlation between multiple variables. A researcher using a quantitative methodology begins with a plan or goal, resulting in an objective or positivist framework for the study, and providing study data that is independent from the perception of the researcher (McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015). A quantitative method directs researchers to objectively analyze data from the variables under study and represents these relationships mathematically (Antwi & Hamza, 2015; Rothmann et al., 2013). The variables in this research study, employee perception of fit to supervisor, employee perception of supervisor support, and employment tenure, are numerically-measurable constructs, making the quantitative approach the best framework to answer the research questions, test the hypotheses, and objectively address the problem statement presented in this study.

A qualitative method provided narrative data rather than numerical data. Using a qualitative method, researchers use a personalized subjective approach to interpret the narrative data collected and describe or assign meaning to participant attitudes and communicated experiences. These findings can be too limited to allow for broader generalization (McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015). This present research was not the

examination of open-ended responses of participants, but rather the study of statistical evidence to objectively identify whether a correlation exists between the studied quantified variables. A qualitative methodology would not produce the objective numerical data required to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses of this research study.

The quantitative method incorporates the use of inferential analyses. The quantitative method has been a primary research approach to collect and study data and identify whether correlative relationships exist for both fit and support variables (Cable & DeRue, 2002; Eisenberger et al., 1986; Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005). Valid and reliable quantitative measurement instruments exist to complete this study (Cable & DeRue, 2002; Eisenberger et al., 1986; Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005). Applying the post positivist scientific method, this study identified whether an employee's perceived fit to his or her supervisor, and an employee's tenure, are related to his or her perception of supervisor support.

In summary, a quantitative method was used in this study as the research method to test hypotheses related to whether there is a statistically significant correlation between an employee's perceived fit to their supervisor and an employee's perception of supervisor support, and whether there is a statistically significant correlation between an employee's employment tenure and the employee's perception of supervisor support. The widely used Cable and DeRue 3-item perceptions scale (2002) was employed to measure the employee perception of person-supervisor fit, and Eisenberger et al.'s (1986) Survey of Perceived Organizational Support was used to evaluate employee perception of supervisor support. Demographic data were also collected, including tenure. All survey

and demographic data were numerically expressed and summarized, which allowed the researcher to use statistical procedures to objectively generalize and analyze the findings. Pearson correlations were used as an inferential analysis to test the hypotheses and assess the association between the variables of interest.

Nature of the Research Design for the Study

A correlational design was selected as the research design for this quantitative study. Correlational designs assess the strength of the relationship between two variables and use inferential analysis such as correlation and regression (Leedy & Ormrod, 2014). The focus of this study was to explore the strength of the correlation between numerically represented fit and support as well as tenure variables collected from multiple participants at one point in time; thus, a correlational design was the most appropriate approach.

Another option considered for this research, and deemed inappropriate, was an experimental design. In an experimental design, the researcher applies a treatment on the study subjects to identify whether the manipulation of variables influences the participants, using experimental and control groups (Bordens & Abbott, 2008). In the present study, no treatment was applied either before or after the testing, so in this study correlation, not causation, was utilized as the study design.

A causal-comparative design was also considered for this research study. However, causal-comparative designs focus on determining the cause for pre-existing differences between groups or individuals distinguished by independent variables, looking retrospectively at associations among variables that exist or have already occurred (Schenker & Rumrill, 2004). The present study did not compare groups retrospectively, but instead looked for relationships or correlations between variables

represented within a single group, so the causal-comparative design was also not appropriate for this current study.

For the purposes of this research, the unit of analysis corresponded to employees of various job types working for multiple employers based in the Phoenix, Arizona area. The target sample size was estimated to be approximately 300 participants, designed to exceed the power estimates for the a priori minimum sample size of 102 participants obtained via an online G*Power calculator (Faul, Erdfelder, Buchner, & Lang, 2009). The unit of observation corresponded to a self-report instrument provided online to participants using a link through Survey Monkey. One variable for this study was the employee's perception of supervisor support (PSS) measured continuously with eight questions from the validated Eisenberger et al. (1986) Survey of Perceived Organizational Support (ESPOS). Another variable for the study was the employee's perception of fit to supervisor and was also measured continuously, using the Cable and DeRue 3-item validated perceptions scale (2002) adapted to measure supervisor fit. The questions for the PSS and the perception of fit to supervisor variables were presented with a seven-point Likert-type scale ranging from "very strongly disagree" (1) to "very strongly agree" (7). The survey also included a self-reported measurement of the variable of employment tenure, with an ordinal scale of possible responses: less than 6 months, 6 months to less than 1 year, 1-5 years, 6-10 years, 10+ years of employment. Additional demographic questions were asked such as gender and age. See Appendix D for a copy of the survey instrument.

Descriptive statistics were used to demonstrate the results of the data for each sample group. Inferential statistics were used to identify relationships between the

variables, using correlation, comparing sets of correlations statistically. A test was conducted to identify any univariate outliers to ensure all data statistically qualifies to be a part of the data. Spearman Rank and Pearson correlations were planned for data analysis like previous job fit studies (Krot & Lewicka, 2012). In summary, a correlational research design was employed in this quantitative study to examine the strength of the correlation between numerically represented fit and support as well as tenure variables among employees of various job types working for multiple employers based in the Phoenix, Arizona area.

Definition of Terms

Perceived supervisor support. Perceived supervisor support (PSS) describes how deeply an employee believes their supervisor appreciates their work and is concerned about their wellbeing (Dawley et al., 2010). PSS helps employees feel important and motivated to contribute more effort towards the organization (Hsieh, 2012).

Perceived fit to supervisor. Perceived person-supervisor fit is an element measured in the study of employees and their perceived fit to other people in the organizational environment. Perceived person-supervisor fit is defined as the employee's perceived similarity to their supervisor's values, attitude, and personality (Jackson & Johnson, 2012; Zhang et al., 2015).

Tenure. Tenure, the length of time an employee has been working for an organization, provides insight into both the choice of the worker to remain with their employer as well as the amount of time a worker is allowed to remain (Copeland, 2019). Tenure is a measure of human capital value within an organization according to human capital theory, which indicates employees develop skills, job knowledge, abilities, and

experiences over time that increase their value to the organization (Steffens, Shemla, Wegge, & Diestel, 2014).

Assumptions, Limitations, Delimitations

This section identifies the assumptions and specifies the limitations, as well as the delimitations, of the study. The information gathered in this research study reflects assumptions, limitations, and delimitations. Assumptions are self-evident truths. Limitations are restrictions on the information over which the researcher had no control. On the other hand, delimitations are choices made by the researcher to restrict the information with deliberation.

Assumptions. An assumption is a self-evident truth. This section lists what was assumed to be true about the information gathered in this study. The following assumptions were present in this study:

1. It was assumed that survey participants in this study were not deceptive with their answers, and that the participants answered questions honestly and to the best of their ability. The survey was presented as a voluntary activity to each employee, and participation was managed as a separate activity from any other employment responsibility. The information received was maintained as anonymous; in other words, an employee's identity was not linked with their survey answers.

2. It is assumed that this study is an accurate representation of the current perceptions of the employees participating in this survey. Employees responded anonymously to the questions, and participation was not tracked by employee.

Limitations and delimitations. Limitations are things that the researcher has no control over, such as bias. In contrast, delimitations are things over which the researcher has control, such as location of the study. The following limitations related to the research methodology, design, and data collection and analysis were present in this study:

1. A limit to the study was the bias provided by the participants. Some people are not always truthful in survey responses.

2. PSS was measured with eight questions from the widely used Eisenberger et al. (1986) Survey of Perceived Organizational Support (ESPOS), adapted to measure supervisor support in place of organizational support. This shorter version of the survey, and this adaptation to measure supervisor support, has been found to be valid and reliable (Shanock & Eisenberger, 2006). The original version of the survey includes additional questions, and although the shortened version was validated by the original author of the full survey, it is possible the measurement of perceived supervisor support might be affected using this minimized version of the survey tool.

3. Although a multi-dimensional tool has been developed recently to measure perceived Person-Supervisor fit specifically (Chuang et al., 2016), the Cable and DeRue scale has been selected for this current study as the tool with the longer period of validation by other researchers in the field of fit (Astakhova, 2015; Hamstra, Van Vianen, & Koen, 2018; Kim & Kim, 2013; Zhang et al., 2015). This study was limited to the single-dimensional fit parameters measured in the Cable and DeRue scale, adapted as per the practice of similar studies to measure perceived person-supervisor fit.

The following delimitations related to the research methodology, design, and data

collection and analysis were present in this study:

1. This study used correlation to evaluate the relatedness of two variables, perceived person-supervisor fit and perceived supervisor support. Because this was not an experimental design study, the direction of the causality could not be confirmed, which leaves open the possibility of reciprocal causation among the two variables (Crossley, Cooper, & Wernsing, 2013).

2. The survey was delimited to a sample pool of full-time, English-speaking employees within one organization, which may have limited the generalizability of the findings. In addition, due to the convenience sampling procedure, geographical restrictions existed which restricted the generalizability of the results.

3. One organization had both English speaking and Spanish speaking employees. However, the survey was offered in English only for purposes of expediency. The exclusion of the non-English speakers may have delimited the results of the survey.

Summary and Organization of the Remainder of the Study

In summary, organizations strive to retain key talent to remain competitive. An

employee's positive perception of fit to supervisor as well as an employee's perception of

supervisor support has been found to promote employee retention in the workplace (Dawley et al., 2010; Zhang et al., 2015). However, little was known about the drivers behind perceived supervisor support (Gillet et al., 2015). It was not known if, or to what extent, there is a correlation between an employee's perceived fit to his or her supervisor, an employee's perception of supervisor support, and an employee's tenure.

This study addressed various gaps in the research related to fit, support, and tenure variables. The study sought to fill a gap in research in the study of the relationship between perceived supervisor support and perceived fit elements other than job fit (DeConinck et al., 2015). Likewise, this study addressed a gap in the examination of the conditions, such as supervisor support, that activate fit dimensions (Boon & Biron, 2016; Chuang et al., 2016). In addition, the proposed study addressed the identified need for a theoretical reason for the recent finding that perceived employee-supervisor support is related to employees with longer tenures of employment (Kraemer & Gouthier, 2014). By addressing these identified gaps this study increased the body of knowledge regarding both perceived person-supervisor fit and perceived supervisor support.

This study also extended theoretical understanding. This quantitative correlational study built on the use of Deci and Ryan's (1985) self-determination theory in the study of both fit and support (Flint et al., 2013; Gillet et al., 2015; Greguras & Diefendorff, 2009), and identified Blau's social exchange theory (1964) as the underpinning theory for the exchange of employee tenure for perceived supervisor support, as requested by Kraemer and Gouthier (2014). Certain support and fit elements have been studied together (Cable & DeRue, 2002; Chen & Chiu, 2008; Dawley et al., 2010; DeConinck et al., 2015).

However, this was the first study found by this researcher to include perceived person-supervisor fit and perceived supervisor support in the same research endeavor.

The remaining chapters built on this introduction to the correlational study of perceived person-supervisor fit, and perceived supervisor support, as well as the correlational study of how perceived supervisor support might differ for employees with shorter tenures from employees with longer tenures in the workplace. Chapter 2 presented a review of current research on perceived person-supervisor fit, perceived supervisor support, and tenure in the workplace. A background to the study and gaps identified in current literature is described, and a review of the theoretical foundation to the study is detailed. Chapter 3 describes the methodology, research design, and procedures for this investigation. Chapter 4 details how the data were analyzed and provides both a written and graphic summary of the results. Chapter 5 is an interpretation and discussion of the results, as it relates to the existing body of research related to the dissertation topic.

Once this research proposal, which includes Chapters 1, 2, and 3, was approved by the Dissertation Committee for study, and the International Review Board (IRB) provided written authorization that all research protocol documents are in order (see Appendix B), data collection began with a questionnaire provided to the studied population, a group of approximately 300 employees from multiple employers in the Phoenix, Arizona area. The results of the completed questionnaires were analyzed, and Chapters 4 and 5 were prepared to detail the study findings. Once complete, the dissertation was presented for review and final defense to the Grand Canyon University Dissertation Committee, and then presented to the Dean for approval.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction to the Chapter and Background to the Problem

The purpose of this literature review was to discover all research related to an employee's perception of fit to supervisor (person-supervisor fit) and an employee's perception of supervisor support (perceived person-supervisor support), including research relating both variables with employee tenure. This chapter provided the theoretical backgrounds and research methodologies used in the study for both variables. Identified gaps in the literature were provided as well as recommendations for further research. The research history of both variables and their related findings and gaps were connected to the need for the current study of the correlation between perceived person-supervisor fit and perceived person-supervisor support, and perceived person-supervisor support's correlation with longevity in the workplace.

After identifying the gap and the need for the current study, this chapter provides a review of the theoretical foundations supporting this research, including the research history leading up to each theory. Keeping engaged employees, a critical point of competitive advantage for any organization, has driven an abundance of quantitative research around the topic of employee retention (Zhang et al., 2015). Studies related to employee retention identify the theory of social exchange as foundational to understanding the exchange between an employee and an organization (Blau, 1964), and this theory was used in initial studies related to perceived organizational support, including Eisenberger et al.'s introduction in 1986 to organizational support theory (Eisenberger et al., 1986). The following year, an attraction-selection-attrition model was developed by Schneider (1987), wherein Schneider described the work environment as

being comprised of the people of the organization, rather than the physical environment. Schneider's model formed the foundation of the person-environment fit variables (Cable & DeRue, 2002; Schneider, 2001). Recent research using Deci and Ryan's (1985) self-determination theory has found both the person-environment fit variables (Greguras & Diefendorff, 2009) and the supervisor support variable (Gillet, et al., 2015) are related to employee needs satisfaction. This literature review provided a study of the theory of social exchange (Blau, 1964), the self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985), and the attraction-selection-attrition model (Schneider, 1987).

This study continued with an examination of previous literature related to perceived person-supervisor fit and perceived supervisor support and the impact of both elements on employee longevity in the workplace. To thoroughly and accurately provide all background factors related to perceived supervisor support and perceived person-supervisor fit and their correlation to employee tenure at work, this chapter reviewed both the origins and historical findings related to research of both perceived person-supervisor support and perceived person-supervisor fit (research prior to 2010) and the most recent study findings (research from 2010 to present day), providing both outcomes and gaps identified in these studies. The topic of employee retention within the context of perceived person-supervisor fit and perceived supervisor support was discussed. Shared correlations with other measures were also reviewed, specifically other fit elements such as person-environment fit in general, and specifically person-organization, person-job, and person-group fit, as well as shared outcome elements related to intention to stay, including engagement, trust, organizational pride, organizational culture, and leader-member exchange (LMX).

This chapter identified the recommendations for further research that led to the present study. Recent quantitative studies have identified both perceived person-supervisor fit and perceived supervisor support as being independently correlated to an employee's intention to stay with an employer (Dawley et al., 2010; Hsieh, 2012; Jackson & Johnson, 2012; Zhang et al., 2015; Zhu et al., 2013). However, a gap in the research exists regarding the correlation of these two factors within the same study (DeConinck et al., 2015). Recent research indicates supervisor support is a moderating factor in the linkage between factors influencing an employee's intention to stay within an organization, and points to the possibility that supervisory support may work in more complex ways than previously understood (Chen et al., 2016). The call for further study on fit elements is echoed in the study by Chuang et al. (2016) recommending an examination of the conditions that activate fit dimensions, as well as by Boon and Biron (2016) to identify whether elements such as supervisor support function as moderators of fit elements. The recommendations for further research identify the need for further study of the correlation between fit and support variables.

This chapter also studied the recommendations for further research regarding an employee's intention to stay with an organization related to fit and support variables. Supervisor support has been found to have a stronger relationship to an employee's intention to stay with an organization for employees with longer tenures of employment (Kraemer & Gouthier, 2014). Much of the research on intention to stay has focused on an employee's stated intention to stay, rather than the employee's actual tenure (Astakhova, 2015; Conway & Coyle-Shapiro, 2012). This literature review identified a need to study the relationship of support dimensions to employment tenure.

With the goal of ensuring all relevant scientific research has been reviewed, the literature review utilized the search engines Google Scholar, EBSCO Host, and ProQuest. Theses search engines include such databases as the Business Source Corporate, Psychology and Behavioral Science Collection, APA PsycNET, and SocIndex, providing the ability to conduct a search of peer-reviewed journal articles and scholarly publications from scientific journals such as the Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology, Journal of Applied Psychology, and the Journal of Business and Psychology. Key words such as person-supervisor fit, person-environment fit, perceived supervisor support, perceived organizational support, employee turnover, and employee tenure were utilized to ensure all relevant sources were obtained.

This chapter also includes a history of instrumentation used in the research of the variables of perceived person-supervisor fit and perceived supervisor support. Methodologies used in prior research studies on the topics of perceived person-supervisor fit and perceived supervisor support are covered. The chapter closes with a summary of the literature review findings.

Identification of the Gap

It was not known if and to what extent an employee's perceived fit to his or her supervisor is correlated to an employee's perception of supervisor support. It is known that employees who perceive positive supervisor support have positive intentions to stay within an organization; however, little was known about the drivers behind perceived supervisor support (Chuang et al., 2016; DeConinck et al., 2015; Gillet et al., 2015). One driver that has been identified as correlated to perceived supervisor support (PSS) is an employee's perceived fit to job (DeConinck et al., 2015). The research article detailing

this finding issues a call for further study of the relationship between PSS and perceived fit elements other than job fit. Understanding the drivers behind PSS is recommended by Gillet et al. (2015) as well. Although PSS was found to indirectly contribute to an employee's intention to stay, little is yet known regarding the instigating factors creating PSS.

This quantitative correlational study addressed the identified gaps in support research and in fit research by focusing on the relationship between an employee's perceived supervisor support and the employee's perceived supervisor fit. A call for further study on fit elements is voiced in the study by Chuang et al. (2016) recommending an examination of the conditions that activate fit dimensions. This call is echoed as well as by Boon and Biron (2016), who recommend further study to identify whether elements such as supervisor support function as moderators of fit elements over time.

This quantitative correlational study of the correlation between perceived person-supervisor fit and perceived supervisor support also identified whether an employee's tenure is correlated to their perception of supervisor support. It was not known whether an employee's tenure is correlated to their perception of supervisor support. Perceived organizational support during an employee's tenure has been found to moderate the reciprocal link between employee performance and company-provided rewards at early points but not at later points (Conway & Coyle-Shapiro, 2012). Further study has been recommended by the researchers (Conway & Coyle-Shapiro, 2012) to understand the changing importance of components of organizational support (*i.e.* supervisor support) in the employee–leader exchange over time, as well as other factors that might moderate the

employee-leader exchange relationship (*i.e.* perceived person-supervisor fit). The gap
identified by Chen et al. (2016) as well as by Boon and Biron (2016) also includes a
recommendation to study how supervisor support functions as a moderator of fit and
other outcomes over time. This builds on the finding by Kraemer and Gouthier (2014)
somewhat incidentally, of the correlation between PSS and employment tenure. Due to
the incidental nature of the finding, Kraemer and Gouthier (2014) recommended further
study to identify the theoretical reason behind the finding that employees with shorter
employment tenures elect perceived support from coworkers as a more important driver
for intention to stay than PSS, and PSS is elected to be more important for employees
with longer employment tenures (Kraemer & Gouthier, 2014; Yang et al., 2015). A 2018
study, which found person-supervisor fit mediates the impact similar person-organization
fit results have among employees and their supervisor in relation to performance ratings,
recommended future research to disentangle fitting and non-fitting activities on employee
work activities, such as tenure (Hamstra et al., 2018).

The study of these identified gaps in both perceived supervisor fit and perceived
supervisor support literature was particularly significant for employers seeking to
increase employee retention in their organizations. The significance of this study resides
in the presentation of quantitative data that links an employee's perception of fit to their
supervisor, and an employee's tenure, to the employee's perception of supervisor support,
an element that has been found to affect an employee's intention to stay with an
organization (Gillet et al., 2015). Both findings would underscore the importance of
assessment of fit between an employee and his or her supervisor prior to job placement
and promote the importance of communication regarding fit between an employee and

his or her supervisor throughout the life cycle of the employee-supervisor relationship (Kurtessis et al., 2017; Van Vianen et al., 2011). In summary, existing literature on perceived organizational support and fit to the organization pushed for further understanding of the relationship moderating variables such as perceived supervisor fit may have on the impact perceived supervisor support has on the employee-organization relationship.

Theoretical Foundations and/or Conceptual Framework

Blau's (1964) social exchange theory and Deci and Ryan's (1985) self-determination theory together served as the theoretical foundation for this study of the variables of an employee's perceived supervisor support, an employee's perceived fit to their supervisor, and employment tenure. Schneider's (1987) attraction-selection-attrition (ASA) cycle provided a conceptual model for the study of person-supervisor fit. This research study proposed that an employee's perceived fit with their supervisor's values is correlated to a perception of supervisor support, meeting a need for relatedness, and that employee tenure is a value exchanged for perceived supervisor support (PSS).

Social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) indicates that for a relationship to exist between two entities, they both must believe they are able to receive something of value from the other. The social exchange between two parties develops as they reciprocate exchanges between the two parties, leaving both in debt to each other. Economic exchange may be in the form of tangible items such as compensation and benefits. Social exchange takes the form of intangible relationship benefits, such as praise, approval and commitment, if the donor is perceived as sincere (Blau, 1964).

Social exchange theory has its roots in the study of social behavior, with initial mention of social exchange as a theory by Marcel Mauss in 1925 and revisited and debated by research psychologists and sociologists such as George Homans (Homans, 1958) and Peter Blau (Blau, 1964; Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Emerson, 1976). Homans (1958) proposed the need for a social behavior as exchange theory that might bridge sociology and economics. Homans identified social behavior as an exchange of material and non-materials goods, wherein the individual that gives a lot seeks to get a lot, and the individual on the receiving end is under pressure to give a lot in return (Homans, 1958). Blau (1964) solidified the term social exchange theory and added that the quality of the exchanges between two individuals is influenced at times by the relationship shared between them (Cropanzano, Anthony, Daniels, & Hall, 2017; Emerson, 1976).

Although widely used as a conceptual framework, concern has been voiced that social exchange theory has imprecise behavioral predictions (Cropanzano et al., 2017). However, even theorists who propose that social exchange theory may have some conceptual discrepancies regarding relationship development (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Cropanzano et al., 2017) provide potential explanations for these discrepancies, and highlight the importance of the research and application of social exchange theory in management science. Social exchange theory continues to be widely used as a platform for the study of human behavior, including the study of organizational support and leader-member exchanges (Kurtessis et al., 2017; Marstand, Martin, & Epitropaki, 2017).

Due to the intangible nature of social exchange, trust has been identified as the differentiator that allows partners to exchange elements that rely on their relationship

with each other (Kurtessis et al., 2017). Within the context of an organization, the fostering of social exchange relationships, including an employee's perception of supervisor support, increases the commitment employees provide back to the organization, and trust mediates this exchange (Sousa-Lima, Michel, & Caetano, 2013). Understanding of the social exchange theory has been expanded through the study of relationship exchanges in the workplace, such as the employee relationship with the organization (Conway & Coyle-Shapiro, 2012; Eisenberger et al., 1986), the employee relationship with coworkers (Sousa-Lima et al., 2013; Tett & Murphy, 2002), and the employee's relationship with their supervisor (Farndale, Van Ruiten, Kelliher, & Hope-Hailey, 2011; Flint et al., 2013; Marstand et al., 2017).

