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See comments on the attached sheet. If any conditions are specified on the sheet, please list the date all conditions must be met in order to satisfy DBA Program and Graduate Studies requirements.

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A FIELD STUDY OF AN EMPLOYEE FIT-CENTERED APPROACH TO UNDERSTANDING EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT ACROSS A GENERATION-DIVERSE WORKFORCE

by

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“I consider myself the luckiest man on the face of this earth” - Lou Gehrig, 1939.

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ABSTRACT

A FIELD STUDY OF AN EMPLOYEE FIT-CENTERED APPROACH TO UNDERSTANDING EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT ACROSS A GENERATION-DIVERSE WORKFORCE

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The University of Dallas, 2018

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A primary concern of organizations is the development of an engaged workforce. This concern stems in part from recurring reports that approximately two-thirds of U.S. employees are not highly engaged. This problem is exacerbated as the workforce becomes increasingly generation diverse. Generation diversity has always been present in the U.S. labor force, but in recent years it has become more prevalent. It is not uncommon to see individuals from each of the three main generations in today’s workforce working side by side, and, there is evidence that the levels of engagement experienced by each generation vary. Drawing from person-environment (P-E) fit and engagement theories, this study presents an employee fit-centered approach to better understand employee engagement across a generation-diverse workforce. A field study research design was employed to test an expanded model of employee engagement. Self-report data were collected from three subsamples (N = 196) and analyzed using quantitative methods. Hypothesis testing was performed using correlation and regression applications. Specifically, this study examined (a) the relationships between employee fit, engagement, and employee attitudes, (b) the mediating effect engagement has on the relationship between employee fit and employee attitudes, (c) generational
differences in work values, and (d) the conditional impact different generations had on the relationship between employee fit and employee engagement. In sum, the results from this study offer strong support for organizations to be more intentional in leveraging the fit-engagement connection. The study findings were used to develop actionable solutions to facilitate high levels of employee engagement.
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CHAPTER 1

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

1.1 Introduction

A primary concern of organizations is the development of an engaged workforce. Bersin (2016, p. 19) recently noted that employee engagement is “the number one topic on the minds of CEOs and senior HR leaders.” The allure of a having a highly-engaged workforce is undeniable—higher revenue growth, increased employee productivity, improved customer loyalty, lower absenteeism, and turnover (Gallup, 2016a; HayGroup, 2016; Mercer, 2014). Other studies have linked employee engagement to knowledge sharing, creativity (Eldor & Vigoda-Gadot, 2016), employee well-being (Shuck, Adelson, & Reio, 2017), and improved firm performance (Barrick, Thurgood, Smith, & Courtright, 2015). Engaged employees are described as individuals who take action when they see a problem, quickly adapt in crisis situations, and never give up despite obstacles (SHRM, 2016). Consulting firm Towers Watson (2014) characterizes engaged employees as persons who are willing to go beyond what is expected of them in their job.

With such positive characterizations, many organizations are making significant investments to increase employee engagement levels. A Harvard Business Review article (LaMotte, 2015) recently reported that engagement has grown into a small industry with companies annually spending $720 million on developing engagement, and this amount is projected to double. Consequently, numerous measures of engagement have emerged given the increased importance placed on employee engagement. The cliché, “what gets measured gets done,” however, has not translated into having an engaged workforce.
A recent Corporate Executive Board Inc. (CEB, 2016) study found that nearly 60% of the survey respondents track engagement as a quality dashboard metric. Most executives see the need to improve employee engagement. However, according to a *Harvard Business Review* (2013) study sponsored by Achievers, many company leaders lack the tools to achieve this objective, and have expressed concern about the absence of explicit, actionable (employer-based) recommendations on how to address the engagement gap (Whittington, Meskelis, Asare, & Beldona, 2017). In a survey of individuals who administer engagement surveys as part of their work, only half indicated that their executives have the ability to build a culture of employee engagement (Bersin, 2015). It stands to reason, then, that low levels of employee engagement are more the norm than the exception.

Consultant studies consistently report that approximately 70% of U.S. employees are not engaged in their work (Aon, 2016; Gallup, 2015; PwC, 2015). Bersin (2015) indicates that worldwide only 13% of employees were “highly engaged” and that 26% were “actively disengaged.” More troubling is the idea that actively disengaged employees may influence those individuals who are in the middle of the engagement continuum. Like a virus, disengaged employees’ negative emotions can be transferred to their colleagues (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008) causing moderately engaged employees to slide toward disengagement. As a consequent, Gallup (2017) claims that U.S. businesses lose between $483 billion to $605 billion annually due to loss of productivity caused by disengaged employees.

When disengagement occurs, individuals withhold their “internal energies from physical, cognitive, and emotional labors” (Kahn, 1990, p. 701). The consequent of withholding one’s self underlies a work performance that Kahn (1990) describes as burned out, effortless, apathetic or detached, and robotic. Actively disengaged employees are said to be withdrawn and detached
from their work roles (Kahn, 1990), unhappy and unproductive (Gallup, 2013). Additionally, Kahn (1990, p. 702) offers the following description: The disengaged are, “…physically uninvolved in tasks, cognitively unvigilant, and emotionally disconnected from others in ways that hide what they think and feel, their creativity, their beliefs and values, and their personal connections to others.”

Consequently, many organizations have instituted programs to enhance its workplace environment and benefits. Onsite fitness centers, a casual dress code, flexible work arrangements and opportunities to volunteer in community building, and social responsibility initiatives are typical enhancement for large firms. Similarly, organizations have emphasized mentoring programs, career coaching, and learning and development opportunities. Many of these workplace enhancements address what Herzberg (1968) refers to as hygiene factors. Hygiene factors pertain to wages, hours, supervision, company policy and working conditions. If these factors are present (e.g., bonuses) in the job, then the individual is said to experience no dissatisfaction with their job. But if not present, dissatisfaction is expressed. While hygiene factors contribute to a positive work context, they do not address the more personal aspects of the employee’s relationship with the organization, their peers, supervisor, or the characteristics of the job itself.

Drawing on various theories, such as social exchange theory, engagement scholars have linked various macro- and micro-level management practices to employee engagement. Social exchange theory suggests that individuals will engage themselves in varying degrees in response, and out of reciprocity, to the resources they receive from their job and organization (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Positive employee evaluations of management practices, therefore, lead to engagement. Examples of macro-level practices that have been linked to engagement include:
corporate volunteering (Caligiuri, Mencin, & Jiang, 2013), work climate (Shuck, Reio, & Rocco, 2011), and flexible human resource management systems (Bal & De Lange, 2015). Examples of micro-level management practices include leisure activity (Vogel, Rodell, & Lynch, 2016), job resources (Byrne, Peters, & Weston, 2016), and the supervisor-employee relationship (Matta, Scott, Koopman, & Conlon, 2015).

Despite the growing presence of these workplace enhancements and managerial practices, employee engagement has barely budged from the 30% it was 13 years ago (Gallup, 2015). Given this problem, scholars (Christian, Garza, & Slaughter, 2011; Saks & Gruman, 2014) have called for more research to focus on identifying factors that lead to high levels of employee engagement.

The concept of employee fit offers a promising and underexplored area that has shown glimpses of being a powerful determinant of engagement. According to Gallup (2017, p. 17), poor job fit leads to low levels of engagement because workers are unlikely to believe “they have opportunities to do what they do best every day.” Consequently, job fit is one of the most common explanations employees give when voluntarily exiting their job (Gallup, 2017). More to the point, Bersin (2015, p. 151) states: “The first and perhaps most important part of employee engagement is job-person fit.” Yet, little empirical research has been done to substantiate claims that employee fit leads to engagement.

Employee fit has been a fixture of research in the field of organizational behavior for decades (Edwards, 2008; Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005; Su, Murdock, & Rounds, 2016). Lewin (1951) suggests that individual behavior is a function of the interaction between the person and their environment. From this view, employee fit refers to the interaction between an employee and their work environment, and is broadly defined as the “the
compatibility between an individual and a work environment that occurs when their characteristics are well matched” (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005, p. 281).

Conceived as a multi-dimensional construct, employee fit occurs across various dimensions of the work environment (Chuang, Shen, & Judge, 2016). Drawing on person-environment (PE) theory, this framework holds that the work environment consist of different dimensions of fit (Ostroff & Schulte, 2012). “The basic premise of PE fit theory and research is that when characteristics of people and the work environment are similar, aligned or fit together, positive outcomes for individuals such as satisfaction, adjustment, commitment, performance, reduced stress, and lower turnover intentions result” (Ostroff & Schulte, 2012, p. 3-4).

Each dimension of employee fit (e.g., organization, job, group, and supervisor), therefore, is distinguished by its respective attributes (Chuang et al., 2016). For instance, organization fit focuses on the congruence between employee and organizational values; job fit considers the match between the abilities of the employee with the demands of the job; group fit considers the similarity of values among co-workers; and, supervisor fit refers to the compatibility between factors such as personality and leadership style. Consequently, it is not clear how the combined dimensions of employee fit (i.e., organization, job, group, and supervisor) will lead to employee engagement. If, for instance, employees perceive fit with their job, group, and supervisor, but not their organization, then how do these interactions combine to facilitate high levels engagement?

Generation theory suggests that attributes of one fit dimension may be more valued by members of one age group than another age group. A generation is defined by an intricate combination of birth age and shared experiences of historical, political, and cultural events (Mannheim, 1952). In accordance with generation theory, different generations have different needs, preferences, and values (Costanza, Badger, Fraser, Severt, & Gade, 2012; Lyons &
Thus, high levels of engagement may be the function of the compatibility between generational differences and different fit dimensions.

A generational cohort represents the boundaries around an age group to delineate homogeneous characteristics, which include value systems that distinguish individuals who grew up at a different times (Twenge, Campbell, Hoffman, & Lance, 2010). Generational differences in work values offer an under-explored area in the engagement literature despite the recent importance business leaders have placed on this topic. Gallup (2017, p. 8) recently warned:

“The one thing leaders cannot do is nothing. They cannot wait for trends to pass them by, and they cannot wait for millennials to get older and start behaving like baby boomers. That won’t happen. This workplace isn’t going to acclimate to the status quo.”

Millennials (born between 1982-2000) are now the largest group of employees in the U.S. workforce (Deloitte, 2016a) making up 38% (Rigoni & Nelson, 2016). With a population of 83 million, millennials are also the largest living U.S. generation followed by the baby boomers (born between 1946-1964) with 75 million, and generation X (born between 1965-1981) with 66 million (U.S. Census, 2015). Although millennials have much to offer organizations, such as their technological savvy, many do not expect to stay with their current employer.

Gallup claims that millennial turnover intentions are high because 71% are not engaged in their work (Rigoni & Nelson, 2016). Low levels of engagement have been associated with high turnover intentions (Mackay, Allen, & Landis, 2017; Shuck et al., 2017; Shuck et al., 2011). The relationship between employee engagement and generational differences, however, is an under-explored topic.

The generational differences literature shows that millennials are more likely to leave their employer than previous generations (Becton, Walker, & Jones-Farmer, 2014; Lyons, Schweitzer, & Ng, 2015; Lyons, Schweitzer, Ng, & Kuron, 2012). According to industry studies,
the turnover rates of millennials are more than double those of previous generations (Mercer, 2014). Deloitte’s (2016a) survey of 7,700 employed individuals born after 1982 showed that two in three millennials expect to leave their employer by 2020. Gallup (2016c) reports in its recent report, *How Millennials Want to Work and Live*, that 50% plan to leave their company one year from now.

High levels of millennial job turnover have organizations concerned on two major fronts. First, the associated financial impact attributed to employee turnover is estimated to cost the U.S. economy $30 billion annually (Gallup, 2016b). Research shows the cost of turnover is as high as 50%-60% of a frontline employee’s annual salary (SHRM, 2008), and this percentage only reflects the direct replacement cost of an employee’s turnover.

Second, millennial job turnover has implications for replacing retiring workers. Ten thousand baby boomers attain age 65 every day, and this rate of aging will continue until 2030 (Taylor, 2014). The replacement of retiring employees with a younger generation that is prone to job turnover has become a growing concern and even a crisis for some industries, such as healthcare (Dave, Dotson, Cazier, Chawla, & Badgett, 2011; Dychtwald, Erickson, & Morison, 2006; Von Bonsdorff, 2011). In effect, we have an aging population that is leaving the workforce; and the younger replacements, who appear to have one foot out the door, do not have the same sense of organizational loyalty. While age diversity has always been present in the U.S. labor force, it has become more prevalent (Standifer, Lester, Schultz, & Windsor, 2013).

This demographic shift is symptomatic of a heterogeneous workforce whose generational members have significantly different life and work values (Lyons & Kuron, 2013; Lyons et al., 2015; Twenge et al., 2010). For instance, research shows that baby boomers have a stronger work ethic, and tend to make work more of a central focus in their life compared to younger
employees (Twenge, 2010). In contrast, millennials value leisure and extrinsic work rewards more than older generations (Twenge et al., 2010). These generational differences are placing new demands on organizations and their initiative to develop a highly-engaged workforce.

Research that examines the impact of generational differences on models of employee engagement is an under-developed area. Moreover, the existing work values literature on generational differences suggests that a one-size-fits-all approach toward developing employee engagement may do little to reduce turnover intentions or increase positive job attitudes across an age-diverse workforce (Costanza et al., 2012; Smola & Sutton, 2002; Twenge, 2010). This dissertation study aims to understand how the impact of generational differences in a diverse workforce affects engagement. In sum, the following research questions shown in Table 1.1 were developed as a guide for this study.

### Table 1.1: Summary of research questions

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<td>What is the relationship between employee fit and employee engagement?</td>
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<td>RQ2:</td>
<td>How does employee engagement and employee fit relate to employee attitudes (i.e., job satisfaction and organizational commitment)?</td>
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<td>RQ3:</td>
<td>Are there differences between generational cohorts?</td>
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<td>RQ4:</td>
<td>Does the relationship between employee fit and engagement vary by generational cohort?</td>
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#### 1.2 Purposes of the Dissertation

The overall purpose of this dissertation is to develop and test an expanded model of employee engagement, as shown in Figure 1. This model identifies factors thought to facilitate employee engagement and lead to positive work attitudes (e.g., organizational commitment and job satisfaction). Specifically, this paper has four purposes. First, a review of the existing research on employee engagement will be presented to establish a basis for extending the
antecedents to employee engagement. Second, I will explore the antecedent role of employee fit to employee engagement. Third, I will examine the mediating mechanism engagement has on the relationship between employee fit and work attitudes. Fourth, I will investigate whether the relationship between employee fit and employee engagement is moderated by generational differences.

I will test this model, as shown in Figure 1, by conducting a cross-sectional field study. The results of this study will inform our understanding of employee engagement in several ways. First, I will examine the role of employee fit as an antecedent of engagement. Employee fit has rarely been studied as a predictor of engagement. Second, I will evaluate engagement as a mediator of the relationship between employee fit and the employee’s satisfaction with their job and commitment to the organization. I will also evaluate the role that generational differences have in engagement. Specifically, I will examine generational differences as a potential moderator of the relationship between employee fit and employee engagement.

The results of this dissertation will complement existing models of the antecedents to employee engagement by investigating the relationship between employee fit and employee engagement. This dissertation will also provide empirical evidence for the role generational
differences play in impacting employee engagement levels. The results obtained from this study will offer new insight for organizations seeking to increase employee engagement, reduce turnover intentions, increase employee commitment to the organization, and improve job satisfaction.

Finally, this study is intended to benefit stakeholders concerned with developing high levels of employee engagement across an age-diverse workforce. By considering the relationship between employee fit on employee engagement, this study highlights how generational differences impact aspects of employees’ working lives. Such findings could be used to design interventions tailored to address millennial engagement and retention. Additionally, this study adds to the growing body of knowledge on the factors leading to engaged employees.

1.3 Organization of Dissertation

This chapter introduced the statement of problem, research questions, purposes of the dissertation, and the theoretical model. The next chapter reviews the literature relevant to the relationships illustrated in the theoretical model shown in Figure 1, and develops hypotheses guided by the research questions summarized in Table 1. The third chapter describes the study’s design, research strategy, data collection, and approaches to statistical analysis and methods. In chapter 4, the hypotheses are tested and the results are analyzed. The final chapter provides a discussion of the results, practical implications, and direction for future research.
CHAPTER 2

A MEDIATED AND MODERATED MODEL OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

2.1 Introduction

This chapter introduces the concept of employee engagement by reviewing the relevant literature, presents an argument for the proposed theoretical model (see Figure 1.1), and develops hypotheses to test the model. As such, this chapter is divided in two parts. The first part of this chapter introduces the concept of employee engagement by placing it in the current literature. As such, I offer a discussion on (a) how employee engagement has been conceptualized, (b) the various approaches researchers take in examining employee engagement, and (c) the major theoretical frameworks engagement scholars have drawn on. The second part of the chapter develops the relationships between the research variables (see Figure 1.1), and offers hypotheses to test these relationships.