The seminal study of perceived support identified its foundation on the theoretical underpinning of the social exchange theory (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Social exchange was found to be demonstrated in the research by identifying perceived organizational support as a variable that is related to an employee's commitment to an organization. More recent research demonstrating the exchange continues to find a relationship between intent to stay as a value exchanged more specifically for perceived supervisor support, with this finding mitigated by both the fit of the person to the job, as well as the personal sacrifice the employee would suffer if they leave (Dawley et al., 2010).

As research continued related to the variable of perceived organizational support, the variable itself began to be referred to as the organizational support theory (Eisenberger, Armeli, Rexwinkel, Lynch, & Rhoades, 2001). While some studies related to organizational support continue to base their research solely on the social exchange theory, other studies related to organizational support have listed organizational support

theory as their sole foundation (Neves & Eisenberger, 2014; Shanock & Eisenberger, 2006). Several recent studies on organizational support reference both social exchange theory and organizational support theory as they detail the basis of their hypothesis and study focus (DeConinck et al., 2015; Kurtessis et al., 2017; Zhang, 2014).

Self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) is a theoretical framework that is concerned with the biological, social, and cultural conditions that support or thwart wellness and flourishing (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Self-determination theory states that each person has the need for independence or autonomy, for relatedness, and for competence. When these needs are met, self-determination theory indicates an individual has the opportunity for optimal growth, functioning, and well-being. A broad network of researchers across more than 40 nations have challenged, refined, and extended understanding of the self-determination theory over the past 30 plus years, which provides a strong platform from which to use this framework to better understand employee behavior (Ryan & Deci, 2017).

Deci and Ryan indicate the development of the self-determination theory came from a concern to explore not how motivation might be controlled from without, but instead how intrinsic motivation occurs and is experienced from within (Ryan & Deci, 2017). Intrinsic motivation indicates that human beings pursue activities and interests, such as sport, games, play, *etc.*, to satisfy basic needs inherent to the individual. (Ryan & Deci (2017). Intrinsic motivation is autonomous, stemming from within the individual, and satisfies a need to either know, accomplish, or experience stimulation (Rothmann et al., 2013). Self-determination theory maintains that the type of motivation received, intrinsic or extrinsic, affects an employee's performance and wellbeing (Deci, Olafsen, &

Ryan, 2017). One intrinsically motivated outcome, empowerment, has been found to be derived from task variety and challenge. The satisfaction of the intrinsic motivational need of competence has been found to lead to empowerment, which is positively related to an employee's affective commitment to an organization (Gillet et al., 2015).

The definition of fit, the compatibility of a person to the characteristics of the work environment, initially was studied by situationists as fit to the physical characteristics of the work environment, such as the structure of the work location and situations that occur in the work environment (Mischel, 1979). Schneider (1987) redefined the work environment characteristics as the people rather than the structure or situations in the work environment with the introduction of a new model, the attraction-selection-attrition (ASA) cycle. With the publication of his landmark research article, "The People Make the Place," Schneider (1987) redirected researchers to view the organizational environment as the sum-total of those who are attracted, selected, and who remain employed. The ASA framework proposed that behavior in organizations is understood by looking at the personality and interests of the people within organizations, and individuals are attracted to, selected by, and remain with an organization when the collective climate and culture of the organization is a fit to their personal attributes. In fact, this draw between similar individuals is described as so powerful, the fit selection cycle means change to a different person profile is very difficult to achieve, and when required, may mean the ultimate failure of the organization (Schneider, 1987). Schneider concluded this seminal work by identifying a need for leadership theories that are person-based, indicating that effective leadership traits and the factors that attract and retain

individuals to an organization are unique to the collective people trait preferences within different types of work settings.

Self-determination theory (SDT) provides an understanding of how need satisfaction influences the person-environment fit framework model (Schneider, 1987), driving employee attraction to an organization, selection for a job, and eventual attrition or retention of the employee. The person-environment fit framework model indicates that as this ASA cycle focused on fit continues, the employee population that remains will be similar, accentuating the ASA cycle. SDT identifies need supporting and need thwarting as independent variables, the basic psychological needs themselves as mediators, and outcome work behaviors such as performance, well-being, and vitality as dependent variables (Deci et al., 2017). Recent research founded in the self-determination theory contributes to understanding the importance of meeting psychological needs in the person-supervisor fit variable (Greguras & Diefendorff, 2009; Kovjanic et al., 2012) as well as the perceived supervisor support variable (Gillet et al., 2015; Rothmann, et al., 2013). A perception of fit to the supervisor as well as a perception of supervisor support have both been found to meet the need of relatedness, which in turn has an indirect relationship to affective commitment, a key component in the intention to stay with an organization (Flint et al., 2013; Gillet et al., 2015; Greguras & Diefendorff, 2009).

Studying the correlation between the variables of person-supervisor fit and perceived supervisor support contributed to the understanding of whether meeting the need of relatedness with one variable increases the likelihood of meeting the need of relatedness through a second variable. This study also added to research related to the ASA model by potentially identifying a higher concentration of individuals with a

perception of fit to their supervisor after a period, demonstrating how the cycle of attrition/retention leads to similar traits amongst a group of employees over time (Schneider, 1987). Finally, a correlation between tenure and a positive perception of supervisor support contributed a demonstration of social exchange between an employee and their supervisor, providing a theory to this already observed phenomenon (Kraemer & Gouthier, 2014).

Review of the Literature

An examination of previous literature related to perceived person-supervisor fit and perceived supervisor support and the impact of both elements on employee longevity in the workplace began with a study of the origins and historical findings of these two variables. The literature review continued with a description of the outcomes and gaps identified in these studies. Related research followed regarding employee retention within the context of perceived person-supervisor fit and perceived supervisor support. Shared correlations with other measures were also reviewed, specifically other fit elements such as person-environment fit in general, and specifically person-organization, person-job, and person-group fit. This literature review also included relevant findings on shared outcome elements related to perceived person-supervisor fit and perceived supervisor support as well as intention to stay, including engagement, trust, organizational pride, organizational culture, and leader-member exchange (LMX).

Historically, behavior was studied by psychologists such as Freud and Raymond Cattell pursuing theories tying behavior to the person, while situational researchers such as Watson and Skinner identified environmental determinants of behavior (Schneider, 1987). The study of organizational and employee behavior became the focus of research

within multiple areas of psychology, with divided camps for person-based and situation-based theories (Bowers, 1973; Mischel, 1979). Schneider (1987), responding to the discourse between situationists and personalists regarding the source of organizational behavior, described the work environment as being comprised of the people of the organization, rather than the physical environment, and identified organizations as representative of the kinds of people they contain. Schneider developed an attraction-selection-attrition (ASA) model that formed the foundation of the study of person-environment fit variables (Cable & DeRue, 2002).

In addition to Schneider's ASA model, several theories developed during this time period related to employee behavior. The theory of social exchange emerged as foundational to understanding the exchange between an employee and an organization (Blau, 1964), identifying an employee's behavior as an interdependent exchange for the actions of the organization (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Deci and Ryan's (1985) self-determination theory identified an individual's need for independence or autonomy, for relatedness, and for competence.

Both the social exchange theory and the self-determination theory provide context for an abundance of quantitative research around the topic of employee retention, the study of keeping engaged employees, a critical point of competitive advantage for any organization (Zhang et al., 2015). Social exchange theory was used in initial studies related to perceived organizational support, including Eisenberger et al.'s introduction in 1986 to organizational support theory (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Self-determination theory as it relates to employee needs satisfaction was used as the foundation for studies

of both person-environment fit variables (Greguras & Diefendorff, 2009) as well as the supervisor support variable (Gillet, et al., 2015).

Previous research studies related to perceived person-supervisor fit and perceived supervisor support and the impact of both elements on employee longevity in the workplace were the next area of focus in this chapter. Perceived person-supervisor fit, and perceived supervisor support are identified as subset variables within the broader concepts of fit and support. Fit variables under the broader organizational fit category include person-organization fit, person-job fit, person-group or person-coworker fit, and the current focus, person-supervisor fit (Chuang et al., 2016; Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005). Support variables under the broader support umbrella include organizational support, coworker support, and the present study, supervisor support (DeConinck et al., 2015).

The perceived fit to supervisor and perceived supervisor support variables have been studied within the context of a variety of research topics related to the work environment. Outcomes related to both supervisor fit and supervisor support identified in this literature review include tenure, intention to stay, turnover, the exchange between leaders and team members (leader-member exchange), and trust. A review of the findings in these studies provided both a recommendation and context for the current research of a correlation between the supervisor support and perceived fit to supervisor as well as tenure.

This study was the first found by this researcher to study the correlation between perceived fit to supervisor and perceived supervisor support. Both variables are found in research to be related to similar outcomes, and multiple studies have combined other

subset fit and support variables together, including the study of fit variables other than person-supervisor fit with supervisor support (Dawley et al., 2010; DeConinck et al., 2015). A review of the correlation between these two variables extended the research and answered the recommendation to identify further connections between fit variables and supervisor support (DeConinck et al., 2015).

This literature review was designed to systematically provide an overview of the research of both variables as it relates to the broader work environment context and to the broader concepts of fit and support. The study of literature related to the variables of fit and support was also intended to identify how the current study of the correlation between the perception of person-supervisor fit and perception of supervisor support extends existing research and follows the recommendations for further research study. The literature review uncovered two research topics related to the supervisor-employee relationship that use the perceived person-supervisor fit and perceived supervisor support variables – namely, the study of trust in organizations (Sousa-Lima et al., 2013) and the study of leader-member exchange (Eisenberger et al., 2014; Hsieh, 2012). This literature review includes information related to trust and leader-member exchange as they relate to either perceived person-supervisor fit or to perceived supervisor support. Finally, this literature review provides an overview of previous research related to tenure and its correlation to perceived supervisor support, as well as previous studies demonstrating tenure's grounding in Blau's (1964) social exchange theory.

Perceived fit. The definition of fit, the compatibility of a person to the characteristics of the work environment, initially was studied as fit to the physical characteristics of the work environment, such as the structure of the work location and

situations that occur in the work environment (Mischel, 1979). A key assumption in this situationist perspective is that the environment and the person are two separate entities, with the person being "subjected" to the environment. The situationist perspective began to be debated as researchers found situations, rather than happening strictly to people, develop through the interaction of people (Bowers, 1973).

Schneider (1987) redefined the work environment characteristics as the people rather than the structure or situations in the work environment with the introduction of the attraction-selection-attrition (ASA) cycle, and redirected researchers to view the organizational environment as the sum total of those who are attracted, selected, and who remain employed. Rooted in the theory of interpersonal attraction, the ASA framework provides a supplementary fit description for a person and their work environment (Chuang et al., 2016). This framework is built on shared dimensions such as values, goals, personality traits, or attitudes (Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005), and indicates that a work environment continuously self-aligns as people are attracted to and selected to be placed in an organization, and then either choose to stay or leave, or are eliminated by the organization. In other words, as Schneider (1987) so eloquently summarized, "The people make the place."

Person-Environment (PE) fit is broadly described as a match of characteristics between a person and the elements of their work environment. The specific elements of the work environment studied in PE fit research include the perceived match or fit between an employee and their job, the perceived fit between an employee and the organization where they work, the perceived fit between an employee and their coworkers, and the perceived fit between employees and their supervisor (Chuang et al.,

2016; Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005). These individually listed factors are typically studied from the perception of the employee (Maertz, Griffeth, Campbell, & Allen, 2007).

Perceived organizational fit was found to be a precedent for employee work affect and job satisfaction (Edwards & Billsberry, 2010). An employee's love for their work and the satisfaction received from performing their job is correlated positively to an employee's perceived fit to the organization (Gabriel et al., 2014). Although both perceived fit to the organization and perceived fit to the job have a similar impact on job satisfaction, perceived fit to the organization has been found to have a stronger relationship to intentions to quit (Lauver & Kristof-Brown, 2001).

An employee's perception of fit to the organization can fluctuate over time (Gabriel et al., 2014; Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005). This perception of fit may start as anticipation of work enjoyment and fit to a job prior to starting the work. An employee's experiences in the work environment, their experience with their supervisor, their job, and their experience with their coworkers each uniquely affect the perception of fit at any given moment, identifying a need for further study on why certain fit dimensions are important at any given point in time (Chuang et al., 2016; Jansen & Kristof-Brown, 2006; Lauver & Kristof-Brown, 2001).

An employee's perception of fit to the organization can also fluctuate based the individual's identification with the type or culture of the organization. A study completed in an academic environment, for example, may be considered limited until the results are duplicated in a different environment (Gregory, Albritton, & Osmonbekov, 2010). An employee's perceived fit to an organization can be inherently unique to that organization

and to its culture (Bélanger, Pierro, Barbieri, De Carlo, Falco, & Kruglanski, 2016), or may be unique to the country of origin of the participants (Astakhova, 2015; Van Vianen et al., 2011). However, contrary to the tendency to account for human behavior largely in light of the situation in which occurs (as espoused by Situationism), fit perceptions are also driven by each participant's unique personality traits (Bowers, 1973; Kristof-Brown, Barrick, & Kay Stevens, 2005; Zhang, Lam, & Deng, 2017).

Providing context to the broader environmental fit, each individual fit element has been found to be uniquely important in an employee's intent to stay in their workplace, as well as important in employee commitment and satisfaction at work (Chuang et al., 2016; Edwards & Billsberry, 2010). The individual fit dimensions are found to have a formative construct, combining to form an employee's perception of overall person-environment fit. Each individual fit dimension contributes to improve the predictability of the outcomes (Darrow & Behrend, 2017).

However, in some cases where retention is studied in conjunction to fit, other variables are found to have a stronger correlation to retention. Factors such as personality (in particular high conscientiousness and low neuroticism) along with job characteristics (in particular, variety and autonomy) have been found to have a stronger correlation to intent to stay than actual job fit or role congruence (Nillsen, Earl, Elizondo, & Wadlington, 2014). Job stress has been found to mediate the relationship between an employee's perceived fit to an organization and job satisfaction (Chen et al., 2016). Fit, specifically job fit, has been found to be most effective to prevent turnover when coupled with an employee's perception of support and the employee's identification with the organization (DeConinck et al., 2015).

Initially fit studies used actual fit evaluation study techniques as the methodology to evaluate fit (Di Marco, 1974), and this direct approach to the study of fit continued to exemplify fit studies, primarily focused on the actual fit of applicants to the work environment (Cable & DeRue, 2002). This direct, or objective, approach is characterized using person and environment variable measures collected or reported by various sources, such as an assessment or identified performance indicators. If individuals were to assess their environment objectively, objective measures would possibly be good indicators of fit. However, studies found a weak relationship between objective fit measures and consistent outcomes, suggesting employees act on perception rather than on reality (Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005).

The first study of employee perceived fit in the workplace, rather than actual fit evaluations, emerged in 2001 (Lauver & Kristof-Brown). The subjective perception of fit more accurately is correlated to the choices people make related to fit than objective factual content regarding fit, since perception was found to be a more accurate predictor of employee attitudes and behaviors (Cable & DeRue, 2002; Kristof-Brown & Stevens, 2001). Perceived fit has continued to be the preferred method of assessing fit (Astakhova, 2015; Chuang et al., 2016; Greguras & Diefendorff, 2009; Kim & Kim, 2013; Van Vianen et al., 2011).

Lauver and Kristof-Brown's (2001) perceived fit study found that each type of fit studied, which included an employee's perceived person-organization fit and perceived person-job fit, has unique outcomes. This finding led to a recommendation that future studies include a person's fit with specific elements in their work environment as a compared variable, very specifically mentioning fit to one's immediate supervisor as a

recommended focus for future fit studies. This recommendation led to several studies identifying very specific fit variables, including perceived person-supervisor fit (Chuang et al., 2016).

Perceived fit to supervisor. Perceived person-supervisor fit measures the employee's perceived fit or compatibility with their supervisor's personality dimensions, values, and goals (Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005). The description of fit between an employee and a supervisor as meeting a need and correlating to relational outcomes is seen in early research related to the supervisor-subordinate relationship (Di Marco, 1974). This initial study of perceived person-supervisor compatibility includes the observation that fit in personal values between supervisor and subordinate correlates to a positive attitude by the subordinate towards the supervisor.

The study of perceived person-supervisor fit was identified in early person-environment fit studies as an important element to explore when assessing multiple types of fit (Lauver & Kristof-Brown, 2001). The Lauver and Kristof-Brown (2001) study forged the way for a focused study on the specific fit concept of perceived person-supervisor fit. Perceived person-supervisor fit was then introduced as one of four fit variables in the Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, and Johnson (2005) meta-analysis of various fit concepts, clarifying person-supervisor fit as an under-explored area of fit, and recommending an exploration of the mechanisms that stimulate fit, as well as the elements that are related to the change of fit perceptions over time. Consequent studies on perceived person-supervisor fit (PS fit) have explored relationships between PS fit and other dependent variables such as job satisfaction (Chuang et al., 2016; Kruglanski, Pierro, & Higgins, 2007; Marstand et al., 2017), behavior on the job (Chuang et al., 2016;

Marstand et al., 2017), employee psychological empowerment (Gillet et al., 2015; Kim & Kim, 2013), and work engagement and organizational commitment (Zhang et al., 2015).

Job satisfaction is significantly correlated to an employee's indication of perceived person-supervisor fit (Chuang et al., 2016). An early finding in the study of person-supervisor fit showed job satisfaction is increased when the employee perceives the supervisor to have a leadership style suited to the employee's current state of operational style, a preference for either a forceful or advisory style (Kruglanski et al., 2007). If a leader is a fit to the employee's work values, the quality of the exchange between the employee and the leader increases, and in turn leads to stronger job satisfaction (Marstand et al., 2017).

Fit to supervisor is correlated also to behavior in the job, such as in-role behavior and organizational citizenship behavior (Chuang et al., 2016). When a leader fulfills an employee's work values, an employee reciprocates by behaving in a manner that meets the behavioral expectations held by the organization. This correlation between meeting employee values and receiving in exchange organizational citizenship behavior is even stronger than the link between fit and job satisfaction, a key finding related to how to drive employee behavior for employers (Marstand et al., 2017). Person-supervisor fit has been found to promote creativity and performance on the job (Lee & Tan, 2012).

Person-supervisor fit also moderates and strengthens employee psychological empowerment when the employee connects with their supervisor's values by observing the supervisor's moral competence (Kim & Kim, 2013). Empowerment is defined as autonomy, a core need for employees based on Ryan and Deci's (2017) Self-Determination Theory, and further described as job enrichment (Kraemer & Gouthier,

2014). Empowerment leads to stronger task performance and stronger organizational citizenship behavior (Kim & Kim, 2013). Empowerment is positively related to an affective commitment to the organization, reducing turnover intentions as well as cynicism (Gillet et al., 2015).

Perceived fit to supervisor positively related to workplace retention. We do know an employee's commitment to stay within an organization improves with perceived employee-supervisor fit (Astakhova, 2015; Zhang et al., 2015; Zhu et al., 2013). We also know that fit has been correlated to satisfaction of the need for relatedness, as identified by the self-determination theory (Greguras & Diefendorff, 2009). Positive perceived fit by the employee with their supervisor has been found to increase employee performance in the workplace (Jackson & Johnson, 2012), and increase job satisfaction (Kruglanski et al., 2007).

Perceived person-supervisor fit has also been found to promote a strong commitment to the workplace (Astakhova, 2015; Zhang et al., 2015; Zhu et al., 2013). Person-supervisor fit contributes to an employee's commitment to their supervisor, and in turn an employee's commitment to their supervisor mediates the employee's commitment to their work organization (Van Vianen et al., 2011). An employee's perceived fit to the organization can impact work affect and job satisfaction, and an employee's perception of fit can fluctuate over time (Gabriel et al., 2014). Person-supervisor fit also works together with work engagement to overcome low organizational commitment and minimize turnover intention. If an employee's commitment to the organization is low, perceived person-supervisor fit can moderate an employee's intention to leave the organization (Zhang et al., 2015).

Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, and Johnson's (2005) challenge to further research the variable of person-supervisor fit has certainly seen some response, but researchers are still listing some of her recommendations for future fit studies in their own research, especially the personal and situational characteristics that moderate the relationship between person-supervisor fit and other outcomes. Recommendations for further study related to fit and retention include the recommendation to study the relationship of fit to work outcomes such as tenure over time (Astakhova, 2015), and the recommendation to study how certain conditions may activate the influence of person-supervisor fit more than others (Chuang et al., 2016).

Leader-member exchange and guanxi. Fit has been correlated to several other key variables tied to the employee-supervisor relationship, namely leader-member exchange and the Chinese concept of guanxi (Marstand et al., 2017; Zhang et al., 2017). These variables are found in multiple studies related to the study of person-environment fit, person-organization fit, person-job fit as well as person-supervisor fit (Enwereuzor, Ugwu, & Eze, 2016). Leader-member exchange and guanxi also factor strongly in results related to retention. A brief overview is provided here of the research findings regarding leader-member exchange and guanxi as they relate specifically to fit and retention, giving further understanding to the supervisor's impact on an employee's tenure within an organization.

Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) is premised on social exchange theory and the reciprocity between a leader and a follower and indicates the quality of this relationship affects the behavior and the attitudes of the follower (Boon & Biron, 2016). Because LMX refers to the work relationship that develops between an employee and their

manager, and because the supervisor is representing the organization in this relationship, LMX is found to be correlated to person-organization fit more than to person-supervisor fit (Zhang et al., 2017). In fact, the LMX relationship between an employee and their supervisor has been found to support both the employee's perceived fit to the organization and to their job (Boon & Biron, 2016).

Guanxi is a term used predominantly in the Chinese culture and refers to the personal relationship between an employee and their manager, typically referencing social exchange experiences occurring on a personal level outside of work (Zhang et al., 2017). Although both guanxi and LMX refer to the relationship between an employee and their manager, Zhang et al.'s findings (2017) suggest guanxi is more closely associated to the person-supervisor fit and assisting the supervisor constructs, while LMX is more closely related to person-organization fit and retention variables. These findings define LMX as a leader reflecting organization-related communication and practices, while guanxi reflects the personal relationship between the employee and the supervisor.

These recent findings conflict with an earlier study which describes guanxi as a functional relationship between the supervisor and employee, with limited impact on an employee's perception of fit to the supervisor (Van Vianen et al., 2011). The same study identifies LMX as a boost that links an employee's perception of organizational fit to organizational commitment as well as an employee's perception of fit to the supervisor and commitment to the supervisor. There have been calls in recent studies on LMX to expand the review of the employee-supervisor relationship using variables other than LMX, naming perceived supervisor support specifically as one such possible variable (Boon & Biron, 2016).

In summary, perceived person-supervisor fit measures the employee's perceived fit or compatibility with their supervisor's personality dimensions, values, and goals (Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005). Perceived person-supervisor fit is a variable within the person-environment fit family of variables and has been found to uniquely contribute to an employee's commitment and satisfaction at work (Chuang et al., 2016; Edwards & Billsberry, 2010; Lauver & Kristof-Brown, 2001). Person-supervisor fit contributes to an employee's commitment to their supervisor and can moderate an employee's intention to leave an organization (Astakhova, 2015; Zhang et al., 2015; Zhu et al., 2013). Recommendations for further study include the recommendation to study the relationship of fit with work outcomes such as tenure (Astakhova, 2015) and the recommendation to identify the conditions that may activate the influence of person-supervisor fit more than other variables (Chuang et al., 2016).

Perceived organizational support. The study of perceived organizational support was launched with Eisenberger et al.'s (1986) groundbreaking study introducing the concept of perceived organizational support as an employee's view of the way in which the employer values their contributions and cares for their wellbeing. Employees were found to have reduced absenteeism when correlated perceived organizational support was positive. This correlation was especially strong for employees with a strong exchange ideology.

Eisenberger et al.'s (1986) research, founded on social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), has in some literature been recognized as the organizational support theory (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Organizational support theory supposes an employee evaluates the extent to which an organization voluntarily provides rewards and

socioemotional support to demonstrate how they value the employee's contributions and care about their wellbeing (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). While some studies related to organizational support continue to base their research solely on the social exchange theory, other studies related to organizational support have listed organizational support theory either as their sole foundation (Neves & Eisenberger, 2014; Shanock & Eisenberger, 2006), or as a theory used in conjunction with social exchange theory as they detail the basis of their hypothesis and research (DeConinck et al., 2015; Kurtessis et al., 2017; Zhang, 2014).

Eisenberger et al.'s (1986) findings identified perceived organizational support as correlated with reduced absenteeism, especially for those employees with a strong exchange ideology. Outcomes correlated to organizational support include an employee's perception of the organization, a sense of well-being, and a collection of helpful behaviors towards the organization. Support has been found to be an effective coping strategy to mitigate stressors that lead to job burnout and turnover intentions (Choi et al., 2012). The conclusion that perceived organizational support is strongly connected to favorable outcomes led to a suggestion that POS is central to the relationship between an employee and their employer (Kurtessis et al., 2017).

Support might come from the organization, from co-workers, and/or from supervisors (Neves & Eisenberger, 2014; Yang et al., 2015). Support from all three sources, the organization, co-workers, and supervisors, satisfy the need to belong and help an employee become embedded in the organization, and by doing so reduce turnover intentions (Singh, Shaffer, & Selvarajan, 2017). Related studies measuring manager and leader support and trust have found that manager relations and leader support affect the

satisfaction of psychological needs, an employee's intention to leave and the employee's commitment to the organization (Gillet et al., 2015; Rothmann et al., 2013).

An early review (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002) of over 70 research documents related to perceived organizational support identified organizational fairness (procedural justice), and supervisor support as the top one/two contributors to perceived organizational support. By 2017 (Kurtessis et al., 2017), a study of now over 550 studies on organizational support continued to find a strong connection between organizational support and the antecedents of organizational fair practices (human resources practices and general working conditions) as well as supervisor support (leadership). The social support from supervisors in particular is found to be a moderator of outcomes such as job burnout and turnover intentions because supervisors provide a valuable social exchange to the employee for their contributions. When providing social support in the workplace, supervisors exchange recognition for the value of the employee's contribution and demonstrate interest in the employee's well-being (Maertz et al., 2007).

Perceived supervisor support. Considered an antecedent to organizational support, perceived supervisor support is a studied element in the workplace involving employees and their supervisors (Gillet et al., 2015). The original studies of organizational support identified representatives of the organization as key purveyors of perceived organizational support in the eyes of the employee (Eisenberger et al., 1986), and concluded with a recommendation for further study to measure the effectiveness of leadership behaviors on an employee's perception of organizational support. Perceived supervisor support is described as the belief an employee holds with regards to the value a supervisor has for their contributions and the care the supervisor displays for their

wellbeing (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Perceived supervisor support is a component of the social support network an employee may encounter in the work environment (Choi et al., 2012), and has its roots in Blau's (1964) social exchange theory.

Perceived supervisor support is conceptualized as portraying the quality of the exchange an employee receives from their supervisor for their services (Conway & Coyle-Shapiro, 2012). When perceived supervisor support is favorable, employee exchange behaviors, such as absenteeism, are diminished, if the employee believes in the importance of an exchange relationship (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Supervisor support strengthens the negative exchange between perceived organizational support and turnover (Maertz et al., 2007).

Perceived supervisor support is linked favorably to greater employee efforts at work (Hsieh, 2012). PSS is found to enhance employee job satisfaction and increase positive employee behavior at work, and when employees have a negative perception of supervisor support, they are at increased risk of leaving their employment (Chen & Chiu, 2008). In fact, the relationship between job scope and job performance depends on the social support that supervisor support provides – employees with a high level of supervisory support see higher job performance as the challenge of their job increases (Mushtaq et al., 2017).

However, perceived supervisor support can be overshadowed by emotional exhaustion (Choi et al., 2012). In a study of customer service representatives across seven call centers, Choi and his colleagues found that the grind of dealing with angry customers, as well as the stress of working in a depersonalized environment, where personal effort came to be merged with that of a larger group, created job burnout. In

Choi et al.'s (2012) study, job burnout was especially anticipated when the measure of personal accomplishment was lost. Burnout and stress are also tied to the fit variable according to Bélanger et al. (2016). According to Bélanger et al. (2016), employees are found to experience less stress when their supervisor uses tactics that fit their need, whether that need is for an indirect, softer approach, or the employee need is for a more directive power tactic.

PSS has an impact on turnover intention (Maertz et al., 2007). Research has found that employees who perceive a supportive relationship between themselves and their immediate supervisor are more likely to indicate they intend to stay with an organization, compared to employees who perceive a non-supportive supervisor relationship (Dawley et al., 2010; Zhang et al., 2015). Perceived coworker support strengthens the impact of perceived supervisor support on employee retention (Yang et al., 2015). Social support has been found to be an effective coping strategy to mitigate stressors that lead to job burnout and turnover intentions (Choi et al., 2012).

Perceived supervisor support has been found to be related to perceived person-job fit (DeConinck et al., 2015). Perceived supervisor support and perceived coworker support have a strong association to minimizing job stress (Yang et al., 2015). Further research has been recommended to understand what other elements shape an employee's perception of treatment by an organization (Kurtessis, et al., 2017). More specifically, recommendations include identifying which fit elements other than person-job fit might be related to perceived supervisor support (DeConinck et al., 2015).

Perceived support positively related to trust. Blau's (1964) social exchange theory indicates employees engage in reciprocal relationships with their supervisor when

they receive an exchange of trust and loyal commitment. A supportive supervisor, working in combination with an organization that shares important information with employees and distributes outcomes fairly to employees, leads to employees who develop feelings of trust in the organization (Sousa-Lima et al., 2013). Trust allows for exchange relationships between employees and the organizations who employ their services to be maintained even through difficult periods, and thereby is correlated with employee retention (Conway & Coyle-Shapiro, 2012). Trust between an employee and their manager is associated with employee job satisfaction and dedication (Gill, 2008). Trust in senior management and a strong employee-supervisor relationship also leads to employee empowerment to use their voice and be engaged at work, which in turn leads to an employee's commitment to the organization (Farndale et al., 2011; Rees, Alfes, & Gatenby, 2013).

A perceived supportive supervisor relationship increases the trust an employee has that their employer will reciprocate commitment as an exchange for the social relationship. This exchange belief was found by Conway and Coyle-Shapiro (2012) to be so strong as to moderate the effect actual commitment activities by the employer have on the employee. However, their findings show that this moderating relationship perceived organizational support has to employee commitment wanes over time, and eventually actual organizational performance regains its original influence on the exchange between employee and employer.

A recent South Africa study of sales employees (van der Berg & Martins, 2013) found social support, both by supervisors as well as coworkers, to be the strongest work life factor to correlate to trust within the organization. The same study found that

employee organizational trust is related to management practices (most significantly credibility and team management) at a greater measure than by focusing on personality types. In other words, perceived supervisor support, and perceived direct supervisor credibility and ability to manage the work team, were correlated to greater employee trust in the organization. Of the personality factors, although not as influential to trust as management practices, agreeableness and conscientiousness had the highest impact on organizational trust.

Supervisors stand in a unique position, with opportunity to impact an employee's trust for the institution (trust an employee has for the organization's policies, procedures, vision, goals, management, technologies, competence, and justice) as well as impact the employee's trust in the employee-supervisor relationship (the supervisor's power over employee assignments, performance evaluations, and career progression) (Sousa-Lima et al., 2013). Qualities found to engender trust include honesty, benevolence, and competence (ability to carry out commitments). Benevolence might include going beyond what is agreed to provide help for the wellbeing of another, or to act in consideration of the other's needs and interests. Trust between coworkers was found to be correlated to integrity. However, trust by the employee in the supervisor was found to be engendered through supervisor benevolence towards the employee (Krot & Lewicka, 2012; van der Berg & Martins, 2013).

Studies related to an employee's willingness to take risks to achieve potentially higher rewards for the organization indicate that the starting point for risk-taking behavior is organizational support. Organizational support, whether expressed directly through support by the supervisor, or indirectly through fair and generous company and

human resources practices, correlates directly to an employee's risk-taking trust in the organization (Neves & Eisenberger, 2014). However, ultimately supervisor support has been found to provide the strongest impact on an employee's trust in the organization and has a more direct impact on an employee's job satisfaction, as well as affective commitment and intention to stay with the employer (Sousa-Lima et al., 2013).

Social support positively related to tenure. Organizational support as well as supervisor support each provide independent associations with an employee's intention to stay with an organization (Maertz et al., 2007). Perceived organizational support is related to turnover intention, and perceived supervisor support is a related to organizational support (Dawley et al., 2010). In fact, supervisor support has been found to have a compounding relationship, in such that low supervisor support increases the intention to leave when there is low organizational support, and high supervisor support increases the intention to stay when there is high organizational support (Maertz et al., 2007).

Perceived supervisor support or consideration towards employees can lead employees to feel important within the organization, and this encouragement inspires dedication to the organization and its values and initiatives (Hsieh, 2012). This supervisor support can affect both intentions to leave and the satisfaction of needs, including the need for autonomy (Rothmann et al., 2013). However, this dedication to the organization inspired by perceived supervisor support many not be enough to retain an employee in the face of demotivating factors such as emotional exhaustion (Choi et al., 2012).

Employee performance and employer fulfillment of the employee's psychological contract have both been found not only to be reciprocally linked, but also to be moderated

by a supportive relationship (Conway & Coyle-Shapiro, 2012). Employees have certain expectations, a perceived psychological contract, when accepting a job opportunity with a company. Some of these expectations are stated in the employment contract – a wage, identified job duties, a work location, stated health and welfare benefits, *etc.* The assigned supervisor is typically one of these stated expectations. Other employee expectations may be derived from the organization's stated mission statement and values, such as having the opportunity to care for others or to protect the environment, or the expectation of fair treatment. Organizational support is typically a derived expectation. Employee performance has been found to be correlated to the employer's fulfillment of the perceived psychological contract, as well as vice versa, the employer's fulfillment of this perceived psychological contract can be correlated to employee performance. The strength of these relationships has been found to increase over time, and to be moderated by a supportive relationship (Conway & Coyle-Shapiro, 2012).

Perceived supervisor support has been studied considering employee demographic information, including time worked, or tenure, on the job, and has been identified as having a greater bearing on intent to stay for employees with longer employment tenure (Kraemer & Gouthier, 2014; Yang et al., 2015). Tenure, or time on the job, according to research completed by Kraemer and Gouthier (2014), has been found to impact the importance supervisor support has on the employee's intention to stay with an organization. Kraemer and Gouthier's research found an employee with shorter employment tenure relies more heavily on support from coworkers when thinking about whether to stay or leave an organization. Kraemer and Gouthier (2014) recommend

further study to understand the theoretical reason behind these "intention to stay" differences by tenure.

Perceived fit related to the outcome of perceived support. Foundational work related to perceived support recommended further study to understand what supervisor behaviors drive perceived support (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Perceived fit was first seen as correlating directly to perceived support in Cable and DeRue's (2002) landmark study on various dimensions of environmental fit and their outcomes. This study identified fit perceptions, such as person-organization fit, demands-abilities fit, and needs-supplies fit, as distinct constructs with directly related outcomes. In this first study to link perceived support as an outcome to perceived fit, the person-organization fit perception correlated to perceived organizational support as well as to an employee's turnover decision as its strongest correlated outcome variables (Cable & DeRue, 2002). The organizational fit measurement tool used by Cable and & DeRue in this study became the model for future studies related to fit and was adapted to measure fit to supervisor for the present study.

A recent meta-analytical evaluation of organizational support theory (Kurtessis et al., 2017) identified a strong correlation between an employee's congruence with an organization's values, a key description of fit, and employee's perceived organizational support. This study identified a total of seven studies measuring correlation of some form of values congruence correlated with perceived organizational support at the employee-organization level. A recent qualitative study found a path to job satisfaction that includes a high level of supervisor support and job security connected with personal environment fit (Gębczyńska & Kwiotkowska, 2018). Although there does not appear to be evidence of any studies evaluating perceived fit and support at the employee-supervisor level,

these studies did provide support for the hypotheses of a correlation at the employee-supervisor level.

The correlation between the fit and support variables has been seen in research correlating perceived job fit to perceived supervisor support (Dawley et al., 2010). Job fit is described as an employee's perception of how well they are a fit to their job within the organization. This includes elements such as organizational values, work team, job responsibilities, culture, and coworkers. The relationship between intent to stay and perceived supervisor support (PSS) was reviewed and found to be mitigated by the fit of the person to the job (Dawley et al., 2010; DeConinck et al., 2015). Further research has been recommended to understand what other fit elements, such as person-supervisor fit, are related to perceived supervisor support (DeConinck et al., 2015).

In summary, perceived supervisor support, rooted in Blau's (1964) social exchange theory, is an element in the organizational support family of variables. Perceived supervisor support describes an employee's perception of the value held by their supervisor for the employee's contributions and the care displayed by the supervisor for the employee's wellbeing (Eisenberger et al., 1986). An employee is found to exchange positive behavior at work with positive perceived supervisor support (Hsieh, 2012; Mushtaq et al., 2017). An employee's intention to stay with an organization is related directly to perceived supervisor support (Dawley et al., 2010; Zhang et al., 2015). Perceived person-job fit has been found to be related to perceived supervisor support (DeConinck et al., 2015) and further study is recommended to identify what other elements, including other fit elements, might be related to an employee's perception of supervisor support (DeConinck et al., 2015; Kurtessis et al., 2017).

Tenure. Tenure, the length of time an employee has been working for an organization, provides insight into both the choice of the worker to remain with their employer as well as the amount of time a worker is allowed to remain (Copeland, 2019). Tenure is a measure of human capital value within an organization according to human capital theory, which indicates employees develop skills, job knowledge, abilities, and experiences over time that increase their value to the organization (Steffens et al., 2014). Tenure is an implied component of Schneider's (1987) attraction/selection/attrition (ASA) model, which indicates employees who find they are a fit to the values and culture of an organization both choose and are chosen to remain with the company (Steffens et al., 2014). According to the ASA model, this cycle inherently leads to organizations comprised of individuals with increasingly similar cultural values.

The overall median tenure for workers in 2018 for wage and salary workers in the United States was 5.0 years. Although the perception may be that career jobs were more prevalent in past years, median tenure has remained steady with very slight dips and increases in tenure over the last thirty-five years - median tenure was also 5.0 years for workers in 1983. The distribution of tenure in 2018 compared to 1983 has been relatively stable (Copeland, 2019). The data suggests employees will continue a pattern of repeatedly changing jobs during their working years rather than being employed in career jobs, with a pattern of increased job changes in the early employment years (ages 25-34) and longer tenure in the final years of employment (ages 55-64).

The same study (Copeland, 2019) indicates that, in general, tenure of greater than one year of service has improved over the last thirty-five years. In the one year of tenure or less category, 20.5 percent of workers had one year or less of employment in 2018

compared to 25.7 percent in 1983. A corresponding slight increase occurred in medium tenure across all other years of service categories, especially in the 20 or more years of service category (10.6 in 2018 compared to 8.9 in 1983). These results indicate that, although median tenure has remained consistent, tenure of greater than one year of service has improved over the last thirty years.

Tenure has been used with both fit and support studies as a direct measure of employee retention (Inabinett & Ballaro, 2014). Tenure has been used in longitudinal design studies to identify measurement points over time (Conway & Coyle-Shapiro, 2012), or to identify in a snapshot of time the differences between employees with less tenure as compared to employees with more tenure (Edwards & Billsberry, 2010; Kraemer & Gouthier, 2014; Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005). Tenure has been used as a measurement in fit and support studies in time periods as short as days, or as long as months (Kraemer & Gouthier, 2014; Marstand et al., 2017) or a combination of months and/or years (Conway & Coyle-Shapiro, 2012; Edwards & Billsberry, 2010).

Studies observing the multi-dimensionality of employee – supervisor fit variables have identified a socialization period of one year at the onset of employment, and long-term tenure with differing related outcome measures being represented as greater than one year of employment (Edwards & Billsberry, 2010; Jansen & Kristof-Brown, 2006). One study measures the impact of supervisor values fit to the employee's perception of Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) at two time points, with measurements at a starting point and again six months later. This study finds statistically significant changes in the perception of LMX by the employee over the six-month period (Marstand et al., 2017).

The beginning months of employment have also been found to be unique in studies related to social support. In Kraemer and Gouthier's (2014) study on the impact of organizational pride on retention, supervisor support was found to have a greater impact on an employee's intention to stay within an organization for employees with longer tenures, in this study identified as after six months of employment. Coworker support was found to have a stronger impact on intention to stay for employees with shorter tenures. This finding was not hypothesized, and the study recommended further review to understand the theoretical basis for the finding.

Tenure has been found to impact perceived trustworthiness among both coworkers as well as between employees and their immediate supervisors. Early in work relationships, trust has been found to be built on demographic similarities, such as age and gender (Levin, Whitener, & Cross, 2006). Relationships of an intermediate time frame base trust on observations of behavior. Shared experiences and perspectives are associated with trust between individuals with long-term relationships in the workplace.

Tenure has been linked to outcomes such as performance (Steffens et al., 2014), and the match of an employee's values to organizational culture (Inabinett & Ballaro, 2014). However, recent findings indicate a unilateral view of the tenure of only the employee may not be the only tenure factor in outcomes such as employee performance. Supervisor tenure has been found to have an incremental impact on employee performance (Steffens et al., 2014). The same study found diversity in tenure among team members served to increase employee performance, highlighting the dynamics of team tenure compared to solely the worker's individual tenure in outcomes such as performance.

Some research has identified functions for low tenure levels that are reduced or are non-existent for employees with greater tenure. Lack of organizational tenure has been found to serve as a moderator for failure to deliver on commitments in the early phases of the employee-employer exchange – in other words, employers have a brief grace period in the exchange process with new employees (Conway & Coyle-Shapiro, 2012). Social relationships at work have a stronger impact on an employee's intention to stay with the organization for employees with shorter tenures (Kraemer & Gouthier, 2014). The collection of organization-related knowledge, enhancing performance, is accelerated during the early stages of employment, and dissipates as the employee accumulates more tenure in the organization (Steffens et al., 2014). An employee's perceived organizational fit (value congruence) moderates a supervisor's transformational leadership effectiveness for new employees, but the impact of perceived organizational fit was found to disappear with tenure, leaving the leader's effectiveness to stand (or fall) on its own merits (Lajoie, Boudrias, Rousseau, & Brunelle, 2017). This finding is congruent with Kraemer and Gouthier's (2014) finding that a leader's impact on an employee's intention to stay is stronger for employees with longer tenures.

Further study recommendations in the literature regarding tenure revolve around both the theoretical platforms for findings related to tenure, as well as further identification of support and fit variables that are related to the impact of tenure. An early study on organizational support and tenure recommended further study to identify distinctive aspects of organizational support (such as supervisor support) across the tenure of the employee (Conway & Coyle-Shapiro, 2012). The only study this researcher found to look specifically at tenure in conjunction with supervisor support (Kraemer &

Gouthier, 2014) found a correlation by accident rather than as a planned part of the study and recommended further review of the theoretical reason behind this finding. A study on organizational tenure and performance released in the same year (Steffens et al., 2014) recommended identification of additional variables that might be correlated to the relationship between employee tenure and performance. Studies on fit related to employee tenure have recommended further research to verify whether specific values contribute to an employee's perception of fit to their organization depending on tenure (Lajoie et al., 2017).

In conclusion, research shows an employee's tenure provides insight into both the employee's choice to remain with an organization, as well as the organization's choice to retain the employee, and is considered to be a direct measure of retention in both fit and support studies. Although nationwide on average 20% of employees currently have less than one year of employment, the median tenure has held steady at approximately five years of employment for the last 30 years. Both employee tenure and supervisor tenure have been found to have a direct impact on company productivity, and teams with diverse tenure levels create a stronger environment for team success. Employees with shorter tenures have been found to connect with and trust their coworkers and supervisor through perceived similarities. For employees with shorter tenure, coworkers as well as a supportive organizational structure and a connection to the values of the organization have the greatest association with tenure. As employee tenure increases, trust begins to be based on actual behavior and eventually on shared experiences, and employee and company performance as well as perceived supervisor support have been found to have a stronger association with an employee's intention to stay.

Methodology and instrumentation/data sources/research materials.

Historically, the quantitative descriptive/survey method has been the traditional research approach to collect and study data related to both fit and support perceptions (Cable & DeRue, 2002; Eisenberger et al., 1986; Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005). A correlational method has been used as the research design for these quantitative studies, testing the hypotheses regarding the relationship between perceived fit and perceived support variables (Jackson & Johnson, 2012; Kim & Kim, 2013; Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005; Kruglanski et al., 2007). Spearman Rank correlation has been used in job fit studies to measure the association between two variables (Krot & Lewicka, 2012; Spearman, 1904).

The study of fit has historically been researched as a perceived measurement, collected via survey instruments from the perspective of the individual under consideration (Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005). In fact, the perception of fit has been found to more accurately be correlated to the choices people make related to fit than objective factual content regarding fit (Cable & DeRue, 2002). Perceived PS fit has typically been measured using the Cable and DeRue 3-item perceptions scale (2002) adapted to measure supervisor fit (Astakhova, 2015; Chuang et al., 2016; Darrow & Behrend, 2017; Kim & Kim, 2013; Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005; Lee & Tan, 2012; Zhang et al., 2015). The scale was originally developed to examine whether employees develop perceptions about their fit to the organization, as well as perceptions regarding needs-supplies fit and demands-abilities fit (Cable & DeRue, 2002), and theoretically was based in part on Schneider's (1987) ASA Model.

With a few rare exceptions (Van Vianen et al., 2011; Zhang et al., 2017), most fit studies have used the Cable and DeRue (2002) 3-item perceptions scale. Individual fit variables have been measured by adapting the verbiage of the Cable and DeRue (2002) tool to meet their needs. In recent years, a multi-dimension instrument was developed to measure the multi-dimensionality of fit, the Perceived Person-Environment Fit Scale (Chuang et al., 2016). The Cable and DeRue scale was used to validate the reliability of the new scale, and the new scale was found to have incremental validity above the Cable and DeRue (2002) fit measure. However, the scale reflects a superordinate rather than an aggregate construct of person-environment fit, and as such raises the possibility of many distinct aspects of fit, resulting in conflict among the dimensions (Chuang et al., 2016). The most recent fit research continues to use the Cable and DeRue measurement tool (Boon & Biron, 2016; Chen et al., 2016; Hamstra et al., 2018; Lajoie et al., 2017).

PSS has been measured primarily with the widely used Eisenberger et al. (1986) Survey of Perceived Organizational Support, the foundational survey tool for this variable (DeConinck et al., 2015; Gillet et al., 2015; Kurtessis et al., 2017; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Shanock & Eisenberger, 2006; Sousa-Lima et al., 2013; Zhang, 2014). When used to measure perceived person-supervisor support, the survey questions have substituted "supervisor" for "organization."   Of the original 36-item survey, 16 items have been identified as a shorter version of the survey, and more recent studies measuring Perceived Support have used as few as five items from the Eisenberger et al. (1986) scale (Neves & Eisenberger, 2014).