2.2 Previous Research on Employee Engagement

The importance of engagement has gained traction. Having a workforce with high levels of engagement have been linked to positive employee attitudes (Byrne et al., 2016; Jiang et al., 2015), improved performance (Alfes, Truss, Soane, & Gatenby, 2013; Mackay et al., 2017), and greater profitability (Barrick et al., 2015; Harter, Schmidt, & Hayes, 2002). In contrast, meta-analytic research (Harter et al., 2006) finds that low levels of engagement are associated with more turnover (30%), less customer loyalty (12%), more safety incidents (61%), more shrinkage (51%), less productivity (18%), and less profitability (12%).

Both positive and negative outcomes have been a source of interest and concern for business leaders. In Deloitte’s (2016b) annual Global Human Capital Trends report, a survey of more than 7,000 executives, 85% of the respondents ranked engagement as an important
initiative. In another survey of HR professionals, Canadian consulting firm Psychometrics (2011, p. 4) showed that 82% of the 368 respondents indicated that it was “very important that their organizations address employee engagement.” Similarly, in a survey of 568 executives, a Harvard Business Review (HBR, 2013) study found that 71% of the respondents ranked employee engagement as being very important to achieving organizational success.

The management consultant industry’s presence in the engagement literature is enormous. Many major management consultant firms have an employee engagement practice (e.g., Mercer, Aon, Deloitte, HayGroup), and much of their literature is readily accessible on the internet. A recent search of the keywords “employee engagement” on Google.com returned 10.4 million hits. Many of the top hits were of consultant articles, studies, and reports.

By comparison, academic research on employee engagement “has lagged somewhat behind” (Shuck, 2011, p. 305). However, recent interest among scholars has surged. A 2008 search of keywords “employee engagement” in the academic database, PsychInfo, yielded only 61 scientific articles (Bakker & Schaufeli, 2008). By comparison, from 2009 to present, an identical search of the PsychInfo database produced 1,116 scientific articles. Of those 1,116 articles, 868 were produced in the past three years.

While the body of knowledge on employee engagement has rapidly grown, a clear consensus on its conceptualization has yet to emerge. In the following section, I review the prominent conceptualizations of employee engagement.

2.3 Conceptualizations of Employee Engagement

The literature often conceptualizes employee engagement in one four ways. Employee engagement has been described as a state-like construct capable of being extended and shaped. According to this perspective, engagement is a malleable individual attitude (Robbins & Judge,
2012) that varies in intensity and duration; frequently depicted along a continuum, fully engaged employees are represented at one end and fully disengaged are at the other (Aon, 2016; Gallup, 2017; PwC, 2015). Others view engagement from a stable trait-perspective (Cole, Walter, Bedeian, & Boyle, 2012; Macey & Schneider, 2008), while still others consider engagement as an observable behavior (James, McKechnie, & Swanberg, 2011; Macey & Schneider, 2008). For others, such as Kahn (1990), a person’s level of engagement is a function of antecedent conditions.

2.3.1 Engagement as a set of conditions

Gallup (Harter et al., 2002) similarly views engagement as a set of antecedent conditions. With more than 30 million employees having taken Gallup’s proprietary engagement survey, the Q12®, over the past two decades (Gallup, 2016a) engagement is often associated with Gallup’s conceptualization. Gallup defines employee engagement as the “individual’s involvement and satisfaction with as well as enthusiasm for work” (Harter et al., 2002, p. 269). While this definition represents a state-based approach, the actual Q12® questions do not assess engagement but rather a set of conditions that lead to engagement (Byrne et al., 2016; Whittington et al., 2017).

2.3.2 Engagement as an outcome

As an outcome, engagement has been defined as both an attitude and an observable behavior (Macey & Schneider, 2008; Shuck, Ghosh, Zigarmi, & Nimon, 2013). As an attitude, the Corporate Executive Board Inc. (CEB, 2009, p. 3) defines employee engagement in terms of an employee’s commitment: “Employee engagement is the extent to which employees commit to something or someone in their organization and how hard they work and how long they stay as a
result of that commitment.” Deloitte (2016c, p. 12) claims that satisfaction is a “traditional engagement construct.”

As a behavioral outcome, Dvir, Eden, Avolio, and Shamir (2002) define engagement in terms of a person’s activity, responsibility, and initiative. Additionally, Macy and Schneider (2008) define engagement as a set of behaviors that include various types of positive behaviors including organizational citizenship behaviors (extra-role behavior), innovative behaviors, proactivity, and extra effort. As extra-role behaviors, behavioral engagement represent actions that enhance the environment critical for task performance (Organ, 1997), such as going beyond one’s assigned duties. The idea that individuals who put forth extra effort or discretionary effort also represents behavior engagement (Macey & Schneider, 2008; Towers Watson, 2014).

2.3.3 Engagement as a trait

The trait perspective conceptualizes engagement as a relatively stable individual difference (Macey & Schneider, 2008). Macey and Schneider (2008) propose that proactive personality traits, such as conscientiousness, one of five foundational personality traits (Hogan & Ones, 1997), represents trait engagement. Individuals high in the conscientiousness trait are described as organized, prompt, and meticulous (Larsen & Buss, 2008). Viewed through the trait-engagement lens, conscientiousness positively correlates with employee performance (Macey & Schneider, 2008). Additionally, positive and negative trait affect, referring to an individual’s positive or negative stable disposition (Judge & Ilies, 2004), are thought to be associated with the trait engagement approach (Cole et al., 2012).

2.3.4 Engagement as a state

In contrast to the trait approach, others argue that engagement is a state (Kahn, 1990; Rich, Lepine, & Crawford, 2010; Shuck et al., 2017). Kahn (1990, p. 692-3) conceptualizes
engagement as “momentary ebbs and flows” in which individuals are continuously “bringing in and leaving out various depths of their selves during the course of their work days.” This view conceives of engagement as a function of a person’s choice to allocate their personal resources (i.e., cognitive, emotional, physical energy) toward their work (Saks & Gruman, 2014). The state perspective of engagement, consequently, is frequently framed as a motivational construct (Rich et al., 2010), and measured in terms of the intensity of the energy one directs proportionately to their personal resources (Rich et al., 2010; Shuck et al., 2017).

For this study, employee engagement is conceived as a “state” and is rooted in Kahn’s (1990) definition of personal engagement. Kahn (1990, p. 694) defines “personal engagement as the harnessing of organization members’ selves to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performance.” For Kahn (1990, p. 700), an individual’s “self and work role exist in some dynamic, negotiable relation in which a person both drives personal energies into role behaviors (self-employment) and displays the self within the role (self-expression).” Recent measures of engagement reflect the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral components identified by Kahn (May, Gilson, & Harter, 2004; Rich et al., 2010; Shuck et al., 2017).

2.4 Theoretical Frameworks

Underpinning the above conceptualizations (summarized in Table 2.1), scholars have drawn from social exchange theory (Alfes et al., 2013; Saks, 2006; Shantz, Alfes, Truss, & Soane, 2013; Shuck, Twyford, Rilo, & Shuck, 2014), the jobs-demands-resources framework (Conway, Fu, Monks, Alfes, & Bailey, 2015; Dollard & Bakker, 2010; Mackay et al., 2017), and Kahn’s (1990) engagement theory (May et al., 2004; Saks & Gruman, 2014; Shuck et al., 2011) to explain relationships between various factors and engagement.
Social exchange theory suggests that individuals will engage themselves in varying degrees in response, and out of reciprocity, to the resources they receive from their job and organization (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). In other words, employees repay their organizations—a form of quid pro quo—with their engagement for the resources they receive. Kahn (1990, p. 694) views engagement as the “harnessing of organizational members’ selves to their work roles.” Social exchange theory holds that “this type of harnessing of the self is a function of the way that the employee is treated in the organization” (James et al., 2011, p. 177).

The jobs demands-resources (JD-R) model argues that job resources (e.g., intrinsic and extrinsic) stimulate work motivation which then leads to high levels of engagement, whereas job demands (e.g., work pressure and emotional demands) lead to low levels of engagement (Conway et al., 2015; Saks & Gruman, 2014). Hence, the more resources one has, the more engaged they will be. Meta-analytic research tested the JD-R model and found that job resources, defined as the aspects of the job that help achieve functional work goals, lead to engagement (Crawford, Lepine, and Rich (2010). Crawford et al. (2010, p. 844) claim that the JD-R’s “greatest use is to broadly categorize working conditions as either resources or demands in predicting engagement.”
Table 2.1: Summary of major conceptions of engagement and theoretical frameworks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conceptualization</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Theory</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Contributor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Antecedent</td>
<td>Presence of factors or set of conditions. Example: Development opportunities</td>
<td>Social exchange theory</td>
<td>In response, and out of reciprocity, to resources received</td>
<td>Blau (1964)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome</td>
<td>Positive behavior and attitudes. Example: Task performance; job satisfaction</td>
<td>Jobs demands-resources model</td>
<td>Job resources out weigh job demands</td>
<td>Demerouti et al. (2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trait</td>
<td>Personality and disposition traits. Example: Conscientiousness trait</td>
<td>Kahn's engagement theory</td>
<td>Function of meeting three psychological conditions</td>
<td>Kahn (1990)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>Application of cognitive, emotional, and physical energies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Kahn’s (1990) engagement theory posits that a person’s level of engagement is a function of three psychological conditions: meaningfulness, safety, and availability. Psychological meaningfulness refers to the extent to which people derive meaning from their work.

Psychological safety concerns an ability “to show and employ one’s self without fear of negative consequences to self-image, status, or career” (Kahn, 1990, p. 708). Psychological availability is defined as “the sense of having the physical, emotional, or psychological resources to personally engage at a particular moment” (Kahn, 1990, p. 714). When individuals appraise their work as meaningful, safe, and perceive they have appropriate resources to complete their work, they are more likely to be engaged (Shuck et al., 2011).

2.5 Antecedents of Employee Engagement

This section examines the macro- and micro-level factors that lead to engagement. I draw on Whittington and Galpin’s (2010) engagement framework to separately discuss the macro- and micro-level factors that facilitate engagement. The macro- and micro-level factors are thought to
have a hierarchical relationship in developing value for the organization. As such, the macro-level factors are discussed first because they “provide the context in which an engaged workforce can develop” (Whittington & Galpin, 2010, p. 17).

### 2.5.1 Macro-level antecedents to engagement

In the human resources domain, macro-level engagement factors are often associated with organizational policies and practices designed to “create work environments that provide a sense of challenge and meaningfulness for employees” (Whittington & Galpin, 2010, p. 15). Referring to Pfeffer’s (1998) writing on the characteristics necessary for building new organizations, Whittington and Galpin (2010) suggest that some of Pfeffer’s practices are macro-level engagement factors. These macro factors include methods relating to hiring practices, decentralized decision-making, employment security, self-managed teams, comparatively high compensation contingent upon organizational performance, reduced status distinctions and barriers, and extensive sharing of financial and performance information throughout the organization (Pfeffer, 1998). In a recent series of field studies, Whittington et al. (2017) found that the human resource value chain was positively related to engagement.

### 2.5.2 Micro-level antecedents to engagement

While macro-level practices serve as the foundational support for developing employee engagement, micro-level practices represent the pillars that sustain high levels of engagement (Whittington & Galpin, 2010). As such, scholars who have used Kahn’s (1990) definition of engagement have focused their attention toward identifying the micro-level factors that predict employee engagement (May et al., 2004; Rich et al., 2010; Saks, 2006). For example, field study research has provided positive support for the following micro-level antecedents to engagement: job enrichment, work role fit, co-worker norms, outside activities, psychological meaningfulness,
psychological safety (May et al., 2004), job characteristics, organizational support, procedural justice (Saks, 2006), value congruence, core self-evaluation (Rich et al., 2010), commitment, fit (Wollard & Shuck, 2011), task variety, autonomy, task significance, feedback (Shantz et al., 2013), and supervisor support (Byrne et al., 2016).

In sum, the empirical engagement literature has identified many macro- and micro-level antecedents to employee engagement, as represented in Table 2.2 and Table 2.3, respectively. Yet, two-thirds of U.S. employees are currently not actively engaged in their work (Gallup, 2017). This raises the question: How does employee “fit” (or the lack of) relate to levels of engagement? One should recall Bersin’s (2015, p. 151) claim that “the first and perhaps most important part of employee engagement is job-person fit.” However, empirical studies substantiating this claim are scarce.

Studies that have examined the relationship between employee fit and employee engagement are rare (Foster, 2013). Hence, employee fit represents an under-explored and promising antecedent to engagement. The following section examines employee fit and its relationship with employee engagement.
Table 2.2: Summary of macro-level factors that lead to engagement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>Macro-level factors</th>
<th>Engagement (Dimensions)</th>
<th>Effect</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Shuck, Reio, and Rocco</td>
<td>Positive climate</td>
<td>Employee engagement (Meaningfulness, safety, and availability)</td>
<td>(r = 0.78^{***})</td>
<td>283</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Alfes, Truss, Soane, and Gatenby</td>
<td>Perceived HRM practices</td>
<td>Employee engagement (Intellectual, social, and affective)</td>
<td>(\beta = 0.31^{***})</td>
<td>1,796</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Caligiuri, Mencin, and Jiang</td>
<td>Corporate volunteerism - meaningfulness</td>
<td>Employee engagement</td>
<td>(\beta = 0.26^*)</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Corporate volunteerism - resources</td>
<td></td>
<td>(\beta = 0.25^*)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>Jiang et al.</td>
<td>Anti-sexual harassment practices</td>
<td>Work engagement (Vigor, dedication, and absorption)</td>
<td>(\beta = 0.31^{***}(♀))</td>
<td>6,287</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(\beta = 0.28^{***}(♂))</td>
<td>6,894</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>Bal and De Lange</td>
<td>Flexible HRM</td>
<td>Work engagement (Vigor, dedication, and absorption)</td>
<td>(\beta = 0.19^{***})</td>
<td>2,210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1,139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>Conway, Fu, Monks, Alfes, and Bailey</td>
<td>Performance Management</td>
<td>Work engagement (Vigor, dedication, and absorption)</td>
<td>(\beta = -0.10^{***})</td>
<td>2,348</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>Barrick, Thurgood, Smith, and Courtright</td>
<td>Motivating work design</td>
<td>Collective Organizational Engagement (Cognitive, emotional, and physical)</td>
<td>(\beta = 0.30^{**})</td>
<td>903</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>CEO transformational leadership</td>
<td></td>
<td>(\beta = 0.30^{**})</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>HRM practices</td>
<td></td>
<td>(\beta = 0.40^{**})</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>Vogel, Rodell, and Lynch</td>
<td>Organization values</td>
<td>Work engagement (Vigor, dedication, and absorption)</td>
<td>(r = 0.39^*)</td>
<td>193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>Ekdor, and Harpaz</td>
<td>Learning climate</td>
<td>Work engagement (Vigor, dedication, and absorption)</td>
<td>(r = 0.52^{***})</td>
<td>625</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>Knoll, and Redman</td>
<td>Employer sponsored voice practices</td>
<td>Job engagement (Cognitive, behavioral, and emotional)</td>
<td>(r = 0.28^{**})</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>Glavas</td>
<td>CSR</td>
<td>Job engagement</td>
<td>(\beta = 0.84^{***})</td>
<td>11,129</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* \(p < .05\). ** \(p < .01\). *** \(p < .001\). \(\beta\) = standardized beta coefficient. \(B\) = unstandardized beta coefficient. \(r\) = correlation coefficient. \(N\) = sample size.