In summary, the quantitative descriptive/survey method has been a validated approach to collect and study data related to both fit and support perceptions (Cable &

DeRue, 2002; Eisenberger et al., 1986; Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005).

Use of the widely used Cable and DeRue 3-item perceptions scale (2002) is the prevalent

method for measuring an employee's perception of person-supervisor fit, and Eisenberger

et al.'s (1986) Survey of Perceived Organizational Support has been the most common

method of evaluating an employee's perception of support. A correlational research

method is frequently used in quantitative studies to test hypotheses regarding

relationships between perceived fit and perceived support and other variables (Jackson &

Johnson, 2012; Kim & Kim, 2013; Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005;

Kruglanski et al., 2007).

Summary

In summary, keeping engaged employees, a critical point of competitive

advantage for any organization, has driven an abundance of quantitative research around

the topic of employee retention. In this chapter we identified two key variables in the

study of employee retention, an employee's perception of supervisor support and an

employee's perception of fit to supervisor (Chuang et al., 2016; Kristof-Brown,

Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005; Zhang et al., 2015). This chapter introduced the

background of the problem under review, identified the contributing theories, and

provided a thorough look of the existing literature to date for these variables.

Several theories were identified as foundational to the retention research. Blau's

(1964) theory on social exchange has been used to understand why an employee provides

an organization with their time and effort on the job. Deci and Ryan's (1985) self-

determination theory provides insight on the employee's need for relatedness, another

key factor that has been found to contribute to an employee's organizational tenure

(Gillet, et al., 2015). These theories have led to the introduction of two key topics in the study of retention. The social exchange theory led to Eisenberger et al.'s introduction in 1986 of the study of organizational support (Eisenberger et al., 1986), and included a call to research the leadership behaviors that might strengthen organizational support. Using Deci and Ryan's (1985) self-determination theory, the study of person-environment fit variables (Cable & DeRue, 2002) started with the attraction-selection-attrition model developed by Schneider (1987), wherein Schneider described the work environment as being comprised of the people of the organization, rather than the physical environment. The attraction-selection-attrition model described a cycle wherein fit between individuals encourages a natural process of inclusion and exclusion within an organization.

This chapter has strived to examine literature that provides context to the problem identified in this research paper, namely, it is not known if, or to what extent, there is a correlation between an employee's perceived fit to his or her supervisor, an employee's perception of supervisor support, and an employee's tenure. This literature review focused on discovering all research related to an employee's perception of fit to supervisor (perceived person-supervisor fit) and an employee's perception of supervisor support (perceived person-supervisor support), including research relating both variables with employee tenure. It is known that employees who perceive positive supervisor support have positive intentions to stay within an organization; however, little is known about the drivers behind perceived supervisor support (Gillet et al., 2015). An employee's perceived fit to job has been found to be related to perceived supervisor support, and a gap was identified indicating further research is needed on the relationship between perceived supervisor support and perceived fit elements other than job fit (Boon & Biron,

2016; Chuang et al., 2016; DeConinck et al., 2015). The literature review strove to understand existing literature related to the proposed problem statement.

The study of fit was found to have been historically researched as a perceived measurement. The study of the perception of fit has resulted in both the assessment of fit, and the consequences and intentions deriving from that perception, collected via survey instruments from the perspective of the individual under consideration (Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005). In fact, the perception of fit was found to more accurately predict the choices people make related to fit than objective factual content regarding fit (Cable & DeRue, 2002). Thus, the use of surveys allowed for the collection of perceptions by the study participants, and the data were analyzed utilizing quantitative correlations.

The variables for this study are the employee's perception of supervisor support, the employee's perception of fit to supervisor, and employee tenure with the organization. Perception of supervisor support was measured with eight selected questions from the widely used Eisenberger et al. (1986) Survey of Perceived Organizational Support (ESPOS), adapted to survey perceived supervisor support. Following Shanock and Eisenberger's (2006) recommendation, Perceived PS fit was measured using the Cable and DeRue 3-item perceptions scale (2002) adapted to measure supervisor fit. Tenure will be collected in the demographic portion of the survey.

The studied population was a group of approximately 300 employees of various job types, including management employees, administrative employees, and operational or skilled labor employees, for multiple employers based in the Phoenix, Arizona area. The employees were provided a link to complete the survey on the internet, with the

permission of the company ownership. The survey was prefaced with informed consent information and was completed on a voluntary basis.

This study addressed several identified gaps in research related to perceived supervisor support, perceived person-supervisor fit, and tenure. A gap in research was identified and addressed in the study of the relationship between perceived supervisor support and perceived fit elements other than job fit (DeConinck et al., 2015). Likewise, this study addressed a gap in the examination of the conditions, such as supervisor support, that activate fit dimensions (Boon & Biron, 2016; Chuang et al., 2016). In addition, the proposed study addressed the identified need for a theoretical reason for the recent finding that perceived employee-supervisor support is related to employees with longer tenure (Kraemer & Gouthier, 2014). All three gaps are identified and explored in the literature review.

The study of these identified gaps in both perceived person-supervisor fit and perceived supervisor support literature is particularly significant for employers seeking to increase employee retention in their organizations. The significance of this study resides in the presentation of quantitative data that links an employee's perception of fit to their supervisor, and an employee's tenure, to the employee's perception of supervisor support, an element that has been found to affect an employee's intention to stay with an organization (Gillet et al., 2015; Van Vianen et al., 2011). Both findings would underscore the importance of assessment of fit between an employee and his or her supervisor prior to job placement and promote the importance of communication regarding fit between an employee and his or her supervisor throughout the life cycle of the employee-supervisor relationship.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

The purpose of this quantitative correlational research study of employees from multiple mid-sized employers in the Phoenix, Arizona area, was to determine if, or to what extent, there is a correlation between an employee's perceived fit to his or her supervisor, an employee's perception of supervisor support, and an employee's tenure. This research study was conducted with approximately 300 employees representing several mid-sized companies in the Phoenix, Arizona area. The target population corresponded to employees with various job types, including management employees, technical and administrative employees, and operational or skilled labor employees.

This quantitative correlational study addressed a gap in research related to an employee's perception of support from their supervisor, by focusing on a recent call for further study of the relationship between perceived supervisor support and perceived fit elements other than job fit. The call for further study on fit elements (DeConinck et al., 2015) is echoed in a study by Chuang et al. (2016) recommending an examination of the conditions that activate fit dimensions. In addition, the study addressed the identified need for a theoretical reason for the recent finding that perceived employee-supervisor support is related to employees with longer employment tenure (Kraemer & Gouthier, 2014), as well as the call to study the impact of support over time (Conway & Coyle-Shapiro, 2012). A specific set of methods and principles, or methodology, will guide this study.

This chapter outlines the methodology applied in this research, including the research questions, the design of the study, and information regarding the population

studied, as well as the instrumentation that was used to collect the studied data. An overview of the steps that were taken in the study to ensure validity and reliability of the data collection and analysis is provided. This chapter closes with information regarding ethical considerations, as well as any limitations and delimitations recommended for consideration by the researcher. A summary of the issues addressed is provided to conclude the chapter. In conclusion, this chapter describes the methods and principles that built the theoretical framework for this study.

Statement of the Problem

It is not known if, or to what extent, there is a correlation between an employee's perceived fit to his or her supervisor, an employee's perception of supervisor support, and an employee's tenure. As stated in chapter one, this research study identified a key gap in the literature to date regarding whether a relationship exists between an employee's perception of fit to their supervisor (Astakhova, 2015; Zhang et al., 2015) and an employee's perception of supervisor support, a key component in job performance (Mushtaq et al., 2017) and the retention of human capital within an organization (Choi et al., 2012). A review of this gap in the literature brought to light the need to identify key variables related to supervisor support (Chuang et al., 2016; DeConinck et al., 2015; Gillet et al., 2015). Supervisor support has been found to have a significant impact on employee retention.

Although a significant amount of research has been done related to supervisor support, much is yet to be discovered. It is known that employees who perceive positive supervisor support have positive intentions to stay within an organization (DeConinck et al., 2015). However, little is known about the drivers behind an employee's perception of

supervisor support (Gillet et al., 2015). An employee's perceived fit to a job has been

found to be positively related to perceived supervisor support (DeConinck et al., 2015). A

call has been issued for further research on the relationship between perceived supervisor

support and perceived fit elements other than job fit (Boon & Biron, 2016; Chuang et al.,

2016; DeConinck et al., 2015). The gap in knowledge regarding the relationship between

support and fit variables is one of several gaps identified by researchers related to

perceived supervisor support.

Questions also remain regarding the importance of various types of supportive

relationships in the workplace, including the supervisor support relationship, over time.

Conway and Coyle-Shapiro (2012) recommend further study on the changing importance

of distinct elements of organizational support (such as supervisor support) over time. The

recent incidental finding that perceived employee-supervisor support is related to longer

employee tenure (Kraemer & Gouthier, 2014) provides some insight regarding supervisor

support and the demographic element of tenure but was discovered without a hypothesis

and without a theoretical basis. This quantitative correlational study addressed this gap in

research by studying the relationship of the demographic element of tenure to supervisor

support in the study. The unit of analysis is employees. In conclusion, this study

addressed the gap in research regarding the relationship between perceived person-

supervisor fit, perceived supervisor support, and employee tenure.

Research Questions and/or Hypotheses

Because it is not known if, or to what extent, there is a correlation between an

employee's perceived fit to his or her supervisor, an employee's perception of supervisor

support, and an employee's tenure, this study focused on the following variables,

research questions and hypotheses:

1. Variable: employee perception of supervisor support. Data were collected using the Eisenberger et al. (1986) Perceived Supervisor Support questionnaire. The originally ordinal variable was approximated to continuous data, and possible scores ranged from 1 to 7.

2. Variable: employee perception of fit to supervisor. Data were collected using the Cable and DeRue (2002) Person-Supervisor Fit questionnaire. The originally ordinal variable was approximated to continuous data, and possible scores range from 1 to 7.

3. Variable: Employee tenure. In the demographic portion of the questionnaire the participant was asked how long he or she has been employed with the current employer, selecting time of employment from an ordinal scale (less than 6 months, 6 months to less than 1 year, 1-5 years, 6-10 years, 10+ years).

RQ1: Is there a statistically significant correlation between an employee's perceived

fit to their supervisor and an employee's perception of supervisor support?

$H1_0$: There is not a statistically significant correlation between an employee's

perceived fit to their supervisor and an employee's perception of supervisor

support.

$H1_a$: There is a statistically significant correlation between an employee's perceived

fit to their supervisor and an employee's perception of supervisor support.

RQ2: Is there a statistically significant correlation between an employee's tenure and

an employee's perception of supervisor support?

$H2_0$: There is not a statistically significant correlation between an employee's tenure

and an employee's perception of supervisor support.

$H2_a$: There is a statistically significant correlation between an employee's tenure and

an employee's perception of supervisor support.

The results of this study identified whether an employee's perceived fit to his or her supervisor is correlated to an employee's perception of supervisor support. This study contributed to the body of knowledge regarding Deci and Ryan's self-determination theory (1985). The study of these research questions and hypotheses also identified whether an employee's perception of supervisor support is related to employment tenure, contributing to the body of knowledge regarding Blau's social exchange theory (1964). Schneider's (1987) attraction-selection-attrition (ASA) cycle provides a conceptual model for the study of person-supervisor fit in this research. In summary, two research questions and related hypotheses provided the structure for conducting this research study related to the possible correlation between an employee's perception of person-supervisor fit, perceived supervisor support, and employment tenure.

Research Methodology

A quantitative methodology was selected for this study. A quantitative approach is appropriate when the research is focused on using statistical analyses to determine whether there is a numerically measurable relationship or correlation between multiple variables, or whether variables are related over time (McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015). Data collection techniques in a quantitative research method focus on evidence that can be objectively represented and summarized in the form of numbers to test hypotheses (Antwi & Hamza, 2015). The variables of interest in this study, employee perceived fit, tenure, and perception of supervisor support, are numerically measurable constructs, making the quantitative approach the best framework to answer the research questions, test the hypotheses, and objectively address the problem statement presented in this study.

Quantitative research enables many factors to be investigated and allows for analysis in how varying factors relate to the research question. The quantitative method begins with a plan or goal, which drives an objective or positivist approach, providing data that is independent from the perception of the researcher. As such, the quantitative approach has been found to be more efficient, allows the researcher to remain objectively separated from the subject matter, and provides generalized statistical evidence from which organizations can formulate policy and act on findings (McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015). Valid and reliable quantitative measurement instruments exist to complete this study (Cable & DeRue, 2002; Eisenberger et al., 1986; Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005). The quantitative method has been used as a validated approach in multiple studies to collect and study data regarding both fit and support perceptions.

A qualitative methodology was considered and deemed not appropriate because a qualitative method would not produce the objective numerical data required to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses of this study. A qualitative methodology is focused on producing narrative data that is interpreted by the researcher to describe and assign meaning to participant experiences and attitudes. Due to the personalized and subjective approach of the qualitative method, the findings can be too limited to allow for broader generalization (McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015). This present research is not the examination of open-ended responses of participants, but rather the study of statistical evidence to objectively identify whether a correlation exists between the studied quantified variables.

The statistical evidence was collected via a survey instrument. The widely used Cable and DeRue 3-item perceptions scale (2002) was employed to measure the

employee perception of person-supervisor fit, and Eisenberger et al.'s (1986) Survey of Perceived Organizational Support was used to evaluate employee perception of supervisor support. Demographic data were also collected, including tenure. All survey and demographic data were numerically expressed and summarized, which allowed the researcher to use statistical procedures to objectively generalize and analyze the findings. Pearson correlations were used as an inferential analysis to test the hypotheses and assess the association between the variables of interest in research question one. To address research question two, a Spearman correlation was used to assess the relationship between employee tenure and perception of supervisor support. In summary, a quantitative method was used in this study as the research methodology to test hypotheses related to whether there is a statistically significant correlation between an employee's perceived fit to their supervisor and an employee's perception of supervisor support, and whether there is a statistically significant correlation between an employee's employment tenure and the employee's perception of supervisor support.

Research Design

This study employed a correlational design. Correlational designs are appropriate when assessing the strength of associations between numerically measurable constructs (Bordens & Abbott, 2008; Fitzgerald, Rumrill, & Schenker, 2004). Rather than looking for causality as in experimental research by manipulating the independent variable, correlational designs look for relationship strength without experimental manipulation.

Correlational designs encompass the use of inferential analyses such as correlations and regressions. Quantitative studies using tools such as surveys and questionnaires are designed around cross-sectional findings, or the measurement of

objective concepts at a point in time (McCusker & Gunaydin, 2015). Correlational design methods have been used extensively as the research design for quantitative studies that test hypotheses regarding perceived fit and perceived support variables (Eisenberger et al., 2014; Jackson & Johnson, 2012; Kim & Kim, 2013; Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005; Kruglanski et al., 2007; Lee & Tan, 2012; Zhang, 2014). The focus of the problem statement and research questions in this study was to explore the strength of the correlation between numerically represented fit and support as well as tenure variables collected from multiple participants at one point in time; thus, a correlational, cross-sectional design was the most appropriate approach.

Another option considered for this research was an experimental design. In an experimental design, the researcher applies a treatment on the study subjects to identify whether the manipulation of variables influences the participants, using experimental and control groups (Bordens & Abbott, 2008). In the present study, no treatment was applied either before or after the testing, so in this study correlation, not causation, will be explored. An experimental design is not appropriate for this present study.

A causal-comparative design was also considered for this research study. However, causal-comparative designs focus on determining the cause for pre-existing differences between groups or individuals distinguished by independent variables. Causal-comparative designs look retrospectively at associations among variables that exist or have already occurred (Schenker & Rumrill, 2004). The present study did not compare groups retrospectively, but instead looked for relationships or correlations between variables represented within a single group, so the causal-comparative design was also not appropriate for this current study.

For the purposes of this research, the unit of analysis corresponded to employees of various job types, including management employees, technical and administrative employees, and operational or skilled labor employees, working for multiple employers based in the Phoenix, Arizona area. The target sample size was estimated to be approximately 300 participants, comparable to or greater than sample sizes for similar studies (DeConinck et al., 2015; Gillet et al., 2015; Sullivan & Feinn, 2012). The estimated sample was designed to exceed the power estimates for the a priori minimum sample size of 102 participants obtained via an online G*Power calculator (Faul et al., 2009). The participant sample was provided the opportunity to participate in the study through a link available via email and in public company meetings.

The unit of observation corresponded to a self-report instrument provided online to participants using a link through Survey Monkey. One variable for this study was the employee's perception of supervisor support (PSS) and was measured continuously with eight questions from the validated Eisenberger et al. (1986) Survey of Perceived Organizational Support (ESPOS). Another variable for the study was the employee's perception of fit to supervisor and was also measured continuously, using the Cable and DeRue 3-item validated perceptions scale (2002) adapted to measure supervisor fit. The questions for the PSS and the perception of fit to supervisor variables were presented with a seven-point Likert-type scale ranging from "very strongly disagree" (1) to "very strongly agree" (7). The survey also included a self-reported measurement of the variable of employment tenure, with an ordinal scale of possible responses: less than 6 months, 6 months to less than1 year, 1-5 years, 6-10 years, 10+ years of employment. Additional

demographic questions were asked such as gender and age. See Appendix D for a copy of the survey instrument.

Descriptive statistics were used to demonstrate the results of the data for each sample group. Inferential statistics were used to identify relationships between the variables, using correlation, comparing sets of correlations statistically. A test was conducted to identify any univariate outliers to ensure all data statistically qualifies to be a part of the data. Pearson and Spearman Rank correlations were planned for data analysis similar to previous job fit studies (Krot & Lewicka, 2012). A Pearson correlation, appropriate when assessing the strength of association between two continuous level variables, was conducted to assess the relationship between employee's perceived fit to their supervisor and employee's perception of supervisor support. A Spearman correlation is appropriate when assessing the strength between two variables when at least one is measured on an ordinal scale and will be used to assess the relationship between employee tenure and employee's perception of supervisor support (Pagano, 2009). In summary, a Pearson correlation was used to identify if, and to what extent, a relationship exists between two continuous variables, and a Spearman correlation was used to measure if, and to what extent, a relationship exists between two variables, one of which is measured on an ordinal scale.

Population and Sample Selection

The setting for this study was Maricopa County, which is situated in the Phoenix, Arizona area. Maricopa County is the fourth largest county in the United States by population, and the fastest growing county in the United States, according to the United States Census Bureau (2018). The target population corresponded to a group of

employees with various job types, including management employees, technical and administrative employees, and operational or skilled labor employees, working for multiple mid-sized employers based in the Phoenix, Arizona area. A convenience sample of approximately 300 employees was used to target study participants. Convenience sampling is a non-probabilistic form of sampling that involves the targeting of participants due to accessibility and convenience (Onwuegbuzie & Johnson, 2004). Since the researcher is a member of senior management for one of the participating employers, any employees that report directly to the researcher were excluded from participation in the study.

Participating organizations included an agricultural organic grower, as well as several other employers from other industries based in the Phoenix, Arizona area. The owner or most senior leader for each organization provided written approval to conduct the study (see Appendix D.). Each organization has both hourly and salaried employees at various stages of employment. The organic grower has been in business for twenty-nine years and is expected to have a high number of longer tenure employees represented in the population. All organizations are at varying levels of sophistication with regards to research and development. One of the organizations, the agricultural organic grower, is committed to research and development in all aspects of the business and sponsored the researcher through its Research and Development Committee, which provided added facilitation of completion of the study survey among the grower employees.

The online G*Power calculator (Faul et al., 2009) was used to compute the a priori minimum sample size for a Pearson correlation and a Spearman correlation, considering a minimum power of 0.80 and the standard level of statistical significance of

0.05. For a Pearson correlation, the resulting minimum sample size was 84 participants (see Appendix E). According to Siegel and Castellan (1988), the power of a Spearman correlation is approximately 91% as efficient as a Pearson correlation. Therefore, the minimum sample size for a Spearman correlation was calculated to be 102 participants.

To ensure achievement of the minimum sample size, a target sample size of all English-speaking full-time employees from the participating organizations was invited to complete the survey, which is a group of approximately 300 employees. The employees were provided a Survey Monkey link to complete the survey on the Internet on a company-provided computer/laptop/tablet, with the permission of the company owner for each employer. The survey was prefaced with informed consent information and was completed on a voluntary basis (see Appendix C for the informed consent prefacing the study questionnaire). Members of the convenience sample with a company email address received an email with an invitation and a link to complete the survey. Any member of this convenience sample of employees who did not have an assigned company email address was provided a link to complete the survey during an employee gathering with a company computer or electronic devise provided to complete the survey, facilitating maximum participation. Of this convenience sampling, the researcher anticipated achieving at least 35% complete participation or a total of at least 105 employees, exceeding the a priori minimum standard.

The researcher provided an explanation of the research project to each participant as part of the informed consent process. The participant had the opportunity to ask questions about the project prior to participation. The researcher outlined the role of the researcher as well as the role of all parties involved and confirmed participation in the

survey is voluntary and anonymous. The participant also received and complete an informed consent notification. The explanation of the study and the informed consent notification were included in the online survey link, to be read and acknowledged by participants prior to the completion of the survey questions (Appendix C). In summary, the population and sample selection process was designed to ensure participants are informed, are providing a voluntary consent to participate in the project, and participate in numbers sufficient to meet the a priori minimum standard.

Instrumentation

All study participants were employees working within an organization in the Maricopa County, Arizona area. For the research study, the survey was conducted online via Survey Monkey. The survey is available in Appendix C. Employees were provided an electronic link to the online survey and provided time to complete the survey during regularly scheduled work hours on a computer, laptop, tablet, or phone provided by the company. The survey was prefaced by an introduction describing the purpose of the study as well as an assurance of the confidentiality of the responses. The survey included eight questions regarding perceived supervisor support (PSS) and three questions regarding perceived person-supervisor fit (PS fit). To manage data matching between the responses to both variables, all 11 questions were provided within a single survey and utilized a shared 7-point Likert scale. The survey ended with demographic questions regarding gender and age, as well as tenure.

PSS was measured with the widely used Eisenberger et al. (1986) Survey of Perceived Organizational Support (ESPOS). Eight questions from the survey were selected for use and adapted to survey perceived supervisor support, following Shanock

and Eisenberger's (2006) recommendation indicating these eight questions demonstrate value for the contribution of employees and care for the wellbeing of employees. Sample questions included "My supervisor really cares about my well-being" and "My supervisor takes pride in my accomplishments at work." Responses were completed on a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 = *Strongly Disagree* to 7 = *Strongly Agree*. The PSS variable was computed through a sum of the eight survey items. The variable was treated as continuous data with possible scores ranging from 6 to 42. Studies demonstrated that PSS demonstrated convergent validity with organizational commitment ($r = .60$, $p < .001$), job involvement ($r = .60$, $p < .001$), and job satisfaction ($r = .59$, $p < .001$ (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Studies demonstrated that PSS demonstrated discriminant validity with turnover intentions ($r = -.45$, $p < .001$; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002).