1 Employee engagement (Meaningfulness, safety, and availability): Modified scale from May et al. (2004) (Shuck, Reio, & Rocco, 2011)
2 Employee engagement (Intellectual, social, and affective): Intellectual Engagement Scale (ISA; Soane, Truss, Alfes, Shantz, Rees, & Gatenby, 2012)
3 Employee engagement: 1 item "I feel energized by my work at COMPANY NAME" (Caligiuri, Mencin, & Jiang, 2006)
4 Work engagement (Vigor, dedication, and absorption): Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES; Schaufeli, Salanova, Gonzalez-Roma, & Bakker, 2002)
5 Collective Organizational Engagement (Cognitive, emotional, and physical): Modified Job Engagement Scale (JES; Rich, Lepine, & Crawford, 2010)
7 Job engagement: Employee attitudes survey (Block, Glavas, Manor, & Erskine, in press)
Table 2.3: Summary of micro-level factors that lead to engagement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>Micro-level factors</th>
<th>Engagement (Dimensions)</th>
<th>Effect</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>May, Gilson, and Harter</td>
<td>Job enrichment</td>
<td>Employee engagement (Cognitive, behavioral, and emotional) (^1)</td>
<td>β = .31*</td>
<td>218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Work role fit</td>
<td>β = .47*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Co-worker norms</td>
<td>β = -.17*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Outside activities</td>
<td>β = -.10*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Psychological meaningfulness</td>
<td>β = .73*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Psychological safety</td>
<td>β = .17*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Saks</td>
<td>Job characteristics</td>
<td>Job engagement (^2)</td>
<td>β = .37***</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Perceived organizational support</td>
<td>β = .36**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Procedural justice</td>
<td>Organization engagement (^3)</td>
<td>β = .18**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Perceived organizational support</td>
<td>β = .37***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Rich, Lepine, and Crawford</td>
<td>Value congruence</td>
<td>Job engagement: (Cognitive, behavioral, and emotional) (^4)</td>
<td>β = .35*</td>
<td>245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Perceived organizational support</td>
<td>β = .37*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Core self-evaluation</td>
<td>β = .36*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Shuck, Reio, and Rocco</td>
<td>Affective commitment</td>
<td>Employee engagement (Meaningfulness, safety, and availability) (^5)</td>
<td>r = .71**</td>
<td>283</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Job fit</td>
<td></td>
<td>r = .66**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Alfes, Truss, Soane, and Gatenby</td>
<td>Perceptions of manager</td>
<td>Employee engagement (Intellectual, social, and affective) (^6)</td>
<td>β = .26**</td>
<td>1,796</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Shantz, Alfes, Truss, and Soane</td>
<td>Job characteristics: Task variety</td>
<td>Employee engagement (Intellectual, social, and affective) (^6)</td>
<td>β = .26**</td>
<td>283</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Job characteristics: Autonomy</td>
<td>β = .19**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Job characteristics: Task significance</td>
<td>β = .18**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Job characteristics: Feedback</td>
<td>β = .15**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* \( p < .05 \). ** \( p < .01 \). *** \( p < .001 \). β = standardized beta coefficient. B = unstandardized beta coefficient. r = correlation coefficient. N = sample size.

\(^1\) Employee engagement (Cognitive, behavioral, and emotional): Psychological Engagement Scale (PES; May, Gilson, & Harter, 2004)

\(^2\) Job engagement survey (Saks, 2006)

\(^3\) Organization engagement survey (Saks, 2006)

\(^4\) Job engagement (Cognitive, behavioral, and emotional) Job Engagement Scale (JES; Rich, Lepine, & Crawford, 2010)

\(^5\) Employee engagement (Meaningfulness, safety, and availability): Modified scale from May et al. (2004) (Shuck, Reio, & Rocco, 2011)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>Micro-level factors</th>
<th>Engagement (Dimensions)</th>
<th>Effect</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>McClelland, Leach, Clegg, and McGowan</td>
<td>Team control</td>
<td>Team engagement (Vigor, dedication, and absorption)</td>
<td>β = .27**</td>
<td>1,935</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Team interdependence</td>
<td></td>
<td>β = .28**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Team efficacy</td>
<td></td>
<td>β = .30*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>Conway, Fu, Monks, Alles, and Bailey</td>
<td>Performance Management</td>
<td>Work engagement (Vigor, dedication, and absorption)</td>
<td>β = .46***</td>
<td>2,348</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>Matta, Scott, Koopman, and Waldman</td>
<td>Employee-rated LMX</td>
<td>Work engagement (Vigor, dedication, and absorption)</td>
<td>B = .34</td>
<td>280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Supervisor*Employee rated LMX</td>
<td>B = .30*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>Owens, Wallace, and Waldman</td>
<td>Leader humility</td>
<td>Work engagement (Vigor, dedication, and absorption)</td>
<td>r = .33*</td>
<td>876</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Perceived leader effectiveness</td>
<td>r = .36*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>Vogel, Rodell, and Lynch</td>
<td>Job crafting</td>
<td>Work engagement (Vigor, dedication, and absorption)</td>
<td>r = .40*</td>
<td>193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Leisure activity</td>
<td></td>
<td>r = .42*</td>
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<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>Owens, Baker, Sumpter, and Cameron</td>
<td>Relational energy</td>
<td>Work engagement (Vigor, dedication, and absorption)</td>
<td>r = .43***</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>Byrne, Peters, and Weston</td>
<td>Psychological meaningfulness</td>
<td>Work engagement (Vigor, dedication, and absorption)</td>
<td>β = .56**</td>
<td>970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Perceived organization support</td>
<td></td>
<td>β = .31**</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Perceived supervisory support</td>
<td></td>
<td>β = .45**</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Psychological safety</td>
<td></td>
<td>β = .23*</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Perceived stress</td>
<td></td>
<td>β = -.25*</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Psychological availability</td>
<td></td>
<td>Job engagement: (Cognitive, behavioral, and emotional)</td>
<td>β = .62**</td>
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<td>Perceived organization support</td>
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<td>β = .52**</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Perceived supervisory support</td>
<td></td>
<td>β = .39**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Psychological safety</td>
<td></td>
<td>β = .36**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Perceived stress</td>
<td></td>
<td>β = -.49**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Job Resources</td>
<td></td>
<td>β = .30*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < .05. ** p < .01. *** p < .001. β = standardized beta coefficient. B = unstandardized beta coefficient. r = correlation coefficient. N = sample size.

4 Job engagement (Cognitive, behavioral, and emotional) Job Engagement Scale (JES; Rich, Lepine, & Crawford, 2010)
5 Employee engagement (Meaningfulness, safety, and availability): Modified scale from May et al. (2004) (Shuck, Reio, & Rocco, 2011)
6 Employee engagement (Intellectual, social, and affective) Intellectual Engagement Scale (ISA; Soane, Truss, Alles, Shantz, Rees, & Gatenbytt, 2012)
7 Team engagement (Vigor, dedication, and absorption) Modified scale from Schaufeli et al. (2002) (McClelland et al., 2014)
8 Work engagement (Vigor, dedication, and absorption) Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES; Schaufeli, Salanova, Gonzalez-Roma, & Bakker, 2002)
2.6 Employee Fit and Employee Engagement

The notion of employee fit is central to research in the organizational social sciences (Edwards, 2008; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; Kristof, 1996). Its wide appeal is due in large part to the positive outcomes fit produces (Edwards & Shipp, 2012). When fit exists, meta-analytic research suggests that improved employee performance and attitudes are the result (Hoffman & Woehr, 2006; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; Oh et al., 2014). In contrast, there is an inverse relationship with high employee fit and intentions to quit. In a review of employee exit surveys, Branham (2008) found that 35% of U.S. workers quit their jobs after six months due to a lack of fit. Other factors associated with job separation include a lack of fit with the organizational environment (Achievers, 2015), job characteristics (Branham, 2005), and the supervisor (Buckingham & Coffman, 1999; CustomInsights, n.d.; Gallup, 2015) . Given the importance of employee fit to organizations and the lack of research on the fit-engagement relationship (Christian et al., 2011), the following sections aim to bridge the gap between the employee fit and engagement literatures.

2.6.1 Conceptualizations of employee fit

Employee fit, often referred to as person-environment fit (P-E fit), has been conceived as both a theory (Edwards, Caplan, & Harrison, 1998; Kristof-Brown, Seong, Degest, Park, & Hong, 2014) and a construct (Cable & DeRue, 2002; Chuang et al., 2016). As a theory, employee fit “involves a cognitive assessment of match and tends to precede other reactions” (Kristof-Brown et al., 2014, p. 982), such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). Employee fit theory holds that the work environment consist of different hierarchical levels of analysis such as the organization, job, group, and supervisor (Ostroff & Schulte, 2012). “The basic premise of PE fit theory and research is that when characteristics of people and the
work environment are similar, aligned or fit together, positive outcomes for individuals such as satisfaction, adjustment, commitment, performance, reduced stress, and lower turnover intentions result” (Ostroff & Schulte, 2012, p. 3-4).

As a construct, employee fit has been defined as “a state of the compatibility of joint values of one or more attributes, of a focal entity (P), and a commensurate set of attribute values of the entity’s environment (E)” (Harrison, 2012, p. 391). From this view, employee fit exists when the employee and their work environment are congruent with each other. In contrast, misfit exists when the employee and work environment are incongruent (Edwards, 2008). While I draw on P-E fit theory for its explanatory power, I also conceptualize employee fit as a unidimensional construct.

Fit occurs when the employee’s attributes are compatible (match, congruent, commensurate, align) with the content attributes of the work environment. As a multi-dimensional construct, the work environment consists of four prominent dimensions (organization, job, group, supervisor). Fit between the employee and the four dimensions of their work environment is often based the similarity or complementary nature of the fit relationship.

Muchinsky and Monahan (1987, p. 269) refer to fit similarity as the state that exists when the “person fits into some environmental perspective context because he or she supplements, embellishes, or possesses some characteristics which are similar to other individuals in this environment.” Over time, and due to the similarity of employees, this type of fit results in a homogeneous workforce (Ostroff & Schulte, 2012).

In contrast, complementary fit refers to the person’s characteristics that “serve to make whole or complement the characteristics of the environment” (Muchinsky & Monahan, 1987, p. 271). The result of complementary fit is heterogeneity (Ostroff & Schulte, 2012). For instance,
an organization might be in need of a particular skill, possessed by a particular person, to effectively fill a deficiency. This person, then, makes the organization whole (complementary fit).

Clearly, conceptualizing the phenomenon of the employee fit experience—similarity or complementary—within one’s work environment becomes quite complex when considering the various dimensions upon which fit can be operationalized. Each dimension of fit (e.g., organization vs. job) is often considered its own domain (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; Kristof, 1996) because different attributes are associated with the different dimensions of a person’s environment. In terms of the employee fit construct, attributes of the focal entity (employee) include: personality (Lauver & Kristin-Brown, 2001), knowledge, skills, abilities (Bretz, Rynes, & Gerhart, 1993), values (Cable & DeRue, 2002), goals (Kristof-Brown & Stevens, 2001), work style, lifestyle (Chuang et al., 2016), and demographics data. The attributes associated with the focal entity’s work environment include: job characteristics (Kulic, Oldham, & Hackman, 1987), organizational culture (O'Reilly, Chatman, & Caldwell, 1991), organizational goals (Piasentin & Chapman, 2006), organizational values (Cable & DeRue, 2002), group member attributes (Seong & Kristof-Brown, 2012), group goals (Kristof-Brown & Stevens, 2001), work style (Kristof-Brown, Jansen, & Colbert, 2002), and leadership characteristics (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005).

Beginning with the organization dimension, the following sections offer a discussion of each dimension of employee fit.

2.6.2 Organizational fit

The organization dimension of the work environment is one of the more researched components of the employee fit construct, as indicated by reviews and meta-analytic research (Hoffman & Woehr, 2006; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; Kristof, 1996). Schneider’s (1987)
Attraction-Selection-Attrition (ASA) framework, the prevailing theory at the organization level (Kristof-Brown & Jansen, 2012), integrates the concepts of employee fit to explain the process by which individuals are attracted to, selected by, and either leave or remain in the organization. Schneider (1987, p. 441) proposes that the “attraction to an organization, selection by it, and attrition from it yield particular kinds of persons in an organization.”

At its core, the three above processes determine organizational behavior; hence, organizations are “characterized by homogeneity and structures, systems, and processes that reflect the characteristics of the people who make the place” (Kristof-Brown & Jansen, 2012, p. 123). Organization fit, therefore, refers broadly to the “compatibility between people and the organization in which they work” (Kristof, 1996, p. 1). Essentially, compatibility between the person and organization occurs when one of the two provides what the other needs or they share similar characteristics. Piasentin and Chapman (2006) found in their review of 46 studies that most organization fit research examines the similarity between the employee and organization (87%).

From this perspective, organization fit is often used as a selection criterion. And by extension, the significance of this fit dimension has heightened as organizations have increasingly encouraged employees to move between different jobs within the firm. Consequently, hiring for fit with the organization is as important as hiring for ability to do the job (Bowen, Ledford, & Nathan, 1991).

Scholars have shown considerable interest in examining the relationships between the employee and their organization, yet the relationship between employee fit and employee engagement at the organization level has rarely been examined. A review of the literature found only three studies that examined the relationship between employee perceptions of fit at the
organization level and employee engagement. Shuck et al. (2011) examined the relationship between fit and engagement at the organization level using Resick et al.’s (2007) five-item Person-Organization Fit Scale (POFS), which includes content attributes on values and personality. The PFOS was developed by combining three items from Saks and Ashforth’s (1997) organization fit scale, and two items from Cable and Judge’s (1996) organization fit scale.

Rich et al. (2010) similarly examined the relationship between fit and engagement at the organization level but used three items from an organizational commitment questionnaire (OCQ: Caldwell, Chatman, & O'Reilly, 1990), which measured the perceived value congruence between the person and organization. Both studies (Shuck et al., 2011; Rich et al., 2010) found support for the relationship between organization fit and engagement ($\beta = .35, p < .95$, Rich et al., 2010; $r = .66, p < .01$, Shuck et al. 2011).

As part of measuring employee fit as a multi-dimensional construct, Foster (2013) found support for the relationship between organization fit and engagement using four items adapted from Piasentin and Chapman’s (2006) organization fit survey. Foster (2013) found a positive and significant relationship at the $p = .01$ level for the relationship between organization fit and both job and organizational engagement ($\beta = .29; \beta = .68$, respectively). Engagement was measured using Saks’ (2006) six-item organizational and job engagement scales.

2.6.3 Job fit

The job fit dimension of the work environment is closely related to a person’s vocation preference but is “defined more narrowly as the relationship between a person’s characteristics and those of the job or tasks that are performed at work” (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005, p. 284). Job fit, according to meta-analytic research, is the second most researched employee fit
dimension following organizational fit (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; Oh et al., 2014). Although both organization and job fit dimensions have similar correlations, job fit is distinctly different with two key perspectives.

First, job fit occurs when both an employee’s skills match the demands of the job (demands-abilities fit) (Cable & DeRue, 2002). The second perspective holds that job fit occurs when employee needs are commensurate with the rewards they receive (needs-supplies fit) in return for their work (Cable & DeRue, 2002).

From these two perspectives, the theory of work adjustment (TWA; Dawis & Lofquist, 1984) argues that “occupations require employees to have certain abilities, and employees expect occupations to supply “reinforcers” (rewards) that meet certain needs (the pattern of which reflects their work values)” (Su et al., 2016, p. 83). Job fit occurs when one’s abilities are congruent or exceed the demands of the job, or the job meets or exceeds the needs of the employee.

Scholars claim that the demands-abilities perspective is more indicative of job fit than the needs-supplies perspective (Gabriel, Diefendorff, Chandler, Moran, & Greguras, 2014; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). “Abilities-demands fit serves as the logic behind many selection and staffing decisions” (Su et al., 2016, p. 86). On the other hand, the needs-supplies perspective relates more to the employee’s satisfaction with the job attributes.

Similar to organization fit, scholars have shown considerable interest in examining the fit relationships between employees and their jobs. Of the 172 studies used in Kristof-Brown et al.’s (2005) meta-analysis, 62 studies concerned the job dimension. Their research found that fit within the job dimension has strong correlations with employee attitudes (job satisfaction, \( \rho \))
The literature review revealed only one study that examined the relationship between job fit and employee engagement.

Foster (2013) examined fit as a unidimensional construct. However, within the job dimension, and using two items, Foster (2013) found a positive and significant relationship at the \( p = .01 \) level between job fit and both job and organizational engagement (\( \beta = .36; \beta = .43 \), respectively).

In light of the lack of knowledge about the relationship between job fit and engagement, Christian et al., (2011, p. 123) proposed: “Because engagement reflects an employee’s investment of their whole selves into their work, it is likely that demands–abilities fit and needs–supplies fit perceptions are important cognitive precursors to one’s willingness to make that investment.”