Perceived PS fit was measured using the Cable and DeRue 3-item perceptions scale (2002) adapted to measure supervisor fit as has been completed in previous studies assessing PS fit (Astakhova, 2015; Kim & Kim, 2013; Zhang et al., 2015). A sample question reads: "My supervisor's values provide a good fit with the things that I value in life." Responses were completed on a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 = *Strongly Disagree* to 7 = *Strongly Agree.* The variable was computed through a sum of the three survey items. The variable was treated continuously with scores ranging from 3 to 21. The scale has demonstrated acceptable internal consistency with Cronbach's $a = .91$ (Chuang et al., 2016). Kurtessis et al.'s (2017) collection of perceived support studies using the ESPOS survey demonstrated convergent validity with perceived organizational support ($r = .44$, $p < .001$) organizational identification ($r = .42$, $p < .001$), and intention to stay in organization ($r = .48$, $p < .001$).

Demographic data were collected regarding tenure, following the example of previous studies. Responses regarding tenure specifically allowed the research to measure whether there is a correlation in perceived supervisor support as an employee's tenure increases within an organization (Kim & Kim, 2013). The participant was asked how long he or she has been employed with the current employer, selecting time of employment from an ordinal scale (less than 6 months, 6 months to less than 1 year, 1-5 years, 6-10 years, 10+ years).

In summary, research data were collected via an online survey tool. Participants were provided with eight questions regarding perceived supervisor support (PSS) and three questions regarding perceived person-supervisor fit (PS fit). The questionnaire concluded with demographic questions including an ordinal scale related to employee tenure. The instrumentation for this research study was designed to use reliable scales that have proven to be valid and yield consistent results.

Validity

The perceived supervisor support variable was measured with the Eisenberger et al. (1986) Survey of Perceived Organizational Support (ESPOS). The ESPOS is a foundational survey tool developed with the introduction of the theory of organizational support (Eisenberger et al., 1986). The survey was initially designed to measure whether an employee perceives an organization to value their contributions and care about their wellbeing. When used to measure perceived supervisor support, the term "organization" is substituted with the term "supervisor."

The ESPOS survey was originally analyzed by the method of principal components in order to determine the number and strengths of factors present. The

presumptive Perceived Support factor accounted for 93.9% of the common variance and 49.3% of the total variance, with a possible second factor accounting for only 6.1% of the common variance and 4.4% of the total variance. The ESPOS survey was then subjected to an exploratory factor analysis with varimax rotation, Kaiser normalization, with a two-factor solution. The Perceived Support factor loaded higher on every one of the original 36 statements than did the possible second factor – in fact, the lowest loading for the Perceived Support factor was greater than the highest of the 36 loadings for the minor second factor. Finally, a reliability and item analysis resulted in a reliability coefficient of .97 (Cronbach's alpha). In conclusion, every one of the 36 items in the ESPOS survey showed a strong loading on the main factor, and minimal evidence for the existence of other factors (Eisenberger et al., 1986). The ESPOS survey has since been validated repeatedly by research studies related to perceived support (Kurtessis et al., 2017). The survey has been used in either its original form, or in a form adjusted to measure aspects of organizational support, such as perceived supervisor support, by over 500 research studies related to perceived support since its inception (Kurtessis et al., 2017). Kurtessis et al.'s (2017) collection of perceived support studies using the ESPOS survey demonstrated convergent validity with perceived organizational support ($r = .44$, $p < .001$), organizational identification ($r = .42$, $p < .001$), and intention to stay in organization ($r = .48$, $p < .001$). In the meta-analysis of the Kurtessis et al.'s (2017) collection of perceived support studies using the ESPOS survey, perceived supervisor support was found to have strong convergent validity to perceived organizational support, $p = .60$.

The Cable and DeRue 3-item perceptions scale (2002) was used to measure perceived person-supervisor fit variable. The perceived person-supervisor fit variable has been measured extensively utilizing the Cable and DeRue (2002) survey. By the year 2005, over 170 fit variable research studies had been conducted utilizing the Cable and DeRue fit survey, measuring either person-job, person-organization, person-group, or person-supervisor fit (Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005). A factor analysis of the pilot version of the measurement scales resulted in the final three-item fit scale, which was then utilized in the full study, and both the convergent and the discriminant validity of the fit measure was supported (Cable & DeRue, 2002). Studies demonstrated that PSS has displayed convergent validity with organizational commitment ($r = .60$, $p < .001$), and job satisfaction ($r = .59$, $p < .001$; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Studies demonstrated that PSS demonstrated discriminant validity with turnover intentions ($r = -.45$, $p < .001$; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002).

In summary, the scales used for measuring the variables in this study have a long history of use. Validity statistics for each scale are available and a summary is provided in this section. A copy of the instruments, with permission letters for use granted by the instrument authors, is provided in Appendix D.

Reliability

Of the original 36 items developed for the ESPOS study, each showed a strong loading on the main factor, which indicates that employees develop global beliefs regarding the measure of care and contribution shared with them by the organization. In the original use of the ESPOS survey, a reliability and item analysis resulted in a reliability coefficient (Cronbach's alpha) of .97 (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Item total

correlations ranged from .42 to .83, with mean and median item-total correlations measured at .67 and .66. A shorter version of the study, comprised of the 17 items with the highest factor loadings, was completed with a second group of participants, and resulted in a reliability coefficient of .93. The scale has been found to show high internal reliability in multiple studies (Gillet et al., 2015). Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) demonstrated acceptable reliability for the 7-item instrument in four separate examples. An example scale coefficient alpha is .86 (Sousa-Lima et al., 2013).

The perceived person-supervisor fit variable has been measured extensively utilizing the Cable and DeRue (2002) person-organization fit survey, substituting the word "organization" for "supervisor." The survey was developed as four fit scale questions relating fit to values congruence, with questions such as "The things that I value in life are very similar to the things that my organization [supervisor] values." After an initial factor analysis, the item with the lowest loading was removed from the survey, leaving a three-item fit scale survey tool. Data for the original three-item final scale was collected both in a single-firm sample as well as a multiple-firm sample. The reliability of the scale was $a = .91$ for the single-firm sample and $a = .92$ for the multiple-firm sample. An example Cronbach's alpha reported in a recent study using the Cable and DeRue 3-item perception scale was reported at .94 (Zhang et al., 2015).

Data Collection and Management

Permission to use the instrumentation was provided in writing (Appendix D). Approval for the study was granted by the Institutional Review Board (IRB, see Appendix B), and site arrangements for administration of the online survey was coordinated with the site manager and the Human Resources Representative. A site

authorization letter was signed by the most senior site officer of the participating

organizations (see Appendix A for the Site Authorization letters).

The sample for this study was all active English-speaking employees within the

organizations. The target sample size was estimated to be approximately 300 participants,

comparable to or greater than sample sizes for similar studies (DeConinck et al., 2015;

Gillet et al., 2015; Sullivan & Feinn, 2012), and exceeding the power estimates for the

data test. Through use of convenience sampling employees of multiple employers were

selected in the Phoenix, Arizona area. The participants were provided a voluntary

invitation to the online survey through use of Survey Monkey. The survey was

administered as an email invitation to all employees who have a company email address.

For employees who did not have a company email address, their supervisor provided a

time for the employee to complete the survey via company-provided tablets or computer

workstations during a paid break from regular work. Data were collected using

confidential numeric identifiers to protect the anonymity of the employee as they

responded to the questionnaire.

An informed consent form was provided to participants which outlined the

purpose of the study, potential benefits, and potential risks (see Appendix C). Participants

had to provide consent to participate in the study. The prepared study questions (see

Appendix D) followed the informed consent, and the entire online survey was

administered anonymously with employee participants. Participants completed the survey

voluntarily during paid work time.

Once the survey collection was complete, the survey data were exported into

Intellectus Statistics [Online computer software] (2019) software for analysis. The data

were reviewed for completeness, and the data for any participants who did not answer all questions was removed. Employee perception of supervisor support was computed through a sum of the eight survey items. The originally ordinal data variable was approximated as continuous data with scores ranging from 6 to 42. Employee perception of fit to supervisor was computed through a sum of the three survey items. The variable was treated as continuous data with scores ranging from 3 to 21. The calculation for the overall variable of PS fit and the overall variable of PSS was made by summing each person's response for each item on a scale and dividing by the number of items. The correlational analysis between the fit and support variables was completed using Pearson's rank order correlation, like other fit studies focused on studying the relationship between fit and a second variable (Krot & Lewicka, 2012). A Spearman correlation was used to assess the relationship between employee tenure and perception of supervisor support

The collected data will be stored electronically for a period of three years. Access to the data will be securely maintained by the researcher on a secure cloud server with password-restricted access. The names of the participants in this study will remain confidential, and the data were collected anonymously. At the end of three years, all data collected for this study will be erased from the secure cloud server.

Data Analysis Procedures

This research study identified a key gap in the literature regarding an employee's perception of supervisor support. Perceived supervisor support is a critical component in job performance (Mushtaq et al., 2017) and the retention of human capital within an organization (Choi et al., 2012). A review of the literature related to perceived supervisor

support brought to light the need to identify fit variables other than job fit that might be correlated with an employee's perception of supervisor support (DeConinck et al., 2015), as well as identify whether there is a correlation between an employee's perception of supervisor support and employment tenure (Kraemer & Gouthier, 2014). Specifically, it was not known if, or to what extent, there is a correlation between an employee's perceived fit to his or her supervisor, an employee's perception of supervisor support, and an employee's tenure.

The survey included a total of eleven questions related to the two continuous variables under study: perceived supervisor support (eight questions) and perceived person-supervisor fit (three questions). PSS was measured with eight selected questions from the widely used Eisenberger et al. (1986) Survey of Perceived Organizational Support (ESPOS), adapted to survey perceived supervisor support. Following Shanock and Eisenberger's (2006) recommendation, Perceived PS fit was measured using the Cable and DeRue 3-item perceptions scale (2002) adapted to measure supervisor fit. The questions were presented with a seven-point Likert-type scale ranging from "very strongly disagree" (1) to "very strongly agree" (7). The survey also included a self-reported measurement of the variable of employment tenure, with possible responses: less than 6 months, 6 months to less than1 year, 1-5 years, 6-10 years, 10+ years of employment. Additional demographic questions were asked such as gender and age. See Appendix D for a copy of the survey instrument.

Once the survey deadline was complete, the survey data were exported from the Survey Monkey online survey tool and imported into the Intellectus Statistics [Online computer software] (2019) software for analysis. To ensure data integrity and accuracy,

the data set was reviewed for completeness, and any datasets with incomplete or out-of-range data were eliminated. Outliers were identified through calculation of standardized values. When the sample size was finalized, descriptive statistics were conducted through use of frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations. Three variables of interest were explored to address the research questions.

1. Variable: employee perception of supervisor support. Data were collected using the Eisenberger et al. (1986) Perceived Supervisor Support questionnaire. The variable was measured continuously, and possible scores ranged from 1 to 7.

2. Variable: employee perception of fit to supervisor. Data were collected using the Cable and DeRue (2002) Person-Supervisor Fit questionnaire. The variable was measured continuously, and possible scores ranged from 1 to 7.

3. Variable: Employee tenure. In the demographic portion of the questionnaire the participant was asked how long he or she has been employed with the current employer, selecting time of employment from an ordinal scale (less than 6 months, 6 months to less than 1 year, 1-5 years, 6-10 years, 10+ years).

Two research questions were answered using inferential analyses:

RQ$_1$: Is there a statistically significant correlation between an employee's perceived fit to their supervisor and an employee's perception of supervisor support?

H1$_0$: There is not a statistically significant correlation between an employee's perceived fit to their supervisor and an employee's perception of supervisor support.

H1$_a$: There is a statistically significant correlation between an employee's perceived fit to their supervisor and an employee's perception of supervisor support.

To address research question one, a Pearson correlation was conducted to assess the relationship between employee's perceived fit to their supervisor and employee's perception of supervisor support. A Pearson correlation is appropriate when assessing the strength of association between two continuous level variables (Pagano, 2009). Cable and

DeRue 3-item perceptions scale and the ESPOS (Eisenberger et al., 1986) was used to measure the employee's perceived fit to their supervisor and their perception of supervisor support, respectively. A scatterplot was generated to test the monotonic relationship between the two variables. Normality was tested through use of Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests for these variables. In addition, skewness and kurtosis was assessed for the continuous level variables. Statistical significance for the Pearson correlation and the assumption tests were evaluated at the generally accepted level, $a = .05$.

> RQ2: Is there a statistically significant correlation between an employee's tenure and an employee's perception of supervisor support?

> H2$_0$: There is not a statistically significant correlation between an employee's tenure and an employee's perception of supervisor support.

> H$_2$: There is a statistically significant correlation between an employee's tenure and an employee's perception of supervisor support.

To address research question two, a Spearman correlation was used to assess the relationship between employee tenure and perception of supervisor support. A Spearman correlation is appropriate when assessing the strength between two variables, when at least one is measured on an ordinal scale (Pagano, 2009). The demographic questionnaire and the ESPOS (Eisenberger et al., 1986) were used to measure employee's tenure and their perception of supervisor support, respectively. Spearman's rank-order correlation measures the strength and direction of the relationship between two ordinal or continuous variables, calculating a coefficient represented as "ρ" (Statistics, 2013). A scatterplot was generated to test the monotonic relationship between the two variables. Statistical

significance for the Spearman correlation was evaluated at the generally accepted level, *a* = .05.

Ethical Considerations

Foundational to the success of a research project is a consideration of the ethical concerns that might arise in the collection of data and completion of the research. Careful preparation was completed to ensure the study was conducted in an ethical manner following the principles of beneficence, justice, and respect for persons outlined in the Belmont Report (Miracle, 2016) for researchers using human subjects in biomedical and behavioral research. Informed consent documents were produced and approved through the IRB and provided to the participant company as well as the selected participants to ensure an ethical and participant-informed study. Active employees were used as participants in this study, so care was taken to ensure their contributions to the survey remain confidential and did not influence their job position either positively or negatively. All participants completed the survey on a voluntary basis and were able to elect out of participation in the survey if desired. The study carried minimal risk to the participants, as the survey did not collect any personal identification information. The data collected in the study will be maintained secure, accessed only with a secure login, according to current research standards.

A potential conflict of interest might have been perceived by participants in the study because the researcher is employed in a senior management position within the grower organization participating in the study. To avoid this potential perception of conflict of interest, additional measures were taken. First, administration of the study fell under the umbrella of the organization's Research and Development committee, of which

the researcher is not a member. Further, participants were informed through the consent process of the purpose of the study and of the anonymity of the respondents. Finally, any employees that report directly to the researcher were excluded from participation in the study.

The focus of the study was on the perception by the employee of their fit to their supervisor and their perception of the support provided by their supervisor. To protect the privacy and well-being of the study participants, the survey was conducted with the use of the online survey tool Survey Monkey. This survey tool provides the ability to elect not to capture any data related to the identity of the participant. As such, the data for the study was obtained without referencing any specific employees or any specific supervisors.

Finally, permission to gather the data was obtained from the organizations' most senior leader (see Appendix A). The study began once approval was obtained from Grand Canyon University's Institutional Review Board (see Appendix B once the approval letter has been obtained). All data is being maintained securely in a password-protected web server in a folder accessible only by the researcher, and will be permanently deleted after three years, following the data maintenance policy provided by Grand Canyon University.

Limitations and Delimitations

Limitations are things over which the researcher has no control. In contrast, delimitations are things over which the researcher has control, such as location of the study. The following limitations related to the research methodology, design, and data collection and analysis were present in this study:

1. A limit to the study is the bias provided by the participants. Some people are not always truthful in survey responses. Care was taken to collect data from enough participants to meet or exceed the power analyses for sample size calculation for this study to help mitigate potential bias that may occur from some participants.

2. PSS was measured with eight questions from the widely used Eisenberger et al. (1986) Survey of Perceived Organizational Support (ESPOS), adapted to measure supervisor support in place of organizational support. This shorter version of the survey, and this adaptation to measure supervisor support, has been found to be valid and reliable (Shanock & Eisenberger, 2006). The original version of the survey includes additional questions, and although the shortened version was validated by the original author of the full survey, it is possible the measurement of perceived supervisor support might be affected using this minimized version of the survey tool. This research relied on the factor loadings from .71 to .84 for the questions selected, as well as the findings from Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) that the questions selected encompass the traits of Perceived Organizational Support and thus Perceived Supervisor Support (placing value on an employee's contribution and wellbeing).

3. This study was limited to the single-dimensional fit parameters measured in the Cable and DeRue scale, adapted as per the practice of similar studies to measure perceived person-supervisor fit, rather than use a multi-dimensional tool that has been developed recently to measure perceived Person-Supervisor fit specifically (Chuang et al., 2016). The Cable and DeRue scale was selected for this current study as the tool with the longer period of validation by other researchers in the field of fit (Astakhova, 2015; Hamstra et al., 2018; Kim & Kim, 2013; Zhang et al., 2015). Description of the single-dimensional fit parameter used in the Cable and DeRue scale, personal values, was highlighted in the results of this research study.

The following delimitations related to the research methodology, design, and data collection and analysis were present in this study:

1. This study used correlation to evaluate the relatedness of two variables, perceived person-supervisor fit and perceived supervisor support. Because this is not an experimental design study, the direction of the causality cannot be confirmed, which leaves open the possibility of reciprocal causation among the two variables (Crossley et al., 2013). Future research is recommended to identify the direction of causality of any correlation that might be found between the variables under review in this study.

2. The survey was delimited to a sample pool of full-time, English-speaking employees, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. In addition, due to the convenience sampling procedure, geographical restrictions exist which restrict the generalizability of the results. The distribution of the survey link via

email and in public company gatherings assisted in overcoming geographical restrictions.

3. The surveyed organizations had both English speaking and Spanish speaking employees. However, the survey was offered in English only for purposes of expediency. The exclusion of the non-English speakers may have delimited the results of the survey. By distributing the survey link equally to all groups via email and in public company gatherings, care will be taken to provide equal access to all participants to capture a representative sampling of the population.

Summary

The purpose of this quantitative correlational research study of employees from multiple employers in the Phoenix, Arizona area, was to determine if, or to what extent, there is a correlation between an employee's perceived fit to his or her supervisor, an employee's perception of supervisor support, and an employee's tenure. This proposed quantitative correlational study addressed a gap in research related to an employee's perception of support from their supervisor, by focusing on a recent call for further study of the relationship between perceived supervisor support and perceived fit elements other than job fit (Boon & Biron, 2016; Chuang et al., 2016; DeConinck et al., 2015). In addition, the proposed study addressed the call to study the impact of support over time (Conway & Coyle-Shapiro, 2012; Kraemer & Gouthier, 2014).

Specifically, it is not known if, or to what extent, there is a correlation between an employee's perceived fit to his or her supervisor, an employee's perception of supervisor support, and an employee's tenure. The results of this study identify whether an employee's perceived fit to his or her supervisor is correlated to an employee's perception of supervisor support, contributing to the body of knowledge regarding Deci and Ryan's self-determination theory (1985). The study of these research questions and hypotheses also identified whether an employee's perception of supervisor support is related to employees with longer tenure, contributing to the body of knowledge regarding

Blau's social exchange theory (1964). Schneider's (1987) attraction-selection-attrition (ASA) cycle provided a conceptual model for the study of person-supervisor fit in this research.

This study applied a quantitative approach to collect and identify the level of correlation between the respondent's answers to questions regarding perceived fit to supervisor and the respondent's answers to questions regarding perceived supervisor support. The quantitative descriptive/survey method has been a validated approach to collect and study data related to both fit and support perceptions (Cable & DeRue, 2002; Eisenberger et al., 1986; Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005). Use of the widely used Cable and DeRue 3-item perceptions scale (2002) was employed as the prevalent method for measuring an employee's perception of person-supervisor fit, and Eisenberger et al.'s (1986) Survey of Perceived Organizational Support was utilized as the most common method of evaluating an employee's perception of support.

A correlational research method was applied. A correlational research method is frequently used in quantitative studies to test hypotheses regarding relationships between perceived fit and perceived support and other variables (Jackson & Johnson, 2012; Kim & Kim, 2013; Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005; Kruglanski et al., 2007). A Pearson correlation was conducted to assess the relationship between the continuous employee's perceived fit to their supervisor and employee's perception of supervisor support variables. A Spearman correlation was used to assess the relationship between the ordinal scale used to measure employee tenure and continuous perception of supervisor support variable.

The study was conducted among employers from multiple industries in the Phoenix, Arizona area, which is located in the fourth largest county of the United States, the Maricopa County, Arizona. The target population were employees of various job types, including management employees, technical and administrative employees, and operational or skilled labor employees, for multiple employers based in the Phoenix, Arizona area. A convenience sample of approximately 300 employees was used to target study participants.

Careful preparation was completed to ensure the study was conducted in an ethical manner. Permission to gather the data was obtained from the organization's most senior officer (see Appendix A). The study began once approval was obtained from Grand Canyon University's Institutional Review Board (approval is located in Appendix B). The employees were provided a Survey Monkey link to complete the survey on the internet on a company-provided computer/laptop/tablet. The survey was prefaced with informed consent information and was completed on a voluntary basis (see Appendix C for the informed consent prefacing the study questionnaire).

Once the survey deadline was complete, the survey data were exported from the Survey Monkey online survey tool and imported into the Intellectus Statistics [Online computer software] (2019) software for analysis. The software was used to test the following hypotheses:

RQ$_1$: Is there a statistically significant correlation between an employee's perceived fit to their supervisor and an employee's perception of supervisor support?

RQ$_2$: Is there a statistically significant correlation between an employee's tenure and an employee's perception of supervisor support?

The methodology for the completion of this study was carefully researched and prepared. Once the proposal was approved by the IRB, Chapter 4 reflects the analysis of the collected data and provides the results of the research. Each of the research questions was answered based on the results of the analysis, and a summary is presented with both graphic and descriptive results.

Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Results

Introduction

The purpose of this quantitative correlational research study of employees from mid-sized employers in the Phoenix, Arizona area was to determine if, or to what extent there is a correlation between an employee's perceived fit to his or her supervisor, an employee's perception of supervisor support, and an employee's tenure. One hundred and fifty-eight employees representing three mid-sized companies in the Phoenix, Arizona area consented to participate in the research study. Of these participants, 35 respondents did not completely answer all the survey questions, leaving a final sample size of 123.

This research study employed a quantitative methodology and a correlational design, using statistical analyses to determine whether there was a measurable relationship between the variables of interest in this study. The variable data were collected from each participant via an online survey. Participants were provided eight questions regarding the variable of perceived supervisor support (PSS) measured via the Eisenberger et al. (1986) Survey of Perceived Organizational Support, and three questions regarding the variable of perceived person-supervisor fit (PS fit) measured via the Cable and DeRue 3-item perceptions scale (2002). The survey concluded with demographic questions, including an inquiry regarding time of employment measured on an ordinal scale, and questions regarding gender, age, and educational level. The following two research questions provided the framework for the data analysis:

RQ1: Is there a statistically significant correlation between an employee's perceived fit to their supervisor and an employee's perception of supervisor support?

RQ2: Is there a statistically significant correlation between an employee's tenure and

an employee's perception of supervisor support?

Chapter 4 provides the results of this research study, including detailed

information regarding the sample, data analysis procedures, and the results of the data

analysis. A review of the demographic characteristics of the respondents is provided, and

a discussion is completed regarding the research question findings. Tables and figures

provide a visual display of the most important findings. A summary of the results is

provided at the conclusion of Chapter 4.

Descriptive Findings

Demographic data were collected by the researcher to provide a profile of the

convenience sample. The target population was a group of employees of various job

types working for three mid-sized employers based in the Phoenix, Arizona area. The

sample size of 123 participants utilized in this research met the a priori minimum sample

size of 102 participants recommended by the online G*Power calculator conducted for

this study (Faul et al., 2009). Summary statistics were calculated for each interval and

ratio variable. Frequencies and percentages were calculated for each nominal variable.

The most frequently observed category of Tenure with Organization was 1-5

years ($n = 78$, 63%). The most frequently observed category of Tenure with Supervisor

was 1-5 years ($n = 71$, 58%). The most frequently observed category of Age Bracket was

23-34 ($n = 52$, 42%). The most frequently observed category of Gender was Male ($n = 67$, 54%). The most frequently observed category of Education Level was bachelor's

degree ($n = 40$, 33%). The most frequently observed category of Workplace was

Employer 1 ($n = 81$, 66%). Frequencies and percentages are presented in Table 1.

Table 1.

Frequency Table for Nominal Variables

Variable	*n*	*%*	Cumulative *%*
Tenure with Organization			
< 6 months	11	8.94	8.94
6 months to 1 year	9	7.32	16.26
1-5 years	78	63.41	79.67
6-10 years	19	15.45	95.12
11+ years	6	4.88	100
Missing	0	0	100
Tenure with Supervisor			
< 6 months	20	16.26	16.26
6 months to 1 year	26	21.14	37.40
1-5 years	71	57.72	95.12
6-10 years	5	4.07	99.19
Missing	1	0.81	100
Age Bracket			
18-22	4	3.25	3.25
23-34	52	42.28	45.53
35-46	36	29.27	74.80
47-65	29	23.58	98.38
66+	1	0.81	99.19
Missing	1	0.81	100
Gender			
Female	52	42.28	42.28
Male	67	54.47	96.75
Missing	4	3.25	100
Education Level			
Some High School	7	5.69	5.69
High School or GED Certificate	25	20.33	26.02
Some College	38	30.89	56.91
Bachelor's Degree	40	32.52	89.43
Graduate Degree	7	5.69	95.12
Missing	6	4.88	100.00
Workplace			
Employer 1	81	65.85	65.85
Employer 2	27	21.95	87.80
Employer 3	11	8.94	96.74
Missing	4	3.25	99.99

Note. Due to rounding errors, percentages may not equal 100%.

The purpose of this study was to determine if there is a correlation between the variables of perceived person-supervisor fit (PS fit), perceived supervisor support (PSS), and tenure. Participants responded to three questions pertaining to PS fit derived from the Cable and DeRue 3-item validated perceptions scale (2002), and eight questions pertaining to PSS derived from the validated Eisenberger et al. (1986) Survey of Perceived Organizational Support (ESPOS). The calculation for the overall variable of PS fit and the overall variable of PSS was made by summing each person's response for each item on a scale and dividing by the number of items.

The reliability coefficients for the subscale variables and the total scores were calculated. A Cronbach alpha coefficient was calculated for the Fit Scale. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient was evaluated using the guidelines suggested by George and Mallery (2016) where $> .9$ excellent, $> .8$ good, $> .7$ acceptable, $> .6$ questionable, $> .5$ poor, and $\leq .5$ unacceptable.

The items for PS fit Scale had a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.93, indicating excellent reliability. This result compared favorably with the reliability results of $\alpha = .92$ for a multiple-firm sample finding in the original scale study (Cable & DeRue, 2002) and a recent study using the Cable and DeRue 3-item perception scale reporting a Cronbach's alpha at .94 (Zhang et al., 2015). Table 2 presents the results of the reliability analysis.

Table 2.

Reliability Table for Fit Scale

Scale	No. of Items	α	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
PS Fit Scale	3	0.93	0.91	0.95

Note. The lower and upper bounds of Cronbach's α were calculated using a 95.00% confidence interval.

A Cronbach alpha coefficient was calculated for the PSS Scale as well. The items

for PSS Scale had a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.89, indicating good reliability. This

finding compares favorably to the reliability coefficient of .97 in the original use of the

full version of the scale (Eisenberger et al., 1986), the reliability coefficient of .93 of a

shorter version of the study comprised of the 17 items with the highest factor loadings

(Gillet et al., 2015), and a coefficient alpha finding of .86 in a recent use of an 8-item

adapted version of the scale to specifically study perceived supervisor support, as used in

this study (Sousa-Lima et al., 2013). Table 3 presents the results of the reliability

analysis.

Table 3.

Reliability Table for PSS Scale

Scale	No. of Items	α	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
PSS Scale	8	0.89	0.86	0.92

Note. The lower and upper bounds of Cronbach's α were calculated using a 95.00% confidence interval.

Summary descriptive statistics were collected for the variables of interest in this

research study. The observations for PS fit had an average of 5.63 ($SD = 1.51$, $SE_M =$

0.14, Min = 0.00, Max = 7.00, $Mdn = 6.00$, Mode = 7.00, Skewness = -1.27, Kurtosis =

1.36). The observations for PSS had an average of 5.97 ($SD = 1.22$, $SE_M = 0.11$, Min =

2.75, Max = 7.00, $Mdn = 6.50$, Mode = 7.00, Skewness = -1.03, Kurtosis = -0.20). When

the skewness is greater than 2 in absolute value, the variable is considered to be

asymmetrical about its mean. When the kurtosis is greater than or equal to 3, then the

variable's distribution is markedly different than a normal distribution in its tendency to

produce outliers (Westfall & Henning, 2013). The summary statistics can be found in Table 4.

Table 4.

Summary Statistics Table for Interval and Ratio Variables

Variable	*M*	*SD*	*n*	SE_M	Min	Max	*Mdn*	Mode	Skewness	Kurtosis
PS Fit	5.63	1.51	123	0.14	0.00	7.00	6.00	7.00	-1.27	1.36
PSS	5.97	1.22	123	0.11	2.75	7.00	6.50	7.00	-1.03	-0.20

Note. '-' denotes the sample size is too small to calculate statistic.

Data Analysis Procedures

The data analysis procedures provide a description of the process that was used to analyze the data. The analysis of the data was framed by the two research questions and related hypotheses guiding this study. The data analysis involved computation of the frequencies for all variables and the reliability coefficients for the perceived person-supervisor fit (PS fit) and perceived supervisor support (PSS) scales. Inferential statistics were used in the examination of the variables of interest for outliers and distribution, assumption checks for correlation analysis, and the actual correlation analysis needed to test the hypotheses and answer the research questions.

Power analysis for a Pearson correlation was conducted during the proposal stages of this research using the online G*Power calculator (Faul et al., 2009) to determine a sufficient sample size with an alpha of 0.05, a power of 0.80, a medium effect size ($p = .3$), and two tails. Based on these assumptions, the desired sample size was 84. As the power of a Spearman correlation is approximately 91% as efficient as a Pearson correlation (Siegel & Castellan, 1988), the minimum sample size for a Spearman correlation was calculated to be 102 participants.

At the completion of data collection, the data set was inspected to identify and discard any participant cases with incomplete data and/or values out of range. Any cases found with incomplete data were scrubbed from the data prior to completing the analysis. Of the 158 total participants, 35 cases were found to have incomplete data, leaving a final participant count in the data set of 123, meeting the minimum a priori sample size required for this research study.

Once the data collection and data inspection were completed a post hoc power analysis was processed (see Appendix E). The power analysis was conducted in G*Power to determine the statistical power of the procedures used to answer the research questions. For research questions one and two, a Spearman correlation suggested a two-tailed test with a .3 effect size and significance of 0.05. Utilizing the total sample size of 123 participants, the post hoc power analysis demonstrated that the achieved power of the test was .925.

Frequencies were computed by the researcher for all variables. Percentages were computed for each demographic variable and the information was summarized to provide a profile of the sample. Descriptive statistics were also computed for the mean of the two variables of interest in this research study, perceived person-supervisor fit (PS fit) and perceived supervisor support (PSS). The descriptive statistics provided the mean, standard deviation, minimum, maximum, skewness and kurtosis findings for the two variables. Reliability coefficients for the variables of interest were then calculated and compared to the coefficients reports for both variables in the original instrument scales, the Eisenberger et al. (1986) Survey of Perceived Organizational Support and the Cable and DeRue 3-item perceptions scale (2002). The reliability coefficients were also

compared to coefficients found in the use of the instrument scales in recent related studies (Gillet et al., 2015; Sousa-Lima et al., 2013).

Univariate outliers were examined for PS fit and PSS. An outlier was defined as any value which falls outside the range of +/- 3.29 standard deviations from the mean (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). There were no outliers present in PS fit. There were no outliers present in PSS. A Pearson correlation, used to assess the strength of association between two continuous level variables, was identified to be appropriate to address research question one, to assess the relationship between PS fit and PSS. A Pearson correlation requires that the relationship between each pair of variables is linear (Conover & Iman, 1981). This assumption is violated if there is curvature among the points on the scatterplot between any pair of variables. Figure 1 presents the scatterplot of the correlation. A regression line has been added to assist the interpretation, demonstrating the assumption of linearity is met.
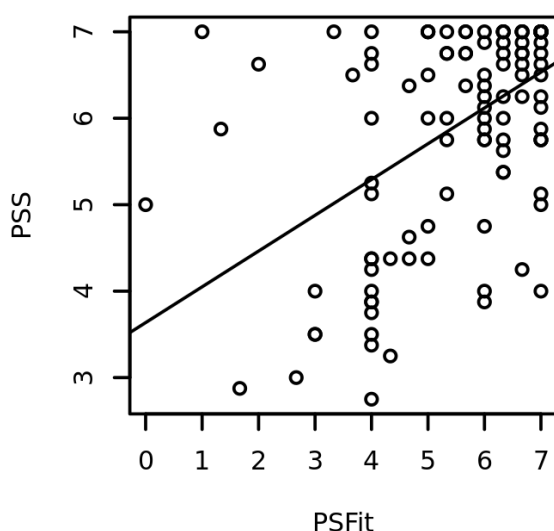
Figure 1. Scatterplots between each variable with the regression line added.

Pearson correlation analysis also assumes normality between the data.
Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests were conducted in order to determine whether the
distributions of PS fit and PSS were significantly different from a normal distribution.
The following variables had distributions which significantly differed from normality
based on an alpha of 0.05: PS Fit ($D = 0.19$, $p < .001$) and PSS ($D = 0.20$, $p < .001$). The
results are presented in Table 5. This finding indicated a violation of the Pearson
assumption of linearity. With the absence of normality between the data, the researcher
elected to conduct the non-parametric Spearman's correlation analysis in place of the
Pearson correlation analysis.

Table 5

Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test Results

Variable	*D*	*p*
PS Fit	0.19	< .001
PSS	0.20	< .001

A Spearman correlation analysis was then conducted by the researcher between
PS fit and PSS. Cohen's standard was used to evaluate the strength of the relationship,
where coefficients between .10 and .29 represent a small effect size, coefficients between
.30 and .49 represent a moderate effect size, and coefficients above .50 indicate a large
effect size (Cohen, 1988). A Spearman correlation requires that the relationship between
each pair of variables does not change direction (Conover & Iman, 1981). This
assumption is violated if the points on the scatterplot between any pair of variables
appear to shift from a positive to negative or negative to positive relationship. Figure 2

presents the scatterplot of the correlation. A regression line has been added to assist the interpretation.

Figure 2. Scatterplots between each variable with the regression line added.

A Spearman correlation was determined to be the best approach to address research question two and assess the relationship between PSS and tenure. A Spearman correlation analysis was conducted between Tenure with Organization (TenureOrg) and PSS. Cohen's standard was used to evaluate the strength of the relationship, where coefficients between .10 and .29 represent a small effect size, coefficients between .30 and .49 represent a moderate effect size, and coefficients above .50 indicate a large effect size (Cohen, 1988).

A Spearman correlation requires that the relationship between each pair of variables does not change direction (Conover & Iman, 1981). This assumption is violated if the points on the scatterplot between any pair of variables appear to shift from a

positive to negative or negative to positive relationship. Figure 3 presents the scatterplot of the correlation. A regression line has been added to assist the interpretation.

Figure 3. Scatterplots between each variable with the regression line added.

Tenure was also measured as Tenure with Supervisor (TenureSpvsr) in the demographic questions included in the participant survey. A Spearman correlation analysis was conducted between Tenure Spvsr and PSS. Cohen's standard was used to evaluate the strength of the relationship, where coefficients between .10 and .29 represent a small effect size, coefficients between .30 and .49 represent a moderate effect size, and coefficients above .50 indicate a large effect size (Cohen, 1988).

A Spearman correlation requires that the relationship between each pair of variables does not change direction (Conover & Iman, 1981). This assumption is violated if the points on the scatterplot between any pair of variables appear to shift from a positive to negative or negative to positive relationship. Figure 4 presents the scatterplot of the correlation. A regression line has been added to assist the interpretation.
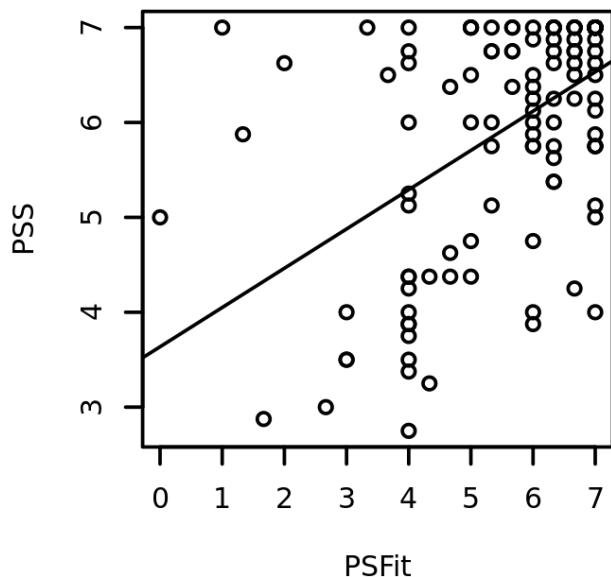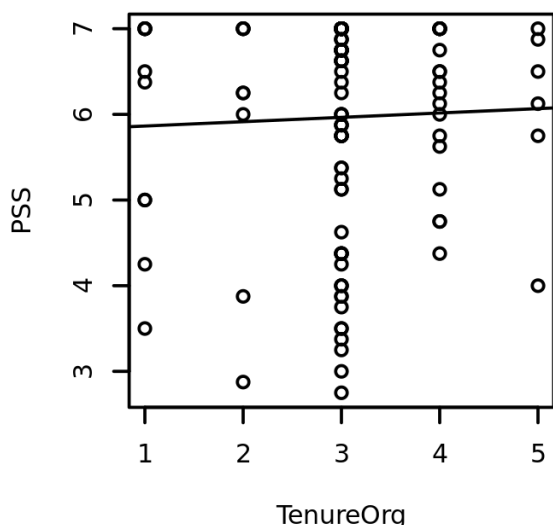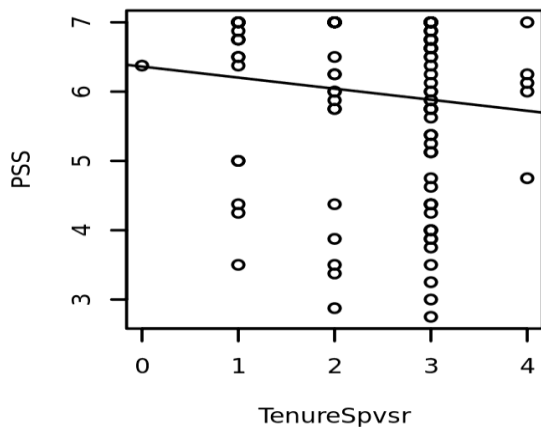
Figure 4. Scatterplots between each variable with the regression line added.

Results

The purpose of this quantitative correlational research study of employees from multiple mid-sized employers in the Phoenix, Arizona area was to determine if, or to what extent, there is a correlation between an employee's perceived fit to his or her supervisor, an employee's perception of supervisor support, and an employee's tenure. An employee's perceived fit to his or her supervisor, or person-supervisor fit (PS fit) was measured using the 3-item Cable and DeRue (2002) perceptions scale. An employee's perception of supervisor support, or perceived supervisor support (PSS) was measured with a scale of eight questions from the Eisenberger et al. (1986) Survey of Perceived Organizational Support, adapted to survey perceived supervisor support following Shanock and Eisenberger's (2006) recommendation. Employee tenure was measured selecting time of employment from an ordinal scale (less than 6 months, 6 months to less than 1 year, 1-5 years, 6-10 years, 10+ years). Tenure was measured as time of employment with organization. Time of employment with supervisor was also included in the demographic questions, along with age bracket, gender, and educational level. See Appendix D for a full copy of the survey instrument.

The target population was a group of employees with various job types, including management employees, technical and administrative employees, and operational or skilled labor employees, working for multiple mid-sized employers based in the Phoenix, Arizona area. The Phoenix area is in Maricopa County, the fastest growing county in the United States (United States Census Bureau, 2018). Three mid-sized employers in the Phoenix, Arizona area consented authorization to invite employees at their site to participate in the online survey, providing a convenience sample of approximately 300 employees as target study participants. From the actual sample of 158 participants who voluntarily responded to the survey, 35 cases were found to have incomplete data, leaving a final sample size of 125, meeting the a priori requirement of a minimum sample size of 102 participants.

The data collected from the participants was analyzed to answer two research questions. The first question addressed the relationship between the continuous variables of PS fit and PSS. The second question addressed the relationship between continuous variable PSS and tenure, measured on an ordinal scale. Following are the results of the analysis of the data.

Research question 1. Is there a statistically significant correlation between an employee's perceived fit to their supervisor and an employee's perception of supervisor support?

H1$_0$: There is not a statistically significant correlation between an employee's perceived fit to their supervisor and an employee's perception of supervisor support.

H1$_a$: There is a statistically significant correlation between an employee's perceived

fit to their supervisor and an employee's perception of supervisor support.

A Spearman's correlation analysis was completed to answer the first research

question. The results showed that the variable PS fit was significantly correlated to the

variable PSS. The correlations were examined based on an alpha value of 0.05. A

significant positive correlation was observed between PS fit and PSS ($r_s = 0.51$, $p < .001$).

The correlation coefficient between PS fit and PSS was 0.51, indicating a large effect

size. This correlation indicates that as PS fit increases, PSS tends to increase. Based on

this finding, the researcher accepted the alternative hypothesis and concluded there is a

statistically significant correlation between an employee's perceived fit to their

supervisor and an employee's perception of supervisor support. Table 6 presents the

results of the correlation.

Table 6.

Spearman Correlation Results Between PS Fit and PSS

Combination	r_s	Lower	Upper	p
PS Fit - PSS	0.51	0.37	0.63	$< .001$

Note. The confidence intervals were computed using $\alpha = 0.05$; $n = 123$

Research question 2. Is there a statistically significant correlation between an

employee's tenure and an employee's perception of supervisor support?

H2$_0$: There is not a statistically significant correlation between an employee's tenure

and an employee's perception of supervisor support.

H2$_a$: There is a statistically significant correlation between an employee's tenure and

an employee's perception of supervisor support.

A Spearman's correlation analysis was completed to answer the second research question. The correlations were examined based on an alpha value of 0.05. There were no significant correlations between any pairs of variables. Based on this finding, the researcher accepted the null hypothesis and concluded there is not a statistically significant correlation between an employee's tenure and an employee's perception of supervisor support. Table 7 presents the results of the correlation.

Table 7.

Spearman Correlation Results Between Tenure with Organization and PSS

Combination	r_s	Lower	Upper	p
Tenure with Organization - PSS	0.04	-0.14	0.22	.637

Note. The confidence intervals were computed using $\alpha = 0.05$; $n = 123$

Tenure was also measured in the demographic portion of the survey as tenure with supervisor. A Spearman's correlation analysis was completed with the variables Tenure with Supervisor (TenureSpvsr) and PSS. The correlations were examined based on an alpha value of 0.05. There were no significant correlations between any pairs of variables. This finding confirms the answer for RQ2: Is there a statistically significant correlation between and employee's tenure and an employee's perception of supervisor support? The answer is null, there is not a statistically significant correlation between an employee's tenure and an employee's perception of supervisor support. Table 8 presents the results of the correlation.

Table 8.

Spearman Correlation Results Between Tenure with Supervisor and PSS

Combination	r_s	Lower	Upper	p
Tenure with Supervisor-PSS	-0.15	-0.32	0.03	.092

Note. The confidence intervals were computed using $\alpha = 0.05$; $n = 123$

Summary

In summary, the purpose of this quantitative correlational research study of
employees from multiple mid-sized employers in the Phoenix, Arizona area was to
determine if, or to what extent, there is a correlation between an employee's perceived fit
to his or her supervisor (person-supervisor fit or PS fit), an employee's perception of
supervisor support (perceived supervisor support or PSS), and an employee's tenure.
Data analysis procedures included descriptive statistics, tests of assumptions, and
correlation analysis. Data analysis, results, and findings of this study were presented in
Chapter 4 and framed by the research questions. The research questions were the
following:

RQ1: Is there a statistically significant correlation between an employee's perceived
fit to their supervisor and an employee's perception of supervisor support?

RQ2: Is there a statistically significant correlation between an employee's tenure and
an employee's perception of supervisor support?

The statistical procedure initially selected to answer research question one and
test the hypotheses regarding the correlation between the continuous variables of PS fit
and PSS was Pearson's correlation analysis, which is appropriate when assessing the
strength of association between two continuous level variables (Pagano, 2009). Cable and
DeRue's (2002) 3-item perceptions scale and eight questions from the ESPOS

(Eisenberger et al., 1986) were used to measure PS fit and PSS, respectively. Skewness and kurtosis were assessed and both variables were found to be symmetrical with a normal distribution. A scatterplot confirmed the monotonic relationship between the two variables. Cronbach's alpha coefficient evaluation found PS fit to have excellent reliability with a coefficient of .93. PSS had a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.89, indicating good reliability. Univariate outliers were examined for PS fit and PSS, and none were present. Based on the Pearson correlation analysis normality requirement, normality was then tested through use of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests. Both variables had distributions which significantly differed from normality based on an alpha of 0.05: PS Fit ($D = 0.19$, $p < .001$) and PSS ($D = 0.20$, $p < .001$). Considering the finding of the absence of normality, the Pearson correlation was replaced with a Spearman correlation analysis.

The Spearman correlation used Cohen's standard to evaluate the strength of the relationship between PS fit and PSS. The correlations were examined based on an alpha value of 0.05. A significant positive correlation was observed between PS Fit and PSS ($r_p = 0.51$, $p < .001$). The correlation coefficient between PS Fit and PSS was 0.51, indicating a large effect size. This correlation indicates that as PS Fit increases, PSS tends to increase. Based on these findings, the researcher identified the alternative hypothesis as the correct answer to research question number one: there is a statistically significant correlation between an employee's perceived fit to their supervisor and an employee's perception of supervisor support.

To address research question two and test the hypotheses regarding the correlation between the continuous variable of PSS and the ordinal variable of tenure a Spearman

correlation was used. A Spearman correlation is appropriate when assessing the strength between two variables, when at least one is measured on an ordinal scale (Pagano, 2009). The ESPOS (Eisenberger et al., 1986) was used to measure PSS, and the demographic questionnaire portion of the survey measured employee tenure with the organization. A scatterplot was generated and confirmed the monotonic relationship between the two variables. The correlations were examined based on an alpha value of 0.05. There were no significant correlations between PSS and tenure with organization. This finding led the researcher to identify the null hypothesis as the correct answer to research question two: There is not a statistically significant correlation between an employee's tenure and an employee's perception of supervisor support.

The demographic questionnaire also included a question on tenure with the employee's supervisor. The researcher applied Spearman's correlation to test the relationship between PSS and the ordinal variable of tenure with supervisor. A scatterplot was generated and confirmed the monotonic relationship between the two variables. The correlations were examined based on an alpha value of 0.05. There were no significant correlations found between PSS and tenure with supervisor, confirming the null hypothesis finding for research question two.