2.6.4 Group fit

Group fit refers to the compatibility between employees and their work group (Kristof, 1996). The group dimension of fit is “concerned with how an individual’s personal characteristics interact with those of other team members to predict individual-level outcomes” (Kristof-Brown et al., 2014, p. 969).

Previous research (Chuang et al., 2016; Edwards & Cable, 2009; Greguras & Diefendorff, 2009) has drawn on Byrne’s (1971) similarity-attraction paradigm to explain how common values among co-workers help group members work together. “Conceptually, value congruence is conducive to attraction because agreement on what is important promotes harmony and cooperation among organization members and increases the likelihood that people share goals and agree on tasks and procedures” (Edwards & Cable, 2009, p. 656).
Accordingly, the compatibility of interpersonal characteristics across a range of attributes define the degree of group fit. For the employee, fit attributes often include personality, values, goals and work style (Chuang et al., 2016). Group attributes include values, goals, personality, work style, and lifestyle (Chuang et al., 2016).

In Kristof-Brown et al.’s (2005) meta-analysis of employee fit, 20 studies of group fit were shown to have a positive relationship across various outcomes. For example, Kristof-Brown et al. (2005) found positive and significant correlations between group and job satisfaction ($\rho = .31$), organizational commitment ($\rho = .19$), and intentions to quit ($\rho = -.22$). Few studies, however, have considered the relationship between group fit and employee engagement. During the review of the literature for this study, only one study was located.

Foster’s (2013) field study found support for relationship between group fit and engagement. Using two items to measure the group fit, Foster (2013) found a positive and significant relationship at the $p = .01$ level with only organizational engagement ($\beta = .36$). Foster (2013) did not find a significant relationship between group fit and job engagement.

While McClelland, Leach, Clegg, and Mcgowan (2014) did not examine group fit, they did find support for the relationships between various team-level factors and employee engagement. Using a sample consisting of 242 call center teams, totaling 1,935 team members, McClelland et al. (2014) tested and found positive and significant support for the relationships between team efficacy, team interdependence, team control, and team-level job crafting with employee engagement.
2.6.5 Supervisor fit

“By far the most well-researched area is the match between supervisors and subordinates” (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005, p. 287). Supervisor fit refers to dyadic relationships between employees and their supervisors (Kristof-Brown, et al., 2005).

Related to the supervisor fit is the leader-member exchange (LMX) theory (Dienesch & Liden, 1986; Liden, Wayne, & Stilwell, 1993). The basic premise of LMX theory is that leaders develop different types of exchange relationships with their subordinates as the relationship evolves. In Kristof-Brown et al.’s (2005) meta-analysis, the studies (N = 628) that focused on LMX had a positive correlation with supervisor fit (ρ = .43). Only satisfaction and job satisfaction had higher correlations with supervisor fit (ρ = .46, .43, respectively).

In addition to LMX theory, Chuang et al. (2016) argue that interpersonal attraction theory (Huston & Levinger, 1978) offers explanatory power for the fit relationship between employees and their supervisor. Interpersonal attraction theory suggests that supervisor fit occurs when an “individual is attracted to another individual on the basis of similar characteristics regarding life goals, personality, activity preferences, values, and so on” (Chuang et al., 2016, p. 72). Based on prior research, the fit attributes of the supervisor dimension include values, personality, work style, and lifestyle, and leadership style (Chuang et al., 2016).

Prior research has shown various supervisor factors have positive and significant relationships with engagement, including: supervisor support (Byrne et al., 2016), CEO transformational leadership (Barrick et al., 2015), leader narcissism and humility (Owens, Wallace, & Waldman, 2015), perceived manager behavior (Alfes et al., 2013), and supervisor support and recognition (James et al., 2011). Meta-analytic research on engagement has also reviewed the relationship between leadership and engagement (Christian et al., 2011). However,
few studies have specifically examined the relationship between supervisor fit and engagement. A review of the fit and engagement literature revealed one study.

Foster’s (2013) field study on employee fit found support for the relationship between supervisor fit and engagement. Using two items to measure supervisor fit, Foster (2013) found a positive and significant relationship at the $p < .01$ level with only organizational engagement ($\beta = .44$) but not job engagement.

2.6.6 Employee fit

An employee’s fit with their work environment encompasses more than any one fit dimension. In other words, the collective of each fit dimension offers a broad view of one’s degree of “fit” with their working life. If for instance, employee fit within the job dimension is low, but in the organization dimension fit is high, then the employee may benefit from moving internally to another area. Oh et al. (2014) refers to these dimensions of employee fit (organizational and job) as a rational or impersonal aspects of work. Likewise, if employee fit within the supervisor dimension is high but low in the group dimension, then adjustments to the group may help. Oh et al. (2014) refers to these fit dimensions (group and supervisor) as relational or interpersonal aspects of work.

As summarized in Table 2.4, the multi-dimensional nature of fit offers various levers (both rational and interpersonal) for practitioners to engage a workforce. In accordance to PE fit theory (Ostroff & Schulte, 2012), when employee fit exists, individuals will (a) remain attracted to the organization (Schneider, 1987), (b) have the abilities to do their job, and in exchange for applying their abilities, receive rewards that meet their needs (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984), (c) share similar values among group members (Byrne, 1971), and (d) have a good relationship with their supervisor (Liden, Wayne, & Stilwell, 1993).
In review of the literature, only Foster (2013) has tested and found support for the relationship between fit as a unidimensional construct and employee engagement. Foster measured employee fit by using ten items (4 = organization; 2 = job; 2 = team; 2 = supervisor) adapted from Piasentin and Chapmen’s (2006) measure of global fit perceptions. Measurement of fit across all dimensions centered on the compatibility of the following attributes: values, goals, personality, culture, similarity, skills, and rewards. Foster found strong support for the relationship between employee fit and organization engagement ($\beta = .69, p < .01$), and moderate support for the relationship between employee fit and job engagement ($\beta = .30, p < .01$). Both organization and job engagement were measured using scales from Saks (2006).

Social exchange theory suggests that individuals will engage themselves in varying degrees in response, and out of reciprocity, to the resources they receive from their work environment (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Moreover, the JD-R model holds that job resources at the different dimension of fit (e.g., job, group, supervisor) stimulate work motivation which then leads to high levels of engagement (Crawford, Lepine, and Rich, 2010). When employees experience compatibility across the four fit dimensions, they apply more of their physical, cognitive, and emotional energies toward their work performance (Kahn, 1990).

This gestalt approach to employee fit—the work environment conceived as the sum of its individual components—may offer insight into the motivating nature of employee engagement. That is, employees may be more inclined to bring their entire selves to work when fit is broadly experienced across multiple work environment components rather than a single component (e.g., supervisor fit). Practitioners, however, often emphasize only one component of employee fit. Consider the quote: “People leave managers, not companies” (Buckingham & Coffman, 1999, p. 31). Although the fit between the employee and supervisor is important, this claim gives short
shrift to the other components comprising the work environment. Do employees not also leave companies because (a) their job is not congruent with their skills and needs? (b) group-member attributes and goals are incompatible? (c) or, their values are not compatible with the organization’s culture? With nearly two-thirds of U.S. employees not engaged in their work (Gallup, 2017), organizations would benefit from having a better understanding of the relationship between the gestalt of employee fit, rather than a narrowly focused individual component of the work environment, and the levels of engagement. Therefore, and based on the previously discussed theoretical rationale and the prior studies that have demonstrated positive relationships between the employee fit dimensions and employee engagement (see summary Table 2.4), the following hypothesis is offered:

$$H1: \text{Employee fit has a positive relationship with employee engagement.}$$

**Figure 2.1:** Hypothesized relationship between “fit” and employee engagement

![Figure 2.1: Hypothesized relationship between “fit” and employee engagement](image-url)
Table 2.4: Summary of employee fit and dimensions as antecedents to engagement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work Aspect</th>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>Theory</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Fit Content</th>
<th>Antecedent to Engagement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Impersonal and relational</td>
<td>Employee</td>
<td>Person-environment fit</td>
<td>The characteristics of employees and the work environment fit together, positive outcomes occur (Ostroff &amp; Schulte, 2012)</td>
<td>Aggregate of dimensions</td>
<td>Foster (2013)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impersonal</td>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Attraction-selection-attrition theory (ASA; Schneider, 1987)</td>
<td>Three processes (attraction, selection, and attrition) help explain organizational fit</td>
<td>Values and goals</td>
<td>Foster (2013); Shuck et al. (2011); Rich et al. (2010)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impersonal</td>
<td>Job</td>
<td>Theory of work adjustment (TWA; Dawis &amp; Lofquist, 1994)</td>
<td>Employee’s have abilities needed for the occupation, and expect rewards to meet certain needs in exchange for work</td>
<td>Knowledge, skills, abilities (KSAs), personality, interests, and job characteristics</td>
<td>Foster (2013)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relational</td>
<td>Group</td>
<td>Similarity-attraction paradigm (Byrne, 1971)</td>
<td>Value congruence is conducive to co-worker attraction</td>
<td>Group member attributes (personality, work style, lifestyle), values, and goals</td>
<td>Foster (2013); McClelland et al. (2014)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relational</td>
<td>Supervisor</td>
<td>Leader member exchange (LMX; Dienesch &amp; Liden, 1986); Interpersonal attraction theory (Huston &amp; Levinger, 1978)</td>
<td>Leaders develop different types of exchange relationship with subordinate (LMX); individuals are attracted to each other on the basis of similar characteristics</td>
<td>Values, personality, work style, lifestyle, and leadership style</td>
<td>Alles et al. (2013); Barrick et al. (2015); Byrne et al. (2016); Christian et al. (2011); Foster (2013); James et al. (2011); Owens et al. (2015)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Fit content derived from Chuang et al.’s (2016) review of fit dimensions
2.7 Outcomes of Employee Engagement

High levels of employee engagement are associated with positive work attitudes (Byrne et al., 2016; Saks, 2006; Shuck et al., 2017). Attitudes represent evaluative appraisals, either negative or positive, about a variety of targets, including people, jobs, events, and objects. Pearce (2009, p. 71) broadly defines an attitude as “a feeling, either positive or negative, about something.” The two most widely studied job attitudes are job satisfaction and organizational commitment. The positive relationships among engagement, organizational commitment, and job satisfaction are well established (Robbins & Judge, 2012).

2.7.1 Organization commitment

Organizational commitment is defined as “the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization” (Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979, p. 226). Research shows that commitment is a complex concept consisting of three distinct components: affective, continuance, and normative (Allen & Meyer, 1990). Affective commitment refers to an employee’s emotional attachment to the employing organization, and emphasizes a psychological bond or attachment to the organization. Continuance commitment refers to the economic value, or costs, associated with leaving the organization. This type of commitment is associated with economic factors such as pay and benefits. The third type of commitment, normative commitment, is associated with an employee’s sense of obligation, or loyalty, to stay with the firm (Allen & Meyer, 1990).

As companies look to boost retention rates through increased commitment, many practitioners have turned to improving employee engagement. In fact, the Corporate Executive Board Inc., a practitioner-based advisory firm, defines engagement in terms of commitment: “Employee engagement is the extent to which employees commit to something or someone in
their organization and how hard they work and how long they stay as a result of that commitment” (CEB, 2009, p. 3). Others who consider engagement as a “state” have empirically established a positive and significant relationship between engagement and organization commitment (Byrne et al., 2016; Jiang et al., 2015; Saks, 2006).

For example, in a study based on a survey of 102 employees from various organizations, Saks (2006) found support for a positive relationship between employee engagement and overall organizational commitment ($\beta = .59, p < .001$). In a different study, using data collected from a military survey consisting of 3,282 women participants and 3,460 men, Jiang et al. (2015) found support for the relationship between engagement and affective commitment (females: $\beta = .48, p < .001$; males: $\beta = .50, p < .001$). Additionally, Byrne et al. (2016) found support for the engagement-affective commitment relationship in two separate samples (Sample 1: $\beta = .26, p < .01$; Sample 2: $\beta = .27, p < .01$).

2.7.2 Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction refers to the pleasurable feeling resulting from a person’s positive evaluation across various job-related facets (Spector, 1997). Employees who are satisfied with their job are thought to have better task performance (Judge, Thoresen, Bono, & Patton, 2001; Schleicher, Watt, & Greguras, 2004), and contextual performance (Mackay et al., 2017; Rich et al., 2010). Traditional sources of job satisfaction include pay, promotion, supervision, benefits, contingent rewards, operating procedures, co-workers, nature of work, and communication (Spector, 1985).

Companies focused on increasing retention place importance on increasing job satisfaction. Such heightened attention on both job satisfaction and employee engagement has resulted in some confusion between the two terms. For example, Deloitte (2016c, p. 12), refers to
satisfaction as a “traditional engagement construct” in its research report titled, *Evaluating employee engagement measurement options*. Scholars who conceptualize engagement as a state have established a positive relationship between engagement and job satisfaction (Saks, 2006; Shuck et al., 2016).

In a global survey of more than 7,000 employees, consulting firm BlessingWhite (2013, p. 3) reported that highly engaged employees experience maximum job satisfaction—agreeing with the statement: “I like my work and do it well.” This finding is corroborated by Shuck et al.’s (2016) survey of 1,067 employees in the financial services industry, which showed a positive correlation ($r = .77$) between employee engagement and job satisfaction. Saks (2006) also found support for the engagement-job satisfaction relationship at the organization and job engagement levels ($\beta = .41, p < .001; \beta = .26, p < .01$, respectively).

**2.7.3 Employee engagement and employee attitudes**

The engagement literature on work attitudes is well established. When employees are engaged, they demonstrate higher levels of organizational commitment (Byrne et al., 2016; Jiang et al., 2015; Saks, 2006) and job satisfaction (BlessingWhite, 2013; Saks, 2006; Shuck et al., 2016). According to the JD-R model, when job resources (e.g., autonomy, pay) exceed job demands (e.g., work pressure, emotional demands), then employees experience high levels of engagement. An evaluative appraisal of this positive experience would result in a similarly positive attitude.

Recently, job resources have extended to the concept of personal resources (Saks & Gruman, 2014). Kahn (1990) conceives of engagement as a function of a person’s choice to allocate their personal resources (i.e., cognitive, emotional, physical) toward their work in varying degrees of intensity and duration. High levels of employee engagement result when
individuals are able to apply their personal resources, which would result in a positive evaluative appraisal of the experience. In contrast, the JD-R model holds that negative work attitudes result when high job demands deplete employees’ resources. Similarly, disengagement is thought to result when individuals do not apply their personal resources to their work (Kahn, 1990).

In sum, employees with high levels of engagement often have a positive attitude toward their work and organization. Previous research has shown employee engagement to be positively correlated with organizational commitment and job satisfaction. That is, and in accordance with engagement theory (Kahn, 1990), employees experiencing high levels of engagement are said to bring their entire selves to their work, which then leads to positive attitudes. Therefore, the following hypothesis is offered:

\[ H2: \text{Employee engagement has a positive relationship with employee attitudes (a) organization commitment and (b) job satisfaction.} \]

![Figure 2.2: Hypothesized employee engagement and employee attitudes](image)

2.8 Employee Engagement as a Mediating Mechanism

With only 33% of U.S. employees engaged in their work (Gallup, 2017), employee engagement remains an unresolved shortcoming (“black box”) for many organizations. Similar to previous mediated engagement models (Byrne et al., 2016; Matta et al., 2015; Shuck et al., 2017), this study’s research model (see Figure 1.1) tests the influence employee engagement has
on the relationship between employee fit and employee attitudes. Referred to as a mediating variable, employee engagement has been shown in previous studies to positively influence a causal relationship between other variables of interest and employee attitudes (Byrne et al., 2016; Jiang et al., 2015; Shuck et al., 2017).

Shadish, Cook, and Campbell (2002, p. 509) define a mediator as “a third variable that comes between a cause and effect and that transmits the causal influence from the cause to the effect.” Therefore, a simple mediated model contains two predictor variables (X) and (M) and two consequent variables (M) and (Y), with X causally related to M and Y, and M causally related to Y (Hayes, 2013). In other words, the mediating variable comes between a predictor variable and a dependent variable in a causal chain, such that the predictor variable influences the mediating variable, which in turn influences the dependent variable (Schwab, 2005).

For a variable to function as a mediator, traditional thinking holds that there first must be evidence of association between the predictor variable and dependent variable (Hayes, 2013). Hayes (2013) further recommends offering empirical evidence to substantiate the associations between the three variables before making causal claims. However, he does argue that such evidence is not mandatory: “I strongly believe that one can conduct a mediation analysis even if one cannot unequivocally establish causality given the limitations of one’s data collection and research design (Hayes, 2013, p. 89).