Limitations are parts of the study research methodology, design, and data collection and analysis over which the researcher has no control. Delimitations are those elements of the study over which the researcher has control. These findings are limited by the bias provided by the participants, although care was taken to collect data from enough participants to exceed the power analyses for the sample size calculation for this study, which helped mitigate potential bias that may have occurred from some participants.

Another limitation was the use of eight questions from the original 36 questions of the ESPOS survey to measure PSS. However, every one of the 36 items in the full ESPOS survey showed a strong loading on the main factor, and minimal evidence for the existence of other factors (Eisenberger et al., 1986). This researcher relied on the factor loadings from .71 to .84 for the questions selected, as well as the findings from Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) that the questions selected encompass the traits of perceived supervisor support, placing value on an employee's contribution and wellbeing.

A final limitation of the study is the single-dimensional fit parameters of the Cable and DeRue (2002) 3-item scale used to measure PS fit. Although multi-dimensional tools exist to study perceived person-supervisor fit (Chuang et al., 2016), the Cable and DeRue scale was selected for this study due to the longer period of validation experienced by the tool with other fit researchers (Astakhova, 2015; Hamstra et al., 2018; Kim & Kim, 2013; Zhang et al., 2015). The single dimension of personal values is the person-supervisor fit dimension measured by this study.

One delimitation of the study is the use of correlation to evaluate the relatedness of the variables of interest, which leaves open the possibility of reciprocal causation among the variables, since causality cannot be confirmed (Crossley et al., 2013). Another delimitation is the geographical and organizational restriction of the sample pool, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Finally, the provision of the survey in English only for purposes of expediency delimited the study to English-only speakers, despite at least one of the surveyed organizations having both English speaking and Spanish speaking employees, potentially delimiting the results of the survey. The distribution of the survey link equally to all groups via email and in public company

gatherings assisted in overcoming geographical restrictions and assisted in capturing a representative sampling of the population.

In summary, the descriptive and inferential analysis of the data collected answered the two research questions framing this study. In answer to the first question, a significant positive correlation was observed between PS fit and PSS, indicating that as PS fit increases, PSS tends to increase. In answer to the second question, there was no significant correlation found between tenure and PSS. In Chapter 5 the researcher concludes the study by providing a brief summary of the study and presenting key findings. The results are discussed considering the literature review, and implications are presented for the findings, with recommendations for current practice and future research.

Chapter 5: Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction and Summary of Study

The purpose of this quantitative correlational research study of employees from mid-sized employers in the Phoenix, Arizona area, was to determine if, or to what extent, there is a correlation between an employee's perceived fit to his or her supervisor (person-supervisor fit, or PS fit), an employee's perception of supervisor support (perceived supervisor support, or PSS), and an employee's tenure. A review of the literature identified a gap in published research related to the correlation between PS fit and PSS, and a call for further study of the relationship between PSS and perceived fit elements (DeConinck et al., 2015). In a study of perceived organizational fit elements and employee turnover, further study was recommended as well of the relationship of variables such as PSS to employment termination over time (Boon & Biron, 2016).

Organizations strive to retain human capital as a point of competitive advantage, and an employee's perceived fit to the work environment and PSS have both been independently found in previous studies to contribute to an employee's intention to stay with an organization (Choi et al., 2012; Dawley et al., 2010; Zhang et al., 2015). PSS has also been found to have a stronger relationship to an employee's intention to stay with an organization for employees with longer employment tenure (Kraemer & Gouthier, 2014). However, it has not been known if, or to what extent, there is a correlation between an employee's perceived fit to his or her supervisor, an employee's perception of supervisor support, and an employee's tenure. Certain support and fit elements have been studied together (Cable & DeRue, 2002; Chen & Chiu, 2008; Dawley et al., 2010; DeConinck et

al., 2015). However, this was the first study found by this researcher to include perceived person-supervisor fit and perceived supervisor support in the same research endeavor.

Blau's (1964) social exchange theory and Deci and Ryan's (1985) self-determination theory together provided the theoretical foundation for this study. The main topics discussed in the literature review were: perceived fit, perceived fit to supervisor, perceived fit to supervisor positively related to workplace retention, leader-member exchange and guanxi, perceived organizational support, perceived supervisor support, perceived support positively related to trust, social support positively related to tenure, perceived fit correlated to the outcome of perceived support, and tenure. The quantitative descriptive/survey method with a correlational research design was identified as a validated research approach used to collect and study data and test hypotheses regarding relationships for both fit and support perception variables (Cable & DeRue, 2002; Eisenberger et al., 1986; Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005).

The study was designed to collect and analyze data to identify whether a relationship exists between PS fit, PSS, and tenure. Understanding if, and to what extent, a relationship exists between these variables contributed to the scientific knowledge on this topic. The results of this study extended understanding for practitioners of the theories supporting the study and is of significance for business organizations seeking to increase employee engagement in their organizations. The following research questions and hypotheses served as a guide to this study:

RQ1: Is there a statistically significant correlation between an employee's perceived fit to their supervisor and an employee's perception of supervisor support?

$H1_0$: There is not a statistically significant correlation between an employee's

perceived fit to their supervisor and an employee's perception of supervisor

support.

$H1_a$: There is a statistically significant correlation between an employee's perceived

fit to their supervisor and an employee's perception of supervisor support.

RQ2: Is there a statistically significant correlation between an employee's tenure and

an employee's perception of supervisor support?

$H2_0$: There is not a statistically significant correlation between an employee's tenure

and an employee's perception of supervisor support.

$H2_a$: There is a statistically significant correlation between an employee's tenure and

an employee's perception of supervisor support.

The researcher conducted an online survey and collected data from a convenience sample of 123 employees from three mid-sized employers in the Phoenix, Arizona area to explore a possible relationship between PS fit, PSS, and tenure. The correlational analysis of data obtained from the survey assessed the strength of the association between the variables, using a Spearman correlation analysis for the first research question, and a Spearman correlation analysis for the second research question. Chapter 5 summarizes both the results and findings from the analysis of the data detailed in Chapter 4, and provides conclusions, implications, and recommendations for future research that resulted from the findings of this study.

Summary of Findings and Conclusion

Keeping engaged employees was found by this researcher in the literature review to be a key theme driving an abundance of quantitative research around the topic of

employee retention. Several theories were identified as foundational to the retention research. Blau's (1964) theory on social exchange was used to understand why an employee provides an organization with their time and effort on the job. Deci and Ryan's (1985) self-determination theory provided insight on the employee's need for relatedness, another key factor that has been found to contribute to an employee's organizational tenure (Gillet, et al., 2015). These theories led to the introduction of two key topics in the study of retention. The social exchange theory led to Eisenberger et al.'s introduction in 1986 of the study of organizational support (Eisenberger et al., 1986), and included a call to research the leadership behaviors that might strengthen an employee's perception of organizational support. Using Deci and Ryan's (1985) self-determination theory, the study of person-environment fit variables (Cable & DeRue, 2002) emerged based on the attraction-selection-attrition model developed by Schneider (1987), describing a cycle wherein fit between individuals encourages a natural process of inclusion and exclusion within an organization. The literature review identified two key variables studied in relation to these two foundational theories related to employee retention: perceived person-supervisor fit and perceived supervisor support (Chuang et al., 2016; Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005; Zhang et al., 2015). Multiple research studies identified a gap and recommended further research on the relationship between variables that are associated with employee retention, such as perceived supervisor support and fit variables such as perceived person-supervisor fit, as well as further research on the correlation of variables such as perceived supervisor support with employment tenure over time (Boon & Biron, 2016; Chuang et al., 2016; DeConinck et al., 2015).

This quantitative correlational study addressed this gap in research by studying the relationship between person-supervisor fit (PS fit), perceived supervisor support (PSS), and tenure. An online survey was conducted using a convenience sampling of 123 employees from three mid-sized organizations in the Phoenix, Arizona area. The survey included eight questions regarding PSS from the Eisenberger et al. (1986) Survey of Perceived Organizational Support and three questions regarding PS fit using the Cable and DeRue 3-item perceptions scale (2002). Demographic data were collected as well regarding tenure, selecting time of employment from an ordinal scale (less than 6 months, 6 months to less than 1 year, 1-5 years, 6-10 years, 10+ years). The survey also collected demographic information related to age bracket, gender, and educational level.

The survey data were analyzed within the framework of two research questions. The following paragraphs provide the findings that align with each research question and related hypotheses. The significance of the findings is discussed, and contributions to advance scientific knowledge are highlighted.

Research question 1. The first research question examined whether there is a statistically significant relationship between the two continuous variables of PS fit and PSS. The analysis used by the researcher to address research question one and its related hypotheses was a Spearman correlation.

RQ1: Is there a statistically significant correlation between an employee's perceived fit to their supervisor and an employee's perception of supervisor support?

H1_0: There is not a statistically significant correlation between an employee's perceived fit to their supervisor and an employee's perception of supervisor support.

H1$_a$: There is a statistically significant correlation between an employee's perceived

fit to their supervisor and an employee's perception of supervisor support.

A Spearman correlation analysis identified a significant positive correlation

between PS fit and PSS ($r_p = 0.51$, $p < .001$). The correlation coefficient between PS fit

and PSS was 0.51, indicating a large effect size. This correlation indicated that as PS fit

increases, PSS tends to increase. With this finding the null hypothesis was rejected.

Previous study findings had found a relationship between PSS and other fit

variables, such as person-job fit (DeConinck et al., 2015) person-organization fit (Chen et

al., 2016) and the related variable of member-leader-exchange (Hsieh, 2012). However,

this is the first study known by the researcher to measure correlation between PS fit and

PSS and identify a statistically significant relationship between the two variables.

Specifically, this finding identified that as PS fit increases, PSS tends to increase. This

finding fills a gap identified by previous studies related to PSS and PS fit requesting

further research on the relationship between perceived supervisor support and perceived

fit elements other than job fit (Boon & Biron, 2016; Chuang et al., 2016; DeConinck et

al., 2015).

Research question 2. The second research question examined whether there is a

statistically significant relationship between the continuous variable of PSS and the

ordinal variable of tenure. The analysis used by the researcher to address research

question two and its related hypotheses was a Spearman correlation.

RQ$_2$: Is there a statistically significant correlation between an employee's tenure and

an employee's perception of supervisor support?

H2$_0$: There is not a statistically significant correlation between an employee's tenure and an employee's perception of supervisor support.

H2$_a$: There is a statistically significant correlation between an employee's tenure and an employee's perception of supervisor support.

Tenure was measured in the survey as tenure with organization and tenure with supervisor. Both variables were tested with a Spearman correlation. There were no significant correlations between any pairs of variables. With this finding the null hypothesis was accepted.

The literature review provided inconsistent findings related to PSS and tenure. Tenure greater than six months was found to be related more strongly to PSS than tenure less than six months in one study (Kraemer & Gouthier, 2014), a related but much more limited time study. Another study found perceived organizational support (POS) to have a stronger impact during earlier time points of employment tenure, and to decrease in impact over time (Conway & Coyle-Shapiro, 2012), and suggested future research on distinctions within organizational support (such as supervisor support) as well as research on the changing importance of support over time. A recent meta-analytic evaluation of organizational support theory (Kurtessis et al., 2017) found POS to have a significant negative relationship with turnover intentions ($p = -.50$) but a much lower negative relation to actual turnover ($p = -.21$).

Since the present study found no correlation between tenure and perceived supervisor support, this gap was answered with a null response. The finding of no relationship between PSS and tenure appears to confirm earlier findings (Conway & Coyle-Shapiro, 2012; Kurtessis et al., 2017) and addressed the call for further study of

the relationship between PSS and tenure (Conway & Coyle-Shapiro, 2012; Kraemer & Gouthier, 2014). This finding also identified that, considering Blau's (1964) social exchange theory, employment tenure is not dependent on the receipt by an employee of perceived supervisor support. Other factors contribute to an employee choosing to stay with an organization over time. Further discussion on the implications of this null finding are reviewed in the next section.

In summary, the findings answered both research questions, and filled an identified gap in the literature and as well as contributed to the body of knowledge related to understanding the relationship between PS fit, PSS, and tenure, as described in Chapter 1 of this study. Before this study, it was unknown whether there was a statistically significant correlation between PS fit, PSS and tenure. The findings of this study discovered that there is a significant relationship between PS fit and PSS. As perceived person-supervisor fit increases, perceived supervisor support tends to increase. Secondly, the findings of this study identified that there is not a relationship between PSS and tenure. An employee's perception of supervisor support is not related to their length of employment with the organization nor is it related to their length of employment with their supervisor. The implications of these two findings are discussed in the next section, and the chapter then concludes with recommendations for further study.

Implications

This quantitative correlational study was designed to determine if, or to what extent, a correlation exists between an employee's perceived fit to his or her supervisor, an employee's perception of supervisor support, and an employee's tenure. The results of the analysis revealed a statistically significant relationship ($r_s = 0.51$, $p < .001$) between

person-supervisor fit (PS fit) and perceived supervisor support (PSS), where PSS
increases as PS fit increases. The study also found no statistically significant relationship
between PSS and tenure. These findings provided both theoretical and practical
implications as well as future implications regarding PS fit, PSS, and tenure in the
workplace. This section explains the theoretical, practical, and future implications of this
research. The section closes with a review of the strengths and weaknesses and degree of
credibility of the study conclusions considering the methodology, research design, data
analysis, and results of the study.

Theoretical implications. Blau's (1964) social exchange theory and Deci and
Ryan's (1985) self-determination theory together served as the theoretical foundations for
this study. The attraction/selection/attrition (ASA) cycle (Schneider, 1987) provided a
conceptual model for the study of person-supervisor fit. Two research questions and
related hypotheses, aligned with the theoretical and model foundation, were formulated
by the researcher to study the relationship between the variables of PS fit, PSS, and
tenure.

Self-determination theory states each person has a need for autonomy, for
relatedness, and for competence, and when these needs are met the individual is
intrinsically motivated and has the opportunity for optimal growth, functioning, and well-
being. This research study proposed that an employee's perceived fit with their
supervisor's values is correlated with a perception of supervisor support, meeting a need
for relatedness. The finding of statistically significant correlation between PS fit and PSS
($r_s = 0.51$, $p < .001$), such that when PS fit increases, PSS also increases, extends
understanding of Deci and Ryan's (1985) self-determination theory. PS fit (Greguras &

Diefendorff, 2009; Kovjanic et al., 2012) and PSS were both independently already known to be contributors to filling the need of relatedness (Gillet et al., 2015; Rothmann et al., 2013). The correlation between the variables of PS fit and PSS contributed to the understanding that meeting the need of relatedness with one variable, PS fit, increased the likelihood of meeting the need of relatedness through the second variable, PSS.

The researcher expected to contribute to research related to the ASA model by demonstrating a relationship between PSS and tenure, such that as PS fit increases, PSS tends to increase, and that PSS is related to tenure. This might have demonstrated how the cycle of attrition/retention leads to similar traits amongst employees who remain with an organization over time (Schneider, 1987). Because of the null finding of the second research question, indicating there is not a statistical correlation between PSS and tenure, a confirmation of the ASA model was not obtained in this study.

The researcher also expected to contribute to social exchange theory by demonstrating a finding of correlation between tenure and PSS to be an illustration of social exchange between an employee and their supervisor. Social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) indicates that for a relationship to exist between two entities, they both must believe they are able to receive something of value from the other. The exchange may be economic such as compensation and benefits, or a social exchange such as praise, approval and commitment. Perceived support was founded on social exchange theory (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Within organizations, social exchange relationships such as PSS have been shown to increase employee commitment to the organization, mediated by trust (Sousa-Lima et al., 2013). An earlier study (Kraemer & Gouthier, 2014) provided a limited demonstration of this phenomenon, with a finding that PSS had a greater impact

on employee's intention to stay with an organization after the first six months of employment. This researcher instead determined that PSS and tenure are not related. This finding, when viewed through the supporting Blau's (1964) social exchange theory, indicated that employment tenure is not dependent on the receipt by an employee of perceived supervisor support. Other factors contribute to an employee choosing to stay with an organization over time, which is discussed further under Practical Implications.

Practical implications. The key findings of this study provided new insight for researchers and employers into the importance of an employee's perception of fit to his or her supervisor as it relates to an employee's perception of supervisor support and offered new insight into tenure in the workplace. The researcher found a significant positive correlation between person-supervisor fit and perceived supervisor support ($r_s = 0.51$, $p <$ .001), such that as person-supervisor fit (PS fit) increases perceived supervisor support (PSS) tends to increase. The researcher also found that PSS is not statistically correlated to tenure. The study surveyed 123 employees representing various job types from three mid-sized employers in the Phoenix, Arizona area. The Phoenix area is in Maricopa County, the setting for this study. Maricopa County is the fourth largest county in the United States by population, and the fastest growing county in the United States, according to the United States Census Bureau (2018).

The finding that as PS fit increases, PSS will tend to increase highlights the importance of assessing fit between an employee and his or her supervisor prior to job placement, and the importance of communication regarding fit between an employee and his or her supervisor throughout the employment relationship. Previous studies established that PSS brings several employee engagement benefits to the workplace such

as employee performance (Conway & Coyle-Shapiro, 2012), job satisfaction (Gębczyńska & Kwiotkowska, 2018), and intention to stay (Cable & DeRue, 2002; Dawley et al., 2010; Kraemer & Gouthier, 2014; Yang et al., 2015; Zhang et al., 2015). The literature review identified PS fit as significantly related to job satisfaction (Chuang et al., 2016). By finding the statistically significant positive relationship between PS fit and PSS, this study underscored the assessment of PS fit as a key element to employee success in the workplace.

The correlation finding between PS fit and PSS also advances scientific knowledge. The desire to retain valued human capital has led to sustained interest in how person-organization fit is related to employee behavior (Chen et al., 2016). Certain support and fit variables other than PS fit and PSS have been studied together (Cable & DeRue, 2002; Chen & Chiu, 2008; Dawley et al., 2010; DeConinck et al., 2015). However, this is the first study found by this researcher to include perceived person-supervisor fit and perceived supervisor support in the same research endeavor. The finding that as PS fit increases, PSS tends to increase has extended the research and provided an answer to the call for further study of the relationship between perceived supervisor support and perceived fit variables other than job fit (Boon & Biron, 2016; Chuang et al., 2016; DeConinck et al., 2015). The significant positive relationship between PS fit and PSS also provided answers to the call to identify drivers behind perceived supervisor support (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Gillet et al., 2015) as well as examine the conditions, such as supervisor support, that activate fit dimensions (Boon & Biron, 2016; Chuang et al., 2016).

The null finding of a correlation between PSS and tenure also has significant implications for researchers and for employers. The finding that PSS and tenure are not related implied that tenure alone is not related to whether an employee feels supported by their supervisor at work. PSS has been linked to an employee's intention to stay with an organization both directly and indirectly (Cable & DeRue, 2002; Dawley et al., 2010; Kraemer & Gouthier, 2014; Yang et al., 2015; Zhang et al., 2015). However, other elements have been found to mitigate the relationship between an employee's intention to stay at a job and PSS, including fit of the person to the job (Dawley et al., 2010; DeConinck et al., 2015). Total years of employment as well as age may also impact tenure. Median tenure has remained steady at 5.0 years for the last 35 years (Copeland, 2019), with a consistent pattern of increased job changes in the early employment years (ages 25-34) and longer tenure in the final years of employment (ages 55-64).

If PSS is correlated to outcomes such as employee performance (Conway & Coyle-Shapiro, 2012) and job satisfaction (Gębczyńska & Kwiotkowska, 2018), and correlates to variables such as job fit (Dawley et al., 2010), and PSS is not correlated to tenure, this study implied that tenure may not be an indicator to whether employees are performing, are satisfied in their jobs, or are a fit to their job. Finally, if PSS tends to increase as PS fit increases, and PSS is not correlated to tenure, tenure is not an indicator as to whether an employee is experiencing a fit to the values of their supervisor. In summary, the lack of a correlation between PSS and tenure has implied that tenure may in turn not be related to employee performance, job satisfaction, job fit, intention to stay, and PS fit.

Future implications. Multiple implications for future research stem from the findings of this study. This study determined that there is a significant positive correlation between PS fit and PSS ($r_s = 0.51$, $p < .001$), such that as PS fit increases, PSS tends to increase. This study also found no correlation between the variables of PSS and tenure.

Future studies should further examine the relationship between PS fit and PSS. The literature review of studies related to PS fit and PSS identified the variables of trust (Sousa-Lima et al., 2013) and leader-member exchange, or LMX (Eisenberger et al., 2014; Hsieh, 2012) as moderating factors related to PS fit, PSS and employee commitment. PSS as well as coworker support have been identified as the strongest work life factors related to trust within the organization (Van der Berg & Martins, 2013). PS fit was found to impact an employee's perception of LMX (Marstand et al., 2017). Trust between an employee and their manager is associated with employee job satisfaction and dedication (Gill, 2008), and LMX has been found to support both an employee's perceived fit to the organization and to their job (Boon & Biron, 2016). With the correlation established by this study between PS fit and PSS, further study is recommended to identify whether other variables related to the employee-supervisor relationship, such as trust and leader-member exchange, are linked to the PS fit – PSS correlation.

Understanding the correlation between PS fit and PSS would be furthered as well by research related to causation between the variables. Organizations would benefit in understanding whether the support provided by a supervisor is impacted by PS fit, and whether the importance of that relationship changes over time (Conway & Coyle-Shapiro, 2012). In other words, does PS fit cause PSS? Or does PSS cause PS fit? Further

understanding of the directionality of the uncovered statistically significant relationship between PS fit and PSS would advance scientific knowledge regarding the correlation of these two employee-supervisor relationship variables.

Questions remain regarding the relationship between an employee's intention to stay or turnover intentions and employee tenure. Findings from previous research revealed a relationship between PSS and an intention to stay with an organization (Chen & Chiu, 2008; Choi et al., 2012; Dawley et al., 2010; Maertz et al., 2007; Yang et al., 2015; Zhang et al., 2015). However, this researcher did not find a relationship between PSS and actual tenure, measured both as tenure with organization as well as tenure with supervisor. Further study is recommended to identify whether there is a relationship between intention to stay and tenure, and to identify behavioral outcome variables such as work engagement, job satisfaction, and organizational citizenship behaviors (Rees et al., 2013; Zhang et al., 2015) that may be related to intention to stay or turnover intentions.

Finally, further study is recommended to identify whether perceived demographic characteristics of an employee's supervisor affect PS fit and PSS. This study collected demographic data, including tenure, for the participant only. Future research could collect data on the employee's perspective of demographic characteristics of the supervisor as well, such as age bracket, gender, and tenure. Trust has been found to be built on demographic similarities, such as age and gender, in the early stages of work relationships (Levin et al., 2006). Collecting additional data related to perceived supervisor demographics would allow for research to identify whether perceived demographic characteristics of an employee's supervisor affect the correlation between PS fit and PSS.

Strengths and weaknesses of the study. The theoretical foundation of this research is a strength that supports the application of the findings in the workplace. This quantitative correlational study of the relationship between perceived person-supervisor fit (PS fit), perceived supervisor support (PSS) and tenure found a statistically significant positive correlation between PS fit and PSS ($r_p = 0.51$, $p < .001$). The study found no correlation between PSS and tenure. The literature review identified the theoretical foundation and conceptual framework for the study, Blau's (1964) social exchange theory, Deci and Ryan's (1985) self-determination theory, and Schneider's (1987) attraction-selection-attrition (ASA) cycle conceptual model, to be key sources for the origination of the study of these variables (Cable & DeRue, 2002; Eisenberger et al., 1986; Greguras & Diefendorff, 2009; Schneider, 1987). Social exchange theory and self-determination theory continue to be widely used platforms for the study of human behavior (Kurtessis et al., 2017; Marstand et al., 2017; Ryan & Deci, 2017). The theoretical foundation and previous research provided alignment for the research questions and the study design and analysis.

The research design, methodology, and data analysis provided a strong foundation for the study findings. The sample size of the study, 123 participants, exceeded the power analysis' minimum sample size of 102 required for the study, which helped mitigate any potential bias that might have occurred from some participants. The use of three mid-sized employers in the Phoenix, Arizona area, located in the fourth largest and fastest growing county in the United States, increased the population and allowed for the generalization of the research findings. The correlational design, which is also discussed below in the limitations, was a good fit in the study of the variables because the variables

were measured with reliable and valid measurement instruments. PS fit was measured as a single-dimensional fit parameter using the Cable and DeRue 3-item scale (2002) and PSS was measured using the Eisenberger et al., (1986) Survey of Perceived Organizational Support. Both scales performed well in the reliability analysis, continuing the pattern of reliability demonstrated in both the assessment of the original scales as well as in subsequent research utilizing the scales (Sousa-Lima et al., 2013; Zhang et al., 2015). The study findings have added to the literature and filled the gap in research regarding the relationship between perceived PS fit, PSS, and tenure.

A limitation in the study design should be considered when applying the results of the present research. The data analysis design was correlational, limiting any conclusions regarding causality, and leaving open the possibility of reciprocal causation among the two variables (Crossley et al., 2013). The design however was appropriate, as the study looked for relationship strength between numerically measurable constructs without experimental manipulation (Bordens & Abbott, 2008; Fitzgerald et al., 2004).

Another limitation is found in the sample geographical diversity. The sample only comprised English-speaking participants from one country (United States). Future research with participants from multiple mid-sized employers from a different country or primary language would replicate and extend the research findings. In addition, one of the participating employers had both English and Spanish speaking employees. However, the survey was offered in English only for purposes of expediency. The exclusion of the non-English speakers may have delimited the results of the survey.

A final limitation is related to the scales used to measure the PSS and the PS fit variables. PSS was measured using a shortened version of the Eisenberger et al. (1986)

Survey of Perceived Organizational Support, adapted to measure supervisor support in place of organizational support. Although the original version of the survey included additional questions, the shorter eight-question version used in this research has been found to be valid and reliable (Shanock & Eisenberger, 2006) and has been used in previous research to measure PSS (Sousa-Lima et al., 2013). PS fit was measured using a single-dimensional scale (Cable & DeRue, 2002). An instrument using a multi-dimensional scale has been developed recently to measure perceived PS fit (Chuang et al., 2016). Using the Cable & DeRue scale limited the fit measure to personal values. Chuang et al. (2016) maintains that the many fit dimensions measured with the new multi-dimensional scale add to the information gleaned from existing fit scales. For purposes of building on existing research, the Cable and DeRue scale was selected for this current study as the tool with the longer period of validation by other researchers in the field of fit (Astakhova, 2015; Hamstra et al., 2018; Kim & Kim, 2013; Zhang et al., 2015). Although further information may have been obtained related to PSS and PS fit by using more robust instruments, the researcher established that the data obtained by the scales used was valid and reliable, as detailed earlier in the study strengths.

Recommendations

The findings of this research study provide insight into key variables related to workplace engagement and identify a need for further research. This quantitative, correlational study of employees from multiple mid-sized employers in the Phoenix, Arizona area examined person-supervisor fit (PS fit), perceived supervisor support (PSS), and tenure and discovered a statistically significant positive correlation between PS fit and PSS ($r_p = 0.51$, $p < .001$) indicating that as PS fit increases, PSS tends to increase. No

relationship was found between the variables of PSS and tenure. The findings provide new insight for researchers and employers into the importance of an employee's perception of fit to his or her supervisor as it relates to an employee's perception of supervisor support and offered new insight into tenure in the workplace.

Based on the results of this study, the assessment of fit between an employee and supervisor at the onset of the work relationship as well as ongoing communication regarding fit to values throughout the working relationship is recommended. These practices will likely lead to employees who feel supported by their supervisor, which based on prior research will promote engagement and productivity in the workplace. Employers should not assume long-tenured employees feel supported by their supervisors and should actively encourage and train supervisors to meet the fit and support needs of every team member for optimal engagement throughout the lifecycle of the employee. Supervisor placement and retention should be evaluated based on meeting employee fit and support needs. The following recommendations are offered by the researcher for future study and practice.

Recommendations for future research. The correlation finding between PS fit and PSS provides the first research study of these two variables together, and advances scientific knowledge by answering the call for further study of the relationship between perceived supervisor support and perceived fit variables other than job fit (Boon & Biron, 2016; Chuang et al., 2016; DeConinck et al., 2015). The finding of no correlation between PSS and tenure is also significant, demonstrating that PSS's relationship with an employee's intention to stay with an organization as identified in the literature review (Cable & DeRue, 2002; Dawley et al., 2010; Kraemer & Gouthier, 2014; Yang et al.,

2015; Zhang et al., 2015) is not correlated to actual employee tenure. To further examine

these findings related to PS fit, PSS, and tenure, the researcher recommended the

following further research endeavors:

- Study the relationship between PS fit and PSS in conjunction with other variables related to the employee-supervisor relationship, such as trust and leader-member exchange (Boon & Biron, 2016; Gill, 2008; Marstand et al., 2017; Van der Berg & Martins, 2013), to determine whether other variables moderate or are related to the correlation between PS fit and PSS.

- Complete an investigation of the relationship between PS fit and PSS among employees using quantitative research designs such as descriptive, quasi-experimental, experimental, longitudinal or other correlational designs to identify whether causation or directionality in the relationship is implied and whether the importance of the relationship changes over time (Conway & Coyle-Shapiro, 2012).

- Identify whether there is a relationship between intention to stay and tenure, and whether dependent variables related to PSS such as work engagement, job satisfaction, and organizational citizenship behaviors (Rees et al., 2013; Zhang et al., 2015) are related to tenure.

- Collect additional data related to perceived supervisor demographics, such as age bracket, gender, and tenure, to identify whether perceived demographic characteristics of an employee's supervisor (Levin et al., 2006) affect the correlation between PS fit and PSS.

- Explore whether the relationship identified between PS fit and PSS moderates the support each variable individually provides to the basic psychological need of relatedness as described in self-determination theory (Gillet et al., 2015; Greguras & Diefendorff, 2009; Kovjanic et al., 2012; Rothmann, et al., 2013), and identify whether the relationship between PS fit and PSS also supports the identified self-determination theory needs of independence and autonomy as well as competence.

- Replicate this study using employees from multiple mid-sized employers in a country other than the United States.

This study's findings filled a gap in the research related to PS fit, PSS, and tenure

in the workplace. The results of this study among multiple mid-sized employers in the

Phoenix, Arizona area added to scholarly research by identifying a statistically significant

relationship between PS fit and PSS, and by finding a null correlation between PSS and tenure. This researcher provides a final recommendation that employers consider these quantitative findings as they place and train supervisors in the workplace.

Recommendations for future practice. Based on previous literature, on the theoretical foundation, and on the results and findings of this study, the researcher has several recommendations for future practice for employers. Employers, employees, and supervisors will benefit directly from reading and from implementing the results of the study. These recommendations are designed to provide a work environment that is engaging and productive and supports the needs of both supervisors and employees, as well as the needs of the employer.

Personal values fit assessment during the job placement process. The first recommendation is for employers. This study revealed a significant relationship between an employee's perception of fit to their supervisor, or person-supervisor fit (PS fit), and his or her perception of supervisor support (PSS), such that as PS fit increases, PSS tends to increase as well. PS fit as measured in this study is a single-dimension measurement of fit to personal values (Cable & DeRue, 2002). The assessment is a measurement of the perception of the employee, and studies find employees act on perception rather than on reality (Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005). The implementation of an assessment of values fit for employees and for supervisors during the job placement process, according to the finding of this study, can help place supervisors with employees who will in turn feel supported. Employees who feel supported, or experience PSS, will tend to bring a number of employee engagement behaviors to the workplace that benefit employees, supervisors and employers, such as employee performance (Conway &

Coyle-Shapiro, 2012), job satisfaction (Gębczyńska & Kwiotkowska, 2018), and intention to stay (Cable & DeRue, 2002; Dawley et al., 2010; Kraemer & Gouthier, 2014; Yang et al., 2015; Zhang et al., 2015). An assessment of values fit during the job placement process for both employees and supervisors is the first recommendation.

Supervisor assessment, training and evaluation of values-driven and employee-supportive behaviors. An additional recommendation for employers is to establish an expectation for supervisors to model company values and provide supportive behaviors that meet the needs of every employee on his or her team. Assessment during job placement and training should be conducted to prepare supervisors to meet these behavior expectations. Company policies and practices should be evaluated to ensure supervisors have opportunities and an expectation to communicate and reflect company values and provide supportive behaviors to their team members. Research on trust shows that employees trust a supervisor that shows benevolence (Krot & Lewicka, 2012; van der Berg & Martins, 2013), and supervisor support has been found to provide the strongest impact on an employee's trust in the organization, an employee's job satisfaction, and intention to stay with the employer (Sousa-Lima et al., 2013). Supervisor evaluations should include an assessment of effectiveness in these responsibilities, and supervisors should be held accountable to these expectations.

Regular assessment of perceived supervisor support (PSS) for every employee. This recommendation is also for employers and relates to the finding in this study that PSS is not related to tenure. Research does show a direct correlation between PSS and intention to stay; however, the present study found no relationship between PSS and actual tenure. This finding indicates workplaces potentially have long-tenured employees

who do not perceive support from their supervisor. If an employee does not feel supported, they may have an intention to leave and not have an affective commitment to their employer (Sousa-Lima et al., 2013), but for other reasons have elected to stay. An ongoing assessment of perceived supervisor support provides the employer with an opportunity to make a correction when needed in the employee-supervisor relationship. A renewed perception of supervisor support for any employee can have significant dividends for the employee and for the employer, as well as for the supervisor. This final recommendation, a regular assessment of PSS for all employees, can be included in an annual company engagement survey or any other form of employee assessment. This PSS assessment recommendation is a regular well-being checkup that can ensure PSS is operating smoothly in the organization. This recommendation comes with an admonition to employers to act if PSS is found to be lacking for a supervisor. Employees are trusting employers to provide them with supervisors who are supportive and reflective of the values of the organization. When a non-supportive supervisor remains in a supervisory role, employee trust in the organization is eroded (van der Berg & Martins, 2013).

Candidate review of potential employer values as a match to own personal values prior to job acceptance. This final recommendation is for employment candidates. When reviewing a job offer, candidates should prioritize a match of company values to personal values as a key factor in the overall review of the job offer. Supervisors will often reflect company values (van der Berg & Martins, 2013). Candidates should self-identify their own personal values, so they know what values they are looking for in a potential employer. The candidate should then verify references for potential employers just as the employer is verifying references for final candidates. Research shows an

employee will love their work and receive satisfaction from performing their job in direct relationship to their perceived fit to the organization (Gabriel et al., 2014). With the finding of this research endeavor that PS fit and PSS are significantly related, a candidate who accepts a job offer with an organization that is a match to his or her personal values will likely also perceive supervisor support in that employment. A bonus of supervisor support is job performance – employees with supervisor support enjoy higher job performance as the challenge of their job increases (Mushtaq et al., 2017), supporting career growth.

In summary, the findings from the study of the relationship between PS fit, PSS, and tenure provided insight and practical implications and recommendations for current and future practice and future research for both employers and practitioners. The recommendations benefit employer organizations, employees, and supervisors alike. Implementing these recommendations for future practice will strengthen the ability of supervisors and employees to be successful at work.

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Appendix A.

Site Authorization Letters

Site authorization letters are on file at Grand Canyon University.

Appendix B.

IRB Approval Letter

GRAND CANYON
UNIVERSITY

3300 West Camelback Road, Phoenix Arizona 85017   602.639.7500   Toll Free 800.800.9776   www.gcu.edu

DATE: April 15, 2019

TO: Christina Huff
FROM: Grand Canyon University Institutional Review Board

STUDY TITLE: The Relationship Between Perceived Person-Supervisor Fit, Perceived Supervisor Support and Employment Tenure

IRB REFERENCE #:   IRB-2019-885

SUBMISSION TYPE: Submission Response for Initial Review Submission Packet

ACTION: Determination of Exempt Status

REVIEW CATEGORY: Category 2

Thank you for your submission of New Project materials for this research study.

Grand Canyon University Institutional Review Board has determined this project is EXEMPT FROM IRB REVIEW according to federal regulations. You now have GCU IRB approval to collect data.

If applicable, please use the approved informed consent that is included in your published documents.

We will put a copy of this correspondence on file in our office.

If you have any questions, please contact the IRB office at irb@gcu.edu or 602-639-7804. Please include your study title and reference number in all correspondence with this office.

Appendix C.

Informed Consent

Grand Canyon University
College of Doctoral Studies
3300 W. Camelback Road
Phoenix, AZ 85017
Phone: 602-639-7804
Email: irb@gcu.edu

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

INTRODUCTION

The title of this research study is "The Relationship Between Perceived Person-Supervisor Fit, Perceived Supervisor Support and Employment Tenure."

I am Christina Nadine Huff, a doctoral student under the supervision of Dr. Reginald Kimball in the College of Doctoral Studies at Grand Canyon University. The purpose of this study is to see if there is a relationship between an employee's perception of fit to their supervisor, an employee's perception of support from their supervisor, and an employee's tenure.

KEY INFORMATION

This document provides information on the terms and conditions for consenting to participate in this research study.

- *How do I know if I can be in this study?* If you work at a participating company, you can volunteer to be in this study.

- *What am I being asked to do?* If you volunteer to be in this study, you will answer some questions about yourself and about your supervisor. Some of these questions may remind you of positive and negative experiences. You will answer the study questions privately at work during work hours, using a personal computer, tablet, or cell phone.

- *Who will have access to my information?* Your information will only be seen by the study researchers.

- *Am I required to participate?* You are not required to participate. If you decide to participate, you can leave the study at any time, even if you have not finished the survey questions. There is no penalty if you decide to stop participating in the survey. If you decide to stop participating, simply close the survey. If you decide to not finish the study, the information you have provided will not be used.

- *Any possible risks or discomforts?* This study should not have any risks or discomforts.

- *Any direct benefits for me?* You will receive no direct benefits from being in this study. However, your information will benefit science and society. You will help researchers better understand if there is a relationship between an employee's perception of fit to their supervisor, an employee's perception of support from their supervisor, and an employee's tenure.

- *Any paid compensation for my time?* You will not be paid for being in this study.

- *How will my information and/or identity be protected?* Your responses will be protected. You will not be asked to provide any identifying information. Your responses will be kept private. All records will be kept in a secure location. The collected information will be stored

electronically for a period of three years. As the researcher I will securely maintain all access to the data on a secure cloud server with password-restricted access. At the end of three years, I will erase all data collected for this study from the secure cloud server.

PRESENTATION OF INFORMATION COLLECTED

The results of this research study will be published once the study is complete. The results may be presented at conferences. A presentation of the results will be available for the participating companies as well. The findings will be presented as a summary of the results only. Individual responses will not be published or presented.

PRIVACY AND DATA SECURITY

- ***Will researchers ever be able to link my data/responses back to me?*** Your responses will not be linked to you. Your record will have a research ID code to protect your anonymity as you respond to the study questions.

- ***Will my data include information that can identify me (names, addresses, etc.)?*** You will not be asked to provide any information that can identify you directly.

- ***Will researchers assign my data/responses a research ID code to use instead of my name?*** Your responses will be assigned a research ID code.
    - ***If yes, will researchers create a list to link names with their research ID codes?*** Your name will not be collected, so the research ID code will not be connected to a name.
    - ***If yes, how will researchers secure the link of names and research ID codes? How long will the link be kept? Who has access? Approximate destroy date?*** Your name will not be collected. Your responses and research ID code will be kept for approximately three years, and then destroyed.

- ***How will my data be protected (electronic and hardcopy)? Where? How long? Who will have access? Approximate destroy or de-identification date?*** Your data will be kept private; your record will be kept in a secure location. Your collected data will be stored electronically for a period of three years. As the researcher, I will keep the data on a secure cloud server with password-restricted access. At the end of three years, I will erase all data collected for this study from the secure cloud server.

- ***Where and how will the signed consent forms be secured?*** You will acknowledge the signed consent form as part of the online survey completion. Your signed consent form will be kept electronically together with your survey data on a secure cloud server with password-restricted access.

FUTURE RESEARCH

Your anonymous data collected for this study could be used for future research studies or distributed to other investigators for future research studies without additional informed consent from you or your legally authorized representative.

STUDY CONTACTS

Any questions you have concerning the research study or your participation in the study, before or after your consent, will be answered by myself as the principal investigator, Christina Huff, at chuff1@my.gcu.edu or [REDACTED], or by Dr. Reginald Kimball at reginald.kimball@my.gcu.edu.

If you have questions about your rights as a subject/participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can contact the Chair of the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board, through the College of Doctoral Studies at IRB@gcu.edu; (602) 639-7804.

VOLUNTARY CONSENT

PARTICIPANT'S RIGHTS

- You have been given an opportunity to read and discuss the informed consent and ask questions about this study;
- You have been given enough time to consider whether or not you want to participate;
- You have read and understand the terms and conditions and agree to take part in this research study;
- You understand your participation is voluntary and that you may stop participation at any time without penalty.

I agree   I do not agree

INVESTIGATOR'S STATEMENT

By utilizing the participant's completed online Informed Consent and survey responses, I certify that I have explained to the above individual the nature and purpose, the potential benefits and possible risks associated with participation in this research study, have answered any questions that have been raised, and have witnessed the above signature. These elements of Informed Consent conform to the Assurance given by Grand Canyon University to the Office for Human Research Protections to protect the rights of human subjects. I have provided (offered) you a copy of this signed consent document."

(Your signature indicates that you have ensured the participant has read, understood, and has had the opportunity to ask questions regarding their participation)

Signature of Investigator_____   Date_____

Appendix D.

Copy of Instruments and Permissions Letters to Use the Instruments

Questionnaire

Listed below are statements that represent possible opinions YOU may have about working with your supervisor. Please indicate the degree of your agreement or disagreement with each statement by identifying the answer that best represents your point of view about your supervisor. Please choose from the following answers:

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Slightly Agree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree

Eisenberger et al. (1986) Survey of Perceived Supervisor Support

1. My supervisor values my contribution to our organization's well-being.

2. My supervisor fails to appreciate any extra effort from me. (R)

3. My supervisor would ignore any complaint from me. (R)

4. My supervisor really cares about my well-being.

5. Even if I did the best job possible, my supervisor would fail to notice, (R)

6. My supervisor cares about my general satisfaction at work.

7. My supervisor shows very little concern for me. (R)

8. My supervisor takes pride in my accomplishments at work.

9. (R) indicates the item is reverse scored.

Cable and DeRue (2002) 3-item Perceptions Scale

1. My supervisor's values provide a good fit with the things that I value in life.

2. The things that I value in life are very similar to the things that my supervisor values.

3. My personal values match my supervisor's values.

Personal Demographics

1. How long have your worked for your current employer?

    a. Less than or equal to 6 months

    b. 6 months – 1 year

    c. 1-5 years

    d. 6-10 years

    e. 11+ years

2. How long have you worked for your current supervisor?

    a. Less than or equal to 6 months

    b. 6 months – 1 year

    c. 1-5 years

    d. 6-10 years

    e. 11+ years

3. Please select your age bracket:

    a. 18-22

    b. 23-34

    c. 35-46

    d. 47-65

    e. 66+

4. Please select your gender:

    a. Female

    b. Male

5. Please select your highest level of education achieved:

    a. Some High School

    b. High School Diploma or GED

    c. Some College

    d. Bachelor's Degree

    e. Graduate Degree

Tina Huff

From:	Eisenberger, Robert W <reisenbe@Central.UH.EDU>
Sent:	Thursday, May 24, 2018 3:08 PM
To:	Tina Huff; reisenberger2@uh.edu
Cc:	'Tina Huff'; 'Christina N Huff'
Subject:	Re: Permission to Use The 8-item Survey of Perceived Organizational Support (SPOS)

Hi Tina,

I am happy the POS concept has proven helpful to you. and am also happy to give permission for you to use the POS scale in your research.

Cordially,

Bob

Robert Eisenberger
Professor of Psychology
College of Liberal Arts & Soc. Sciences
Professor of Management
C. T. Bauer College of Business
University of Houston
reisenberger2@uh.edu

From: Tina Huff <tinahuff1@cox.net>
Sent: Thursday, May 24, 2018 8:50 AM
To: reisenberger2@uh.edu
Cc: 'Tina Huff'; 'Christina N Huff'
Subject: Permission to Use The 8-item Survey of Perceived Organizational Support (SPOS)

Good morning, Dr. Eisenberger! I am writing to confirm your permission to use the 8-item Survey of Perceived Organizational Support (SPOS), adjusted to measure perceived supervisor support.

I am a doctoral student at Grand Canyon University in the PhD in Psychology program, with an emphasis in Industrial and Organizational Psychology. My dissertation is a quantitative correlational study of agricultural employees in the United States to determine if there is a positive correlation between an employee's perceived fit to his or her supervisor and an employee's perception of supervisor support.

I do see the SPOS survey as well as related published articles on your website – thank you for the easy accessibility to your research! I have utilized the findings extensively both in my research as well as in my practice as a Human Resources leader. Although open permission to use the survey seems to be implied in the publishing of the survey, I did not see an explicit permission to use the survey, hence my email here today.

Thanks so much for your help,

Tina

Christina Huff, SPHR, SHRM-SCP, MBA

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Tina Huff

From:	Daniel Cable <dcable@london.edu>
Sent:	Thursday, May 24, 2018 12:43 PM
To:	Tina Huff
Subject:	RE: Permission to use the 3-Item Perceptions Scale

Of course you can use the scale. Thanks you for your interest

Dan

From: Tina Huff [mailto:tinahuff1@cox.net]
Sent: 24 May 2018 16:06
To: Daniel Cable
Subject: Permission to use the 3-Item Perceptions Scale

Good morning, Dr. Cable! I am writing to confirm your permission to use the **3-item Perceptions Scale**, adjusted to measure perceived person-supervisor fit.

I am a doctoral student at Grand Canyon University in the PhD in Psychology program, with an emphasis in Industrial and Organizational Psychology. My dissertation is a quantitative correlational study of agricultural employees in the United States to determine if there is a positive correlation between an employee's perceived fit to his or her supervisor and an employee's perception of supervisor support.

I do see the listing of related published articles on your website – thank you for your life-long dedication to employee behavior and success at work! I have utilized the findings extensively both in my research as well as in my practice as a Human Resources leader. I did not see an explicit permission to use the survey on your site, hence my email here today.
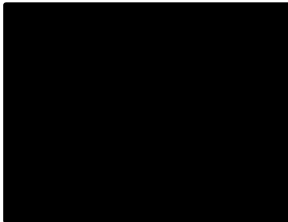
Thanks so much for your help,

Tina

Christina Huff, SPHR, SHRM-SCP, MBA

Chuff1@my.gcu.edu

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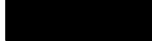
Appendix E.

Power Analyses for Sample Size Calculation