2.8.1 Employee fit and employee engagement

As previously described, employee fit and its dimensions have a positive relationship with employee engagement (Foster, 2013; Rich et al., 2010; Wollard & Shuck, 2011). A positive relationship between organization fit and engagement has been established through two field study research designs (Rich et al., 2010; Shuck et al., 2011). Additionally, Foster (2013)
provided support for the relationship between the unidimensional construct of employee fit and engagement. Although few studies that have examined the relationship between employee fit and engagement, the theoretical underpinnings are well established. For example, the theory of work adjustment (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984) holds that job fit occurs when one’s abilities are congruent or exceed the demands of the job, or the job meets or exceeds the needs of the employee; within the group dimension, the similarity-attraction framework (Byrne, 1971) posits that employee fit exists when group members share common values; and within the supervisor dimension, LMX theorizes that the outcome of a high-quality employee-supervisor relationship is employee fit (Chuang et al., 2016).

### 2.8.2 Employee engagement and employee attitudes

Additionally, the relationship between employee engagement and employee attitudes is well-established. As previously demonstrated, empirical research has shown that highly engaged employees are associated with positive work attitudes (Byrne et al., 2016; Saks, 2006; Shuck et al., 2017). For example, the relationship between employee engagement and organization commitment was recently supported in two separate field studies (Byrne et al., 2016; Jiang et al., 2015). The relationship between employee engagement and job satisfaction was similarly supported through a field study research design (Saks, 2006; Shuck et al., 2017).

### 2.8.3 Employee fit and employee attitudes

Previous research has also established a positive relationship between employee fit and employee attitudes. As a singular, unidimensional construct, Foster (2013) found strong support for the relationship between employee fit and job satisfaction ($\beta = .72, p < .01$), affective commitment ($\beta = .61, p < .01$), and continuance commitment ($\beta = -.28, p < .01$). Meta-analytic studies have similarly established a strong relationship between the individual dimensions of
employee fit and employee attitudes (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; Verquer, Beehr, & Wagner, 2003; Yang, Levine, Smith, Ispas, & Rossi, 2008).

*Organization.* Within the organization dimension, two meta-analytic studies have shown employee fit to be a strong predictor of organization-directed attitudes, such as organizational commitment (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; Verquer et al., 2003). Kristof-Brown et al.’s (2005) meta-analysis involving 172 studies found organizational fit to have the strongest relationship with organizational commitment ($\rho = .51$) as compared to job satisfaction ($\rho = .44$). Verquer et al. (2003) found a similar relationship in their review of 21 studies (organizational commitment, $\rho = .31$; job satisfaction, $\rho = .28$). As Schneider’s (1987) ASA theory would suggest, the higher the congruence of employee and organization content attributes (e.g., values, goals, personality), the greater the attraction. Accordingly, a person’s level of attraction to the organization influences their emotional attachment, and, hence, their commitment to the organization (Allen & Meyer, 1990).

*Job.* The relationship between the job dimension of fit and employee attitudes is also well established. Kristof-Brown et al.’s (2005) meta-analysis found that job fit has a strong relationship with job satisfaction ($\rho = .56$) followed by organizational commitment ($\rho = .47$). Additionally, the needs-supplies component of the job dimension had a stronger relationship with job satisfaction and organizational commitment ($\rho = .61, .37$, respectively) as compared to the demands-abilities perspective ($\rho = .41, .31$, respectively). These results suggest that employees often judge satisfaction in their jobs based on the fit between their personal needs and the rewards they receive for their work, rather than values congruence or having an ability to do the job (Cable & DeRue, 2002). In accordance with TWA (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984), employees
seek to attain a state in which their job environment fulfills their needs. When fulfilled, employees express more positive attitudes at work (Boon & Biron, 2016).

**Group.** While there are fewer studies within the group dimension of fit (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005), meta-analytic evidence suggest that group fit relates to positive work attitudes. Using 20 studies, Kristof-Brown et al.'s (2005) meta-analysis showed a moderate relationship between group fit and job satisfaction ($\rho = .31$) and organizational commitment ($\rho = .19$). Comparatively, Oh et al.'s (2014) meta-analytic research in East Asian fit studies found a significantly greater difference in the relationship between group fit and job satisfaction ($\rho = .54$) and organizational commitment ($\rho = .56$). These findings can be understood through Byrne’s (1971) similarity-attraction hypothesis. Given the collectivist culture of East Asia, Byrne’s (1971) framework suggests that persons from the East Asian culture share more similarities, and therefore, look for validation of similar values and abilities (Oh et al., 2014).

**Supervisor.** Even fewer studies have examined the relationship between supervisor fit and positive employee attitudes (Foster, 2013). Kristof-Brown et al.’s (2005) meta-analysis used 17 studies to find a stronger relationship between supervisor fit and job satisfaction ($\rho = .44$) than organizational commitment ($\rho = .09$). As might be expected, correlations between supervisor fit and supervisor satisfaction and LMX were strong ($\rho = .46, .43$, respectively). Oh et al.’s (2014) cross-cultural meta-analysis research using data from East Asian studies found similar results between supervisor fit ($\rho = .48$), whereas findings for organizational commitment were markedly higher ($\rho = .54$). LMX theory explains that supervisors develop an exchange relationship with the employee, and a high-quality relationship results in positive employee attitudes.
2.8.4 Employee fit, employee engagement, and employee attitudes

Employee engagement frequently serves as a mediating variable (Byrne et al., 2016; Eldor & Vigoda-Gadot, 2016; Owens, Baker, Sumpter, & Cameron, 2016). Recent research (Whittington et al., 2017) has shown that engagement mediates the relationships between various antecedents (e.g., human resource value chain, meaningfulness, performance management) and consequences (e.g., job satisfaction, affective commitment, and organizational citizenship behavior). Others have examined engagement’s mediating influence between relational energy and job performance (Owens et al., 2016), learning climate and knowledge sharing (Eldor & Vigoda-Gadot, 2016), leader-member exchange and organizational citizenship behavior (Matta et al., 2015). Rarely, however, has the mediating mechanism of engagement been examined with perceived fit as the antecedent; only one study was identified. Rich et al. (2010) showed that job engagement mediated the relationship between organization fit and task performance (indirect: \( \beta = .12, p < .05 \)) and organizational citizenship behavior (indirect: \( \beta = .11, p < .05 \)).

For this study, employee engagement serves as the mediating mechanism for the relationship between employee fit and employee attitudes. One assumption of a mediated model is that the independent variable has a causal relationship with both the mediating and dependent variables (Baron & Kenny, 1986). While a causal relationship cannot be determined by cross-sectional design, inference can be drawn to support claims that employee fit leads to engagement and positive outcomes.

Consequently, employees will have more favorable attitudes toward their work environment resulting from the compatibility (fit) they have with their work environment. That is, work-related attitudes are thought to have a positive relationship with an employee’s compatibility with their work environment. When employee fit exists, employees will have
positive feelings toward their job and a stronger emotional attachment to their organization. In contrast, employees’ evaluative perceptions toward their work environment will turn unfavorable as employees experience less fit. In such instances, employees’ organizational commitment and job satisfaction would decrease. Therefore, the following is hypothesized

\( H3: \text{Employee fit has a positive relationship with employee attitudes (a) organization commitment and (b) job satisfaction.} \)

In sum, and in review of the literature, engagement often serves as a mediating mechanism. Prior research has linked individual components of employee fit and employee engagement to positive relationships with employee attitudes. Moreover, high levels of engagement have been shown to positively mediate the relationship between the individual components of employee fit and positive work-related attitudes. Rarely, has the mediating effect of engagement been examined in the relationship between the gestalt of individual work environment components (e.g., employee fit) and employee attitudes. High levels of engagement may improve the relationship between employee fit and work attitudes. In contrast, low levels of engagement may impair the relationship between employee fit and work attitudes. Therefore, the following hypothesis is offered:

\( H4: \text{The effects of employee fit on employee attitudes -- (a) organization commitment and (b) job satisfaction -- are mediated by employee engagement.} \)
2.9 Moderating the Relationship between Employee Fit and Employee Engagement

Strategic human resource management practices have been challenged in response to a large population of young workers entering the workforce while simultaneously managing the different needs of three other generations. With life expectancy pushing 80 years of age, according to a National Institute of Health report on aging (NIH, 2011), it is not uncommon to have members from four generations working for the same organization. There have always been generational differences, but with employees living longer and waiting longer to retire, the generational gaps in the current workplace have increasingly widened.

A generational gap refers to the differences that can be observed among various age groups (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002). These gaps have at times resulted in clashes between different generations. These clashes have recently become more pronounced given the rapid pace the youngest generation has entered the U.S. workforce.

Consider that the youngest generation, referred to as millennials (born 1982-2000), are now the largest living population at 83.1 million (U.S. Census, 2015); and, according to the Pew Research, in 2015, the millennial generation became the largest component of the U.S. workforce at 53.5 million (34%). By 2020, millennials are expected to make up 50% of the global workforce (PwC, 2011). And by 2025, consulting firm Ernest Young predicts millennials will be 75% of the global workforce (Twaronite, 2015).

Prior to the millennials, the baby boomer generation (born 1946-1964), with its population of 76 million, had been the largest component of the U.S. workforce for more than four decades. In 2012, generation X (born 1965-1981), the smallest generation population with 65 million, became the largest group of the U.S. workforce, albeit for only three years. In 2015,
the Pew Research (Fry, 2015) reported that 2% of the workforce consisted of individuals from the traditionalist generation (born 1925-1945).

With four generations comprising the U.S. workforce, noticeable differences in work values have emerged. That is, the work values of one generation are not necessarily going to be compatible with another generation’s. As a result, “when generation gaps open up at work, employees who don’t feel they “fit” decide to leave” (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002, p. 8). As an example, generation consultants Lancaster and Stillman’s (2002) argue that the idea of changing jobs during one’s careers means something different to each generation. For the oldest generation (traditionalists), changing jobs was considered a stigma, whereas for baby boomers changing jobs was seen as a setback to one’s career. For generation X, however, changing jobs became a necessity. Now, for the millennials, changing jobs is simply part of their work routine. Recent research on millennials contends that this new group of workers are more prone to changing jobs than previous generations (Lyons et al., 2015; Lyons et al., 2012).

Industry reports indicate that turnover rates of U.S. millennials are more than double the rates of other generations (Mercer, 2014), and turnover has steadily increased since 2011 (Turnover Rates). But with 10,000 baby boomers attaining age 65 every day until 2030 (Taylor, 2014), and millennials not as loyal to organizations as previous generations, some are expecting a workforce crisis: “We will have too few young workforce entrants to replace the labor, skills, and talent of boomer retirees” (Dychtwald et al., 2006, p. 12).

Consequently, some firms have hired intergenerational consulting services. This type of consultant service represents an emerging industry that firms are increasingly investing in to help with effectively navigating the differences among generations, attract and retain young workers, plan for succession, and ensure work engagement. The Wall Street Journal reports that these are
“boom times” for so-called millennial experts (Gellman, 2016). By some media accounts (CBS, 2016), U.S. firms spent between $60 million to $70 million on intergenerational consulting in 2015. Some companies obviously see its spend on generational consulting as an investment. From that view, understanding the various generations may pay future dividends as their differences may uniquely impact employee fit and engagement initiatives.

The following sections take a closer look at generational differences. First, a discussion of generation theory is offered within the context of the generations represented in the current workforce. Next, the methodological challenges in generational research are considered. Third, the moderating impact that generational differences in work values are examined. Finally, a summary of the section is offered.

2.9.1 Generational theory

The Training Journal claims: “More than ever before, organizations are made up of different generations” (McCartney, 2014). By some accounts, the development of an “age-friendly” organizational culture has become a mandate not just for developing an engaged workforce but also to facilitate an unprecedented transfer of knowledge from older employees to younger employees (Skrzpinski, 2012). However, such collaboration between different generations can result in clashes due to their different needs, preferences, and values (Costanza et al., 2012; Lyons & Kuron, 2013; Parry & Urwin, 2011). Consequently, the changing makeup of the workforce has created a complicated context for the relationship between fit, engagement, and employee outcomes.

Generational research has received much attention in recent years given the increased age diversity in the workplace. The work habits and communication styles between employees from different generations are not always harmonious. Against this backdrop, and due in part to the
small size of generation X, SHRM predicts that young employees will increasingly be put in a position in which they are managing workers who are as old as their parents, or older (Wilkie, 2014).

Generation theory provides useful explanatory insight on the contrasting (and at times clashing) differences between members of different generations. Two key perspective are integral to understanding generation theory.

2.9.1.1 Social forces perspective.

From the social forces perspective, generational theory argues that individuals born around the same time and proximity share a similar value structure because they experienced the same chronological, social, and historical context during their formative years (Mannheim, 1952). These social forces imprint a shared memory among individuals of similar birth age, thereby affecting future work attitudes and values (Schuman & Scott, 1989). This view represents the social forces perspective of generational theory (Mannheim, 1952).

Mannheim argues that the context a generation experiences during its formative years serves as the basis for shaping how a generation experiences life. In an organizational context, generational experiences may shape how different generations value rewards. Older generations, many of which had parents live through the Great Depression of 1929, may place more value on the satisfaction of doing hard work well. In contrast, members of the newest workforce entrants, many of whom carry high student loan debt and were unable to find a job for many years following the Great Recession of 2008, may place more value in monetary rewards. (Twenge et al., 2010). For the various generations, the respective social forces experienced during their formidable years influenced how each approach organizational rewards.
2.9.1.2 Cohort forces perspective.

While the social forces perspective offers explanatory reasoning for generational differences, the cohort perspective provides empirical precision to the generation construct. A generational cohort is an objective demographic represented by a group of individuals born at about the same time and who “experience the same event within the same time interval” (Ryder, 1965, p. 865). How one determines the time interval that demarcates a cohort is anything but an exact science. A twenty-year period, however, is commonly used to represent a generation in empirical research (Howe & Strauss, 1991; Parry & Urwin, 2011; Twenge, 2010). For this study, the time intervals for each cohort were sourced from the U.S. Census Bureau (2015).

The cohort perspective considers the various archetypes associated with the corresponding time period. These archetypes are then synthesized to develop a cohort profile. For example, a cohort is thought to be shaped by the significant icons, major news events, economic conditions, and important inventions during that 20-year period. Some of the icons for baby boomers include Martin Luther King, Jr., Richard Nixon, John F. Kennedy, Beaver Cleaver, Barbara Streisand, the Beatles, and the Rolling Stones. Places and things indicative to the baby boomer cohort include the Watergate Hotel, Woodstock, suburbs, bell-bottoms, and mood rings. The greatest invention was the television; more than 50 million households had a TV by 1960, which helped further develop common experiences for baby boomers. In sum, the baby boomer cohort (born 1946-1964) was shaped by TV, Vietnam, the Watergate scandal, human rights movements, and economic conditions (stagflation and recession). Through these shared experiences, along with growing up among 80 million other baby boomers, this cohort is best described as “optimistic” (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002). After all, this generation saw man
walk on the moon! Lancaster and Stillman (2002) also developed profiles for generation X ("skeptical") and millennials ("realistic"), which have been summarized in Table 2.5.

A significant challenge to generational theory is the age-period-cohort confound. At issue, any purported generational difference might be reasonably explained by rival hypotheses. The following section offers a discussion on this methodological challenge.

Table 2.5: Summary of generational cohorts (baby boomers, GenX, and millennials)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Living pop. (2015)</td>
<td>74.9 m</td>
<td>66 m</td>
<td>75.4 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workforce (2015)</td>
<td>44.6 m</td>
<td>52.7 m</td>
<td>53.5 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defining invention</td>
<td>Television</td>
<td>Internet</td>
<td>Social media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defining word</td>
<td>Optimistic</td>
<td>Skepticism</td>
<td>Realistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defining icons of the generation</td>
<td>Martin Luther King, Jr., Richard Nixon, John F. Kennedy, Beaver Cleaver, Janis Joplin, the Beatles, and the Rolling Stones.</td>
<td>Madonna, Michael Jordan, Bill Clinton, O. J. Simpson, Bill Gates, Quentin Tarantino, Monica Lewinski, the Brat Pack</td>
<td>Chelsea Clinton, Leonardo DiCaprio, Prince William, Venus and Serena Williams, Mark Zuckerberg, Justin Bieber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defining things/places</td>
<td>Watergate Hotel, Woodstock, suburbs, bell-bottoms, and mood rings.</td>
<td>Former Soviet Union, International Space Station, Iraq, cable TV, microwaves, cell phone</td>
<td>War on terror (9/11), Iraq, Afganistan, video games, high speed internet, wireless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defining events</td>
<td>TV, Vietnam, the Watergate scandal, Space program, human rights movements, economic conditions (stagflation and recession), Woodstock</td>
<td>Divorce rate triples, single-parent households, company downsizing, merger/acquisitions, outsourcing, automation, AIDS, increased violence in the news</td>
<td>Increased diversity, School shootings (Columbine, Virginia Tech), war on terror (Desert Storm), Oklahoma City bombing. Great Recession, Environmental issues</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Pew Research (2016)  
3 Lancaster & Stillman (2002)
**2.9.1.3 Methodological challenges**

Inherent to cross-sectional generational research is what Kowske, Rasch, and Wiley (2010, p. 268) refer to as the “identification problem.” Generational research is often subject to a confounding problem due to an inability to isolate the effects of age, time period, and cohort. Consequently, a generational difference might be plausibly explained by either age-related effects (e.g. life-stage), conditions of the period in which the data was gathered (e.g., event or condition), or cohort (e.g. formative context).

Age effects refer to the changing views, attitudes, and behaviors of individuals caused by psychological or biological aging (Parry & Urwin, 2011). For example, younger adults’ work-related attitudes would over time begin to resemble the attitudes of older adults. As such, generational differences ascribed to young people may actually be an age effect. This confounding problem is a limitation of cross-sectional studies.

Period effects refer to the age-related impact the environment has on individuals’ values, behaviors, and attitudes. For example, the Great Recession of 2008 was a period of considerable economic loss for many individuals. However, were individuals’ attitudes toward their loss due to historical or generational effects? Similar to the age-generation effect confound, period effects are equally a challenge to disentangle from the cohort-effect.

Cohort effects refer to the result of experiences shared by individuals during their formidable years. “If differences in work-related attitudes were due to cohort effects, one would expect these attitudes and the differences between age cohorts to remain relatively stable” (Parry & Urwin, 2010, p. 88). But as individuals age, human development psychology suggest that attitudes and beliefs will change as well (Newman & Newman, 1984). Longitudinal studies, however, have attempted to address the confounding problem inherent in generational research.
Prior longitudinal research has shown compelling evidence for generational differences (Kowkse et al., 2010; Smola & Sutton, 2002; Twenge et al., 2010). A longitudinal design involves collecting data from individuals of approximately the same age over the course of decades. For example, Twenge et al. (2010) used survey data that was collected from U.S. high school seniors \( (N = 16,507) \) across three separate time periods representing each generation (1976, baby boomers; 1991, generation X; and, 2006, millennials). In effect, longitudinal design isolates generational differences by holding constant age effects.

Generational differences in longitudinal studies are often examined through the lens of work values. The following section examines the significance of work values in generational research.

### 2.9.2 Generational differences in work values

The conditions, forces, and events commonly experienced by a generational cohort are thought to “create common value systems distinguishing them from people who grew up at a different times” (Twenge et al., 2010, p. 1120). Sagie and Elizur (1996) describe a personal value system in terms of four distinct arenas: life, work, optional activities, and religion. From this perspective, Meglino and Ravlin (1998) conceptualize work values—a subset of a person’s life values—along a continuum ranging from the abstract (life values) to the concrete (attitudes). This study adopts Meglino and Ravlin’s view of work values, as shown in Figure 2.4.

**Figure 2.4: Personal values continuum (Meglino & Ravlin, 1998, p. 366)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abstract</th>
<th>Concrete</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Life Values</td>
<td>Work Values</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Work values are manifestations of a person’s life values (Elizur & Sagie, 1999; Lyons, Higgins, & Duxbury, 2010). In accordance with the theory of individual values, Ros, Schwartz, and Surkiss (1999) provide empirical support linking higher order life values to work values. Their research, based on two separate studies ($N = 1,371$), showed that work values are “specific expression of general values in the work setting” (Ros et al., 1999, p. 54). For example, the life values relating to the openness to change (i.e., pursuit of autonomy, growth, interest, creativity) is associated with intrinsic work values; conservation life values (i.e., general security and maintenance of life) are associated with extrinsic work values; and, self-transcendence (i.e., contribution to society, social relations) is associated with social work values. Consequently, longitudinal research has used these work values (extrinsic, intrinsic, and social), in addition to others, to examine generational differences in an organizational context. Additional work values (altruism and leisure) were identified by Elizur and Sagie (1999) as manifestations of life values. Table 2.6 summarizes the associations Ros et al. (1999) made between four life values and work values.

Table 2.6: Human values positive correlation with work values (Source: Ros et al., 1999)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Higher order human values</th>
<th>Work values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Openness to change</td>
<td>Intrinsic work values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservation</td>
<td>Extrinsic work values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-transcendence</td>
<td>Social work values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-enhancement</td>
<td>Prestige-related work values</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Twenge’s (2010) review of longitudinal studies on generational differences in work values, seven work values were identified: work ethic, work centrality, leisure, altruism, extrinsic, intrinsic, and social values. The three longitudinal studies, all of which used a time-lag design, provide compelling evidence for the existence of differences among the generations. Time-lag studies require samples of individuals of similar age while data collection occurs over

2.9.2.1 Work values defined

Research on generational differences is often based on generational differences in work values (Lyons & Kuron, 2013; Parry & Urwin, 2011; Smola & Sutton, 2002). Operational definitions of work values have been expressed in terms of beliefs (Rokeach, 1973; Sverko & Vizek-Vidovic, 1995), needs (Lofquist & Dawis, 1978; Super, 1973), goals (Locke, 1976; Schwartz, 1999), attitudes (Kalleberg, 1977; Sverko & Vizek-Vidovic, 1995), preferences (Allport, 1961; Pryor, 1982), rewards (Schwartz, 1999; Twenge et al., 2010), and outcomes (Lyons et al., 2010).

Schwartz (1999, p. 43) refers to the rewards people seek through work as “expressions of more general human values in the context of the work setting.” Twenge et al. (2010, p. 1121) define work values “as the outcomes people desire and feel they should attain through work.” From a generational differences perspective, work values and rewards will be used synonymously for this study (Schwartz, 1999; Twenge et al., 2010). Generational differences have been observed in five separate work values: extrinsic, intrinsic, altruistic, social, and leisure. For the present study, work values will constitute rewards attained through
organizational work (Twenge et al., 2010). Based on a review of generational research on work values (Lyons & Kuron, 2013), three of the five work values (extrinsic, intrinsic, and social) are the focus of the majority of studies on generational differences in work values. These work values, in addition to altruistic and leisure work values, are discussed in the following paragraphs.

2.9.2.2 Extrinsic work values

Extrinsic values often refer to pay, benefits, and job security (Lyons, 2004; Ros et al., 1999). As a distinguishing characteristic, “extrinsic rewards like pay have to be given by someone else” (Lawler, 1970, p. 226). Twenge et al.’s (2010) longitudinal research showed a curvilinear pattern with generation X placing the most value on extrinsic rewards (money, status, and prestige) compared to baby boomers ($d = .39$) and millennials ($d = .13$). Millennials were shown to have significantly higher extrinsic values than baby boomers ($d = .26$). Wray-Lake, Syvertsen, Briddell, Osgood, and Flanagan (2011) used the same archival data source as Twenge et al. (2010) but analyzed 30 years of survey data (1976-2005). Their analysis confirmed the curvilinear pattern observed by Twenge et al. (2010). Wray-Lake et al.’s (2011) findings suggest that extrinsic rewards peaked in the mid-1990s.

Economic conditions leading up to the mid-1990s, including the Gulf War and high unemployment for recent college graduates, made extrinsic rewards that much more desirable for young generation X adults. College graduates who entered the workforce in the early to mid-1990s were “expected to face a more competitive job market than that encountered by graduates during the 1980s” (Shelly, 1992, p. 13). According to the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE, 2016), the starting salary of college graduates in 1987 was -6.5% less than the prior year. Starting salaries of graduates continued to decline from 1989 through 1995. The
Atlantic magazine reported: “Falling wages and rising inequality have affected all young Americans, regardless of educational achievement. During the said-to-be economically strong years 1989-1995 earnings for recent college graduates fell by nearly 10 percent—representing the first time that a generation of graduates earned less than the previous one” (Halstead, 1999). High extrinsic rewards for generation X should not be a surprise given the economic conditions experienced during their formidable years, notwithstanding the psycho-social factors such as a divorce rate that tripled during the period 1970-1987. According to the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS, 1990), nearly one-third of generation X was directly impacted by divorcing parents during that period (see Appendix J for divorce data from 1950-1987).

The desire for extrinsic rewards, such as pay, may have wide appeal to millennial college graduates who have experienced mounting student loans. Two-thirds of recent college graduates carry an average of $27,000 of student loan debt, according to Pew Research study (Millennials in adulthood, 2014). Twenty years ago only half of the graduates had student debt, which averaged $15,000. Moreover, the inflation-adjusted average starting salary for college graduates in 2015 has only increased 5.9% since 1960 (NACE, 2016).

In sum, the three generations approach financial rewards from different perspectives. Longitudinal research suggests that generation X prefers financial rewards the most followed by millennials and then baby boomers (Twenge et al., 2010; Wray-Lake et al., 2011). Therefore, the extrinsic work values are thought to impact the relationship between employee fit and engagement in accordance with the generational differences found in prior empirical research.

2.9.2.3 Intrinsic work values

Intrinsic work values refer to the rewards that “are given to a person by himself when he performs well” (Lawler, 1970, p. 227), and are characterized as producing “a positive
psychological state within individuals generally accompanied by feelings of passion, energy, and enthusiasm” (Tymon, Stumpf, & Doh, 2010, p. 111). Intrinsic work rewards relate to the extent to which one finds their work interesting and derives meaning from work.

According to Twenge et al.’s (2010) longitudinal study findings, intrinsic values have steadily declined over generations. This finding suggests that younger workers may not be experiencing as much interest, creativity, and challenge, in their work compared to older generations. Twenge et al.’s (2010) research showed that millennials placed significantly less value on intrinsic rewards compared to generation X ($d = -.16$) and baby boomers ($d = -.20$).

Wray-Lake et al. (2011) found a similar declining pattern of intrinsic work values. Specifically, intrinsic work values remained stable at around 92% throughout the 1970s and 1980. Smola and Sutton’s (2002) longitudinal research also showed no significant difference in intrinsic work values between baby boomers and generation X. However, Wray-Lake et al. (2011) saw a modest but significant dip in the early 2000s, down to 88% at its lowest in 2004.

Consequently, longitudinal research findings suggest a modest declining pattern in intrinsic work values with the largest generation gap observed between baby boomers and millennials (Twenge et al., 2010; Wray-Lake et al., 2011). Therefore, one might expect to observe a modest interaction between generational differences in intrinsic work values and the relationship between employee fit and engagement in the current workforce.

**2.9.2.4 Social work values**

Social work values relate to having contact with people, having good relations with co-workers, being respected at work, and contributing to the workplace (Sagie & Elizur, 1996; Schwartz, 1999). Twenge et al.’s (2010) longitudinal study found that millennials place significantly less value on social rewards than previous generations.
Although there was not a significant difference between generation X and baby boomers, Twenge et al. (2010) indicated that millennial’s interest in developing social interactions at work is less than generation X ($d = -0.18$) and baby boomers ($d = -0.28$). In contrast, Cennamo and Gardner (2008) found no significant difference in social values among the generations in their cross-sectional study using 504 Auckland employees. One explanation for the conflicting result may be due to age effects. That is, Cennamo and Gardner’s (2008) study did not control for age; hence, the need for social interaction may change over time. However, recent qualitative research suggests that differences in social values may be the result of how generations use technology.

Turkle (2015) claims that younger individuals use of technology has impacted how individuals converse. Young individuals are growing up without experiencing an unbroken conversation due in large part to the smartphone. More specifically, Turkle (2015, p. 22) claims that many young people would rather shy away from the “real time” inherent in face-to-face conversation in lieu of texting. In a work context, instant messaging and email enable a conversation-less setting. According to one CEO that Turkle interviewed (2015, p. 266) interviewed: “…people who do not make time for conversation do not learn how to have conversation.” As a result, face-to-face meetings are becoming rarer (Turkle, 2015). From that view, individuals who rely more on digital modes of communication may not place much value on social rewards relative to past generations.

In sum, and in accordance with Twenge et al.’s (2010) findings that social values among generations are declining, one can expect generations in the current workforce to share a similar pattern. Consistent with Turkle (2015), the decline in face-to-face conversations in a work context may be a generational difference. Therefore, one might reasonably expect generational
differences in social rewards to moderate the relationship between employee fit and engagement in the current workforce.

2.9.2.5 Altruistic work values

Altruistic values are characterized by a desire to help others and society through work (Twenge et al., 2010). Altruism is often thought of in terms of social services (Lofquist & Dawis, 1978), and are most associated with the vocation work values literature (Pryor, 1982; Super, 1970). Pryor (1982, p. 44) defines altruism as “a concern for assisting others.”

At the individual level, many organizations have developed social service programs as part of a community outreach initiative. The programs often employ a popular altruistic-oriented practice: employee volunteering. According to the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), in 2015, 62.8 million Americans volunteered 7.9 billion hours of work at an estimated value of $184 billion (2016). Many headlines in the popular press attribute the success of corporate volunteer employee programs to millennials.

There is little longitudinal evidence, however, to suggest that millennials differ in terms of altruistic work values. Twenge et al.’s (2010) showed no difference among the three generation in altruistic work values. That said, the researchers did find a small and significant effect \((d = -.13)\) on one item (“a job that gives you an opportunity to be directly helpful to others”). While small, this effect suggests that millennials are less likely to desire a job that affords an opportunity to help others.

Cross-sectional research has provided conflicting evidence on generational differences on altruistic work values. On one hand, Cennamo and Gardner (2008) found no significant differences among the generations in altruistic work values. On the other hand, Lyons (2004) found support for a declining pattern of altruistic work values across the generations such that
baby boomers had the highest, generation X was in the middle, and millennials had the least. Lyons’ (2004) findings were based on a self-developed work values survey which was taken by 1,191 Canadians.

The popular press has reported that millennials display “a notable urgency to make social change” (Washington Post, Shapira, 2008), and their “commitment to altruism signifies a social change” (Forbes, Hewlett, 2009). However, the longitudinal (Twenge et al., 2010) and cross-sectional research (Cennammo & Gardner, 2008) does not support claims that millennials are more altruistic than other generations. In fact, one cross-sectional study supports the claim that millennials have less altruistic work values (Lyons, 2004). Accordingly, and given the longitudinal evidence available, generational differences in altruistic work values may have little to no impact on the relationship between employee fit and employee engagement.

2.9.2.6 Leisure work values

Leisure work rewards refer “to the opportunity for free time, vacation, and freedom from supervision” (Johnson & Elder, 2002, p. 120). The concept of leisure is a fixture of the protestant work ethic (PWE) literature (Blood, 1969; Miller, Woehr, & Hudspeth, 2002; Wentworth & Chell, 1997); although hard work and leisure are viewed as separate factors, each are often measured together as part of the PWE construct (Blood, 1969; Miller, Woehr & Hudspth, 2002). From a PWE perspective, scholars characterize leisure as a non-protestant work ethic (Blood, 1969), viewed with disdain (Wentworth & Chell, 1997), and admonition (Mirels & Garrett, 1971). The PWE literature helps explain generational differences in leisure work values.

Both longitudinal and cross-sectional research show successive generations placing more value on leisure rewards. Twenge (2010, p. 204) reviewed three longitudinal and two cross-sectional studies and summarized that the literature: “…consistently find that GenX, and
especially GenMe [millennials], express a weaker work ethic, believe that work is less central to
their lives, value leisure, and seek more freedom and work-life balance than their boomer
counterparts.” Twenge et al.’s (2010) longitudinal study showed that millennials place more
value on leisure at work (e.g., more vacation, work-life balance, a job that allows one to work
slowly, and freedom from supervision) relative to both generation X (d = .22) and baby boomers
(d = .57). Other studies have provided similar results.

Smola and Sutton’s (2002, p. 376) longitudinal additionally showed that baby boomers
felt more strongly “that work should be one of the most important parts of a person’s life” (F =
6.09, p < .05). Wray-Lake et al.’s (2011, p. 8) longitudinal study supports this idea by showing
the importance of work for high school seniors has “steadily declined since its peak in 1978
(76%) to its lowest point in 2001 (57%)”.

In sum, differences in leisure work values may result in clashes among the generations.
According to Blood (1969), the pro-protestant and non-protestant ethic can be conceptualized as
a continuum. Older generations who favor the pro-protestant work ethic may believe “that
personal worth or occupational achievement would likely derive some satisfaction even in a
demanding menial position” (Blood, 1969, p. 456). The live to work idiom comes to mind. In
contrast, the work to live approach represents what Blood (1969, p. 456) calls the non-protestant
work ethic, which considers all work “an abomination and is to be undertaken only when all
other strategies fail.” From this view, and based on the leisure work values literature, successive
generations can be placed on this continuum such that older generations are closer to PWE.

Smola and Sutton (2002) explain that the rise of leisure work values among successive
generations may be related to the decline in company loyalty and an association of one’s self-
worth with their job. Additionally, younger generations saw older generations laid off because of
downsizing, outsourcing, mergers, automation, and economic recession. This perceived lack of employer commitment to their employees may also have contributed to the changing leisure work values. As a result, generational differences in leisure rewards are expected to impact the relationship between employee fit and engagement.

2.9.4 Moderating impact of generational differences in work values

The changing composition of the workforce has created a complicated organizational context for the relationship between fit, engagement, and employee outcomes. Generational differences in work values has further exacerbating this complication. Longitudinal research has provided empirical support for generational differences in work values (summarized in Table 2.7). However, whether those differences moderate the relationships between fit, engagement, and various outcomes have received little attention.

Table 2.7: Summary of generational cohorts (baby boomers, generation X, and millennials)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work Values</th>
<th>Research Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(A) Extrinsic</td>
<td>Gen X &gt; Millennials &gt; Baby boomers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(B) Intrinsc</td>
<td>Baby boomers &gt; Gen X &gt; Millennials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(C) Social</td>
<td>Baby boomers &gt; Gen X &gt; Millennials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(D) Altruistic</td>
<td>No difference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(E) Leisure</td>
<td>Millennials &gt; Gen X &gt; Baby Boomers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A moderator is “a qualitative or quantitative variable that affects the direction and/or strength of the relation between an independent or predictor variable and a dependent or criterion variable” (Baron & Kenny, 1986, p. 1174). In other words, moderation occurs when, for
example, the relationship between employee fit and engagement depends on or can be predicted by generational differences. In such an event, generational differences and employee fit are thought to interact in their influence on employee engagement (Hayes, 2013).

The literature on generational differences provide compelling evidence that younger generations (a) want to work less and receive more pay; (b) value more extrinsic and leisure rewards, and (c) desire less social and intrinsic rewards. The empirical research (Twenge et al., 2010, Cennammo & Gardner, 2008), however, does not support popular press claims that millennials are more altruistic.

Drawing on generational theory, individuals born around the same time and proximity are imprinted with many shared memories experienced within the same chronological, social, and historical context during their formative years. The concept of imprinting in the field of human development psychology refers to the critical period during an individual’s life in which a specific capacity is developed. From this view, imprinting at the generational level--through shared experiences during one’s formidable years--influences the development of work values. These shared experiences shape the differences, including work values, between generations. Therefore, the following hypothesis is offered:

**H5: There are significant differences in work values among generations.**

Although the baby boomer generation represents just 29% of the labor force (Fry, 2015), this cohort has the most organizational executives (Korn Ferry, 2017) and represented the largest generation in the labor force for decades until 2012. Consequently, organizational cultures and human resource value chains for many firms have been heavily influenced by baby boomer work values. The boomer’s influence may have also extended to the relationship between employee fit and employee engagement. That is, employee fit is thought to be the function of the
compatibility between a person and the attributes of their work environment. Since baby boomers can be credited with developing the work environment for most organizations, a reasonable inference suggest that such work environments are tailored for the baby boomer cohort to experience a greater positive relationship between employee fit and engagement as compared to the younger generations. Therefore, the following hypothesis is offered:

**H6: The relationship between employee fit and employee engagement is moderated by generational differences such that:**

(a) Baby boomers will experience the greatest positive relationship between employee fit and employee engagement, and,
(b) Generation X and millennial cohorts will decreasingly experience a less positive relationship between employee fit and employee engagement.

**Figure 2.5:** Hypothesized model

![Hypothesized model diagram](image)

**2.10 Summary**

This chapter has reviewed the previous research on employee engagement and its antecedent and outcome effects. A model was developed to examine the effects of a mediated and moderated relationship on employee engagement. The relationships of the model were developed through hypotheses that examine (a) the mediating effects employee engagement has on the relationship between employee fit and employee attitudes, and (b) the moderating impact.
generational differences have on the relationship between employee fit and employee engagement.

Despite the many initiatives that firms have implemented to increase the levels of employee engagement, most employees remain not engaged with many actively disengaged (Gallup, 2017). By considering how employee fit, as a unidimensional construct, relates to employee engagement, the model presented here examines an under explored relationship. The model further considers how generational differences in work values potentially impact the relationship between employee fit and engagement.

The model also extends previous models on employee engagement and employee fit. Few models have examined the antecedent relationship between employee fit, as a unidimensional construct, and employee engagement.
CHAPTER 3

METHOD

3.0 Overview

One hundred and ninety-six employees \((N = 196)\) comprising three subsamples participated in the cross-sectional field study. Research participants completed a 93-item self-report survey, which was used to collect data on five variable measures and respondent demographics. The three samples consisted of employees at a financial services firm \((n = 103)\), business school graduate students \((n = 77)\), and employees at a museum \((n = 16)\). The methods employed in the field study are discussed in the following sections.

3.1 Research Design

This section provides an analysis of the strategy employed in the design of this cross-sectional field study. The research design employed in this study was developed in response to recent consultant claims about employee engagement in organizations. First, Gallup (2013, 2015, 2017) has consistently reported little improvement in employee engagement since 2000, with millennials experiencing lower levels of engagement than older generations (Gallup, 2016). Second, Bersin (2015, p. 151) asserts that the “most important part of employee engagement is job-person fit.” Yet, little empirical research has been done to substantiate Bersin’s claim that employee fit leads to engagement, or Gallup’s finding on generational differences in engagement. The field study research strategy used in this study focuses on examining this engagement problem by investigating how employee fit relates to employee engagement. In addition, the moderating impact generational differences have on the relationship between employee fit and engagement was examined.
McGrath’s (1982) research strategy framework was utilized to determine the optimal research design. McGrath’s (1982) research strategy framework underscores the trade-offs inherent in designing a research strategy that optimally addresses the research problem given certain constraints. The field study strategy was selected because it provides the highest degree of contextual realism. Realism refers to the context in which the study’s participants’ attitudes and behaviors are observed (McGrath, 1982). Since the research problem concerns employees, the field study research strategy was selected because it takes place in the context of the workplace with moderate intrusion. The limitations of the field study, however, are potentially lower generalizability to other settings or employee groups. Field studies also lack the precision and control over the variables of interest that could be obtained in a more controlled laboratory setting. Despite the inherent limitations and tradeoffs, the field study was chosen as the most appropriate design for the research questions I was addressing.

There are several other advantages for using the field study design. This field study appears to be the first to consider the moderating impact of generational differences on the relationship between employee fit and engagement. As such, the employee workplace context provides the ideal backdrop to test the hypothesized model (see Figure 2.5). Second, having a diverse sample of adequate size improves the generalizability of the study’s results across multiple workplace settings. Diversity in the respondent sample is demonstrated across (a) employer, (b) employee role (e.g., individual contributor, managers of individual contributor, manager of managers), (c) occupation type (e.g., technology, sales, operations, etc.), (d) tenure with employer, (e) education level, (f) age of employee, and (g) gender. All measures used in this study had been used in previous studies with acceptable levels of reliability. Overall, the field study design chosen for this study maximizes contextual realism, and utilizes a diverse sample.
that improves generalizability to other settings. These strengths offset the lack of precision and control I would have obtained in a laboratory setting. Moreover, the field study design is the most appropriate research strategy for addressing the research questions identified in this dissertation.

3.2 Research Population

A research population refers to a well-defined group of individuals that have a common characteristic. In accordance with the field study research strategy, the defining characteristic of the research population is the workplace context. In this study participants were employed in multiple workplaces; the overall sample was made up of three subsamples. The first subsample was obtained from a financial services firm’s regional office located in the south-central region of the U.S. The second subsample included business school graduate students at a regional university located in the south-central region of the U.S. The third subsample was drawn from employees of a not-for-profit museum located in the south-central region of the U.S. The following sections discuss the study’s sample in greater detail.

3.2.1 Sample

Shortly after receiving approval from the University of Dallas’ Institutional Review Board (IRB: see Appendix A), 588 individuals, representing three different sample populations, received a personalized invitation via email to participate in the field study by completing a survey. Within the email was an embedded link to access an internet-based survey. The online method of distributing and collecting survey data was selected for a variety of reasons. First, this method ensured confidentiality of identifying participant information (i.e., names, email, IP address). Second, participants were able to access the survey at their convenience. Finally,
participants could exit out of the online survey and come back to the same place at a later time to complete.

Additional advantages for employing an internet-based survey relate to ease of use, cost, and increased efficiency. For instance, there was no cost for the distribution of the survey since it was made available via a URL-embedded in an email invitation. The online survey made it possible to reach large population samples. Additionally, the design and development of the survey was made easy with the tools provided by the online survey platform, Qualtrics. Qualtrics is commonly used among researchers in administering surveys. The Qualtrics platform collects the survey responses and provides the functionality of exporting the data to IBM SPSS for analysis.

The emailed invitation was delivered to individuals in each of the three sample populations. See Appendix F for an example of the survey invitation. The invitation included (a) a brief description about the study, (b) informed consent to use their data, (c) a message about the survey being voluntary, (d) assurance that their survey responses were confidential, (e) information about the incentive, and (f) a request to complete the survey.

An incentive was offered to encourage full participation in my study. The incentives varied by subsample. For instance, the student subsample incentive was a chance to win one of seven Amazon gift cards valued from $25 to $100. The incentive for the financial services firm employee subsample was a chance to win one of 42 prizes consisting of twelve Amazon gift cards valued at $25 each and 30 meal vouchers from the organization’s cafeteria. An incentive was not offered to the museum employee subsample. For a chance to win the incentive, participants were given the opportunity to enter a raffle at the end of the survey by providing
their name and contact information. Winners of the incentive were randomly selected, and given their prize.

Of the 588 individuals who received an email inviting them to participate in the study, 251 opened the survey, 208 started the survey, and 196 individuals completed the survey, yielding a 33% response rate. The 12 incomplete surveys were removed from the data analysis. Each of the subsamples will be discussed in further detail following an analysis on the adequacy of the sample size.

3.2.2 Sample size

To determine an adequate sample size, Myors (2006) suggest conducting a power analysis. The concept of statistical power refers to “the probability of making a correct decision when the null hypothesis is, in fact, wrong” (p. 162). Statistical power gives researchers confidence that a study’s results are not due to chance fluctuations in the data. One way to achieve acceptable power is to have an appropriate sample size, which can be determined by performing a power analysis.

A power analysis consists of four factors: power, sample size (N), effect size, and significance level (α). Myors (2006) recommends leaving power and α fixed at conventional levels and solving for N in terms of the effect size; Myors argues having power equal to .80, so the Type II error rate will be no worse than .20. Citing Cohen’s (1988) work on power analysis, Myors (2006, p. 161) states that power at .80 “has been widely accepted in the literature as providing a good balance between the various trade-offs required to achieve acceptable levels of power.” Additionally, Myors (2006, p. 162) recommends following “long-held conventions in the scientific literature surrounding appropriate values of α,” which is .05. Significance at the .05 level means “that a null hypothesis was tested in such a way that the risk of making a Type I
error was set at .05, and the null hypothesis was rejected in favor of the alternative hypothesis” (Jaeger, 1993, p. 167).

Myors (2006) offers an equation designed to determine an adequate sample size based on a desired power of .80 and a significance level of .05. The equation assumes one degree of freedom in the numerator and the denominator is the effect size parameter. The effect size refers to the degree of “departure of the alternative hypothesis from the null hypothesis” (Myors, 2006). Effect sizes range from small, medium, and large. Based on the work of Cohen (1988), table 3.1 shows the effect size conventions used to produce the power analysis (Myors, 2006). The effect sizes in Table 3.1 were also used to determine the sample size (n) needed for this study. The effect sizes represent the denominator in the expressions shown in Table 3.2 for both the one- and two-sample tests.

Table 3.1: Effect size conventions. Adapted from Myors (2006, p. 164)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effect size</th>
<th>d</th>
<th>r²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small (S)</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium (M)</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large (L)</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“Power analysis starts with an a priori estimate of effect size” (Myors, 2006, p. 165). Although N = 785 was recommended for a small effect size in a two-sample test, solving for the effect size with N = 200 resulted in a modest increase to $r^2 = .039$ but within range of Cohen’s (1988) small effect size of $r^2 = .01$. In contrast, a one-sample test recommended $N = 196$ to achieve a small effect size ($d = .20$). Based on the power analysis in Table 3.2, a sample size of 196 participants was deemed adequate for this field study. Notably, this study considered the combined three subsamples as one sample.

In addition to the power analysis conducted to determine the adequacy of the sample size, I also conducted additional analysis to validate the adequacy of the sample size. The power
analysis previously conducted suggested that an adequate sample for this field study was 196 participants. As a validation of sample size adequacy, Field (2013) suggests using the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy in SPSS. The KMO statistic “represents the ratio of the squared correlation between variables to the squared partial correlation between variables” (Field, 2013, p. 684).

The KMO statistic was calculated for each of the study’s variable measures. The KMO statistic varies between 0 and 1. Field (2013) recommends collecting additional data if the KMO statistic is less than .5. The KMO statistic for each of the field study’s scales ranged from a high of .930 to a low of .5. Only two variables used in these analyses were at the .5 level: social work values and altruistic work values. Although a .5 KMO statistic is less than desirable for sample adequacy, Field (2013, p. 684) states that sample size for variables with a KMO statistic value of .5 is acceptable, albeit “barely.”

Table 3.2: Sample size needed to achieve power of .80 with two-tailed tests assuming a significance level of .05. Adapted from Myors (2006, p. 165)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effect size</th>
<th>One-sample tests $N_{\text{needed}} = \frac{7.85}{d^2}$</th>
<th>Two-sample tests $N_{\text{needed}} = \frac{7.85}{r^2}$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$S = .20$</td>
<td>$N_{\text{needed}} = \frac{7.85}{.04}$</td>
<td>$S = .01$ $N_{\text{needed}} = \frac{7.85}{.01}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$M = .50$</td>
<td>$N_{\text{needed}} = \frac{7.85}{.25}$</td>
<td>$M = .10$ $N_{\text{needed}} = \frac{7.85}{.10}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$L = .80$</td>
<td>$N_{\text{needed}} = \frac{7.85}{.64}$</td>
<td>$L = .25$ $N_{\text{needed}} = \frac{7.85}{.25}$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.2.3 Sample population

A sample population refers to a small group of the research population “that will accurately represent the properties and characteristics of the larger group” (McCready, 2006, p. 147). The total sample ($N = 196$) used for this field consisted of employees from three different
subsamples, namely employees of a financial services firm \((n = 103)\), business school graduate students \((n = 77)\), and employees of a museum \((n = 16)\). Following a discussion of the total sample population, each of the study’s subsamples will be discussed in further detail in the next sections.

### 3.2.3.1 Total sample population

As summarized in Table 3.3, the total sample consisted of employees from 52 different workplaces of various size and industry, and represented a variety of functional work areas including technology (18%), relationship management (13.3%), and operations (11.2%). Individual contributors comprised 76.5% of the total sample, whereas frontline managers were 18.9%, and manager of managers represented 4.6%. The total sample characterized an educated labor force with 51% holding a graduate degree and 40% having a bachelor’s degree. Most of the employees (35.7%) reported having between one and five years tenure with their current employer.

The average age of the total sample was 39. The millennial generation (1982-2000; \(n = 81\); average age 28) was the largest at 41.3%, followed by Gen X (1965-1981; \(n = 77\); average age 43) at 39.3%, and Boomers (1946-1964; \(n = 38\); average age 56) at 19.4%. The total sample was mostly male (64.8%), and identified the U.S. as their country of origin (79%). All hypotheses were tested using the total sample.

### 3.2.3.2 Subsample population: Financial services firm employees

Although study participants come from three research populations, the largest subsample population \((n = 103)\) constituted employees of a financial services firm. Many of the respondents of the financial services firm are also alumni from the same university \((n = 68)\). Employees were identified as alumni by referencing the university’s alumni directory and LinkedIn. These two
sources yielded 126 employee-alumni, which were invited by email to participate in the survey. Of the 126 initial email invitations, 11 were returned because the individual no longer worked for the organization. After the initial invitation, an email reminder was sent on day seven and a second email reminder was sent on day 13. Sixty-eight surveys were usable resulting in a 59% response rate. Two types of incentives were offered to survey participants. Specifically, participants were entered into a drawing for a chance to win one of 42 prizes. Twelve prizes were Amazon gift cards ($25 each) and 30 prizes were meal vouchers at the organization’s cafeteria.

Table 3.3: Demographic summary of total sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top 5: Industries</th>
<th>Top 5: Job Descriptions</th>
<th>Top 5: Tenure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Financial Services (56.6%)</td>
<td>Technology (17.9%)</td>
<td>1-5 years (35.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts/Entertainment (9.1%)</td>
<td>Relationship Mgmt (13.3%)</td>
<td>6-10 years (16.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthcare (4%)</td>
<td>Operations (11.2%)</td>
<td>16-20 years (13.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology (3.5%)</td>
<td>Project Mgmt. (8.2%)</td>
<td>21-25 years (9.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education (3.1%)</td>
<td>Finance (7.7%)</td>
<td>Less than 1 year (9.2%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Generation Cohort</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Job Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boomers (n=38, 19.4%, avg age 56)</td>
<td>Mean: 38.9</td>
<td>Individual Contributor: 76.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GenX (n=77, 39.3%, avg age 43)</td>
<td>Min: 19</td>
<td>Manager: 18.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Millennial (n=81, 41.3%, avg age 28)</td>
<td>Max: 72</td>
<td>Manager of Managers: 4.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Country of Origin</th>
<th>Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High School (5.1%)</td>
<td>United States (78.5%)</td>
<td>Male (64.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Degree (40.3%)</td>
<td>Non-U.S. (21.5%)</td>
<td>Female (35.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate (51%), Doctorate (3.6%)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In addition to the employee-alumni subsample, a convenience sample of 30 employees from this same organization was invited to take the survey. The convenience sample consisted of employees belonging to my personal network. Three of the individuals in the convenience sample requested permission to forward the hyperlink to the survey to their peers so they too could participate. This survey protocol, referred to as snowball sampling, resulted in 39
individuals opening the survey. Thirty-five surveys were usable. An advantage of snowball sampling includes the ability of primary data sources to recruit potential participants from different work populations, such as different generations (Dubovskiy, 2016). Both the convenience sample and the employee-alumni subsample received the survey at the same time. Over a period of two weeks, individuals received an initial email invitation and two reminders. The first reminder was sent one week after the initial survey invitation (day seven), and the second reminder was sent one day prior to closing the survey (day 13). The convenience subsample participants received the same incentive as the employee-alumni subsample.

As summarized in Table 3.4, the financial services firm subsample (n = 103) is an educated labor force with 62.1% having a graduate degree and 29.1% having an undergraduate degree. Predominately male (73.8%), this subsample’s country of origin is mostly U.S. (86.4%). Individual contributors (81.6%) with a work tenure between one and five years (24.3%) characterized this subsample. Most of the respondents (20.4%) worked in the client relationship area of the organization. With a mean age of 42, the GenX cohort represented more than half (53.4%) of this subsample, followed by millennials (25.2%) and boomers (21.4%).

3.2.3.3 Subsample population: Graduate students

The second sample population (n = 77) consisted of graduate students enrolled in a regional university’s professional graduate business programs. The university is located in the south-central region of the U.S. Doctoral and MBA students were invited to participate. The survey was open for two weeks, and two email reminders—day seven and day 13, respectively—were sent to the MBA students following the initial invite. Three hundred and eighty-eight MBA students received an invitation to participate in the study and 68 surveys were usable, resulting in a response rate of 17%. Survey participants were incentivized with a chance to win one of seven
Amazon gift cards (one valued at $100, two at $50 each, and four at $25 each).

In addition to MBA students, twenty doctoral students received an invitation to participate in the survey, which was open for seven days. No reminders were sent to the doctoral students. The doctoral students received the same incentive as the MBA students. This survey protocol yielded ten usable surveys from doctoral students resulting in a 50% response rate. The overall response rate for the student sample was 19%.

As summarized in Table 3.5, the graduate student subsample consisted of employees of 50 workplaces of various size and industry, and who work in a variety of functional areas
including technology (19.5%), accounting (14.3%), and sales (10.4%). Individual contributors comprised 70.1% of the student subsample, whereas frontline managers represented 23.3%, and manager of managers represented 6.5%.

Table 3.5: Demographic summary of graduate student sample populations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic</th>
<th>Graduate Student Sample Total ( (n = 77) )</th>
<th>MBA Student Subsample ( (n = 67) )</th>
<th>Doctoral Student Subsample ( (n = 10) )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Top 3: Job Descriptions</strong></td>
<td>Technology (19.5%)</td>
<td>Technology (20.9%)</td>
<td>Sales (30%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Accounting (14.3%)</td>
<td>Accounting (14.9%)</td>
<td>Project Mgmt. (30%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sales (10.4%)</td>
<td>Finance (9%)</td>
<td>Tie with others at 10% each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Top 3: Tenure with Employer</strong></td>
<td>1-5 years (48.1%)</td>
<td>1-5 years (50.7%)</td>
<td>1-5 years (30%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Less than 1 year (22.1%)</td>
<td>Less than 1 year (23.9%)</td>
<td>Tie with others at 10% each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6-10 years (10.4%)</td>
<td>6-10 years (10.4%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Job Role</strong></td>
<td>Individual Contributor (70.1%)</td>
<td>Individual Contributor (59%)</td>
<td>Individual Contributor (50%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Manager (23.4%)</td>
<td>Manager (18.1%)</td>
<td>Manager (30%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Manager of Managers (6.5%)</td>
<td>Manager of Managers (3.6%)</td>
<td>Manager of Managers (20%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
<td>High School (0%)</td>
<td>High School (0%)</td>
<td>High School (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>College Degree (52.4%)</td>
<td>College Degree (64.2%)</td>
<td>College Degree (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Graduate Degree (35.4%)</td>
<td>Graduate Degree (31.3%)</td>
<td>Graduate Degree (80%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Doctorate (6.1%)</td>
<td>Doctorate (4.5%)</td>
<td>Doctorate (20%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Generation Cohort</strong></td>
<td>Boomer: 1946-1964 (11, 14.3%)</td>
<td>Boomer: 1946-1964 (5, 7.5%)</td>
<td>Boomer: 1946-1964 (6, 60%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GenX: 1965-1981 (15, 19.5%)</td>
<td>GenX: 1965-1981 (12, 17.9%)</td>
<td>GenX: 1965-1981 (3, 30%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Millennials: 1982-2000 (51, 66.2%)</td>
<td>Millennials: 1982-2000 (50, 74.6%)</td>
<td>Millennials: 1982-2000 (1, 10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td>Mean: 34 years</td>
<td>Mean: 31.5 years</td>
<td>Mean: 49 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Min.: 19 years</td>
<td>Min.: 19 years</td>
<td>Min.: 32 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Max.: 72 years</td>
<td>Max.: 72 years</td>
<td>Max.: 60 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td>Male (58.4%)</td>
<td>Male (56.7%)</td>
<td>Male (70%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female (41.6%)</td>
<td>Female (43.3%)</td>
<td>Female (30%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Country of Origin</strong></td>
<td>United States (65.8%)</td>
<td>United States (65.2%)</td>
<td>United States (70%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-U.S. (34.2%)</td>
<td>Non-U.S. (34.8%)</td>
<td>Non-U.S. (30%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The student subsample can be characterized as an educated workforce with five individuals holding a doctorate (6.1%), 29 individuals having a graduate degree (35.4%), and 43 with a bachelor’s degree (52.4%). Additionally, most of the students had a relatively short tenure with their current employer. More than 70% of the students reported having worked for their current employer for ten years or less; nearly half of the student sample (48.1%) reported working with their current employer between one and five years. Two students (2.5%) reported
being not currently employed. The student subsample was mostly male (58.4%), and 65.8%
recognized the U.S. as their country of origin.

3.2.4.3 Subsample population: Museum employees

The third subsample \( n = 16 \) consisted of a convenience sample of museum
employees. The convenience sample was comprised of individuals in my personal network.
Twenty-four employees were emailed an invitation to participate in the survey. The survey was
open for two weeks and no reminders were sent. No incentive was offered for participating in the
study. This survey protocol yielded 18 responses of which 16 were usable resulting in a 67%
response rate.

As summarized in Table 3.6, the museum employee subsample consisted of individuals
who work in a variety of functional areas including technology (31.3%), project management.
(12.5%), and customer service (6.5%). Individual contributors made up 75% of the museum
employee sample population, whereas frontline managers represented 25%. The museum
employee subsample is an educated workforce with one individual holding a doctorate (6.5%),
seven individuals with a graduate degree (43.8%), and six individuals with a bachelor’s degree
(37.5%). Half of the employees (50%) reported having been with the museum between one and
five years. The average age of the museum employee subsample was 42.9; the millennial
generation (1982-2000) was the smallest at 25%, followed by boomers (1946-1964) at 31.3%,
and GenX (1965-1991) at 43.8%. The museum employee subsample was mostly female (62.5%),
and 87.5% recognized the U.S. as their country of origin.
Table 3.6: Demographic summary of museum employee sample population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top 5: Job Descriptions</th>
<th>Job Role</th>
<th>Top 5: Tenure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Technology (31.3%)</td>
<td>Individual Contributor: 76.5%</td>
<td>1-5 years (50%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Mgmt (12.5%)</td>
<td>Manager: 18.9%</td>
<td>6-10 years (25%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer Service (6.3%)</td>
<td>Manager of Managers: 4.6%</td>
<td>16-20 years (12.5%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Generation Cohort</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boomers: 1946-1964 (5, 31.3%)</td>
<td>Mean: 42.9</td>
<td>High School (12.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GenX: 1965-1981 (7, 43.8%)</td>
<td>Min: 25</td>
<td>College Degree (37.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Millennial: 1982-2000 (4, 25%)</td>
<td>Max: 62</td>
<td>Graduate (43.8%), Doctorate (6.3%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country of Origin</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States (87.5%)</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>(37.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-U.S. (12.5%)</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>(62.5%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.3 Modes of Treatment

This field study was designed to extract relevant information about employees’ attitudes and dispositions concerning aspects of their work. Field studies such as this take place in the context of complex systems of human behavior. The complexity of these systems always requires choices to be made concerning factors to be included and those that will be excluded. These choices are necessary, but they are made with the explicit recognition of the constraints they create, or the costs associated with these decisions. For instance, if a potential factor is ignored, then either systematic error or random error, or both, may occur; the consequence relates to extracting distorted information from the observations (Runkel & McGrath, 1972).

Various decisions were made on how best to treat these factors. Consequently, these modes of treatment were deliberate choices that resulted from the design of this study (Runkel & McGrath, 1972). For this study, all constructs were measured (Mode Y). Mode Y lets the value of each construct measured to vary freely. Additionally, half of the university’s 766 MBA students were randomly selected into the sample pool (Mode R). Each of the 388 MBA students had an equal chance of participating in this study. There were no manipulations or treatment
conditions applied (Mode X). Because all measures were obtained from the same source, there was no need to match self-reports with social-reports or archival data (Mode M). There were no a priori controls to set variables at a certain level (Mode K). Finally, because a field study design was used, there was maximum contextual realism. The tradeoff for maximum contextual realism, however, is a study that has very little precision and control. Any phenomena occurring in a workplace context (e.g., voluntary buy-outs, layoffs, mergers) that was not measured or controlled for received Mode Z (“zippo”) treatment. This is a characteristic, and limitation, of all field studies, and there may have been other factors influencing the variables of interest.

The measurement choices used in this study were self-reports. Comparable to other recent and similar dissertation studies (Badger, 2014; Foster, 2013; Shuck, 2010), there were no social reports, direct observations or archival data used in this study. Because I was focusing on employee attitudes and the evaluation of workplace characteristics, a self-report survey was the optimal choice for data collection. All measures of independent and dependent variables were obtained from the participants, thus common source variance is a concern.

Given the concern of the use of a single source in this study, a Harmon’s single factor method test was performed to examine the potential impact of common source variance. To perform Harmon’s single factor method test, the items in each construct were submitted to a factor analysis using principal axis factoring while constraining one factor to extraction (Sharma, Yetton, & Crawford, 2009). No rotation was applied on the analysis. According to the test, common method bias is not present when the percent of variance explained by the one factor is less than 50%.

Harmon’s single factor method test showed the percent of variance for the single factor tested in each construct measured: employee fit (44%), employee engagement (49%).
organizational commitment (27%), job satisfaction (45%), and work values (22%). While the findings of this test do not negate the possibility of common method bias, they do indicate that common method bias is not a major concern for the results obtained. Therefore, the results of the Harmon’s single factor method test suggest that common method bias is not a concern for this field study. In the next section, a discussion of the preliminary analysis of the collected is offered.

3.4 Preliminary Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted in SPSS. Prior to conducting the preliminary analysis, and following the recommendation of Lounsbury, Gibson, and Saudargas (2006), reverse-scoring was done in SPSS rather than by hand. There were six negatively worded items (e.g., “I am often bored with my job”) that were reverse-scored in SPSS.

The preliminary analysis of the collected data was conducted in two parts. The first part, referred to as the preliminary analysis, served as the initial screening of the data. The second part of the data analysis focused on each variable measure, including a reliability analysis. The following sections discuss in further detail the procedures and results of the preliminary data analysis.

3.4.1 Preliminary analysis

The preliminary analysis served as a foundational screening of the collected data to ensure the integrity of the study. This initial screening consisted of examining (a) missing data, (b) outliers, and (c) inter-item correlations for each variable measure.

3.4.1.1 Analysis missing data

“Rarely does the researcher avoid some form of missing data problem” (Hair, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 2009, p. 42). Following the data collection, the initial analysis began with
the examination of the 252 individuals who opened the survey. Nineteen participants closed the survey after opening it and did not return, whereas 24 individuals reviewed the survey but did not respond to any items. These 43 records were removed from the collected data. Additionally, 12 individuals started the survey but did not finish; consequently, the records for those 12 individuals were removed from the analysis.

Finally, of the remaining 196 respondents, 40 individuals did not answer at least one of the 93 survey items. A total of 70 items had missing values, which represent .4% of the total data values [(70 missing item values / (196 respondents * 93 items)]. The missing values were infrequent and scattered randomly throughout the observations. Consequently, the 70 missing item values did not have a substantive impact on the collected data.

3.4.1.2 Analysis of outliers

“An outlier is a score very different from the rest of the data” (Field, 2013). A concern about outliers is the potential bias of the data. As recommended by Bobko (2001), I conducted an analysis of the outliers for each of the variable measures. Outliers were identified using the vertical boxplot data charting function in SPSS (Field, 2013).

The criteria used to identify an outlier was based on the value of the interquartile range (IQR). SPSS calculates two IQRs. The first IQR is 1.5 times the difference between the upper and lower quarters. The outliers 1.5 times the IQR are denoted by SPSS as a circle (o). The second IQR is three times the difference between the upper and lower quarters. The outliers 3 times the IQR are identified in SPSS with an asterisk (*).

Hoaglin and Iglewicz (1987) observed that the 1.5 IQR multiplier was inaccurate in their research on outliers 50% of the time; therefore, I only analyzed outliers that were three times the
IQR. The analysis of the boxplot charts revealed four outliers that were three times the IQR: two in the employee engagement data and two in the work values data.

The question of whether to remove the four identified outliers is a discussion that remains unanswered: “Are outliers real and to be left in, or error and to be discarded?” (Bobko, 2001, p. 23). Field study research design emphasizes contextual realism of which a small number of outliers would be reasonably expected, particularly given a sample size of \( N = 196 \). Therefore, I retained the outliers.

### 3.4.1.3 Analysis of correlations

Field (2013) recommends performing a correlation analysis prior to conducting a principal component analysis. Although high correlations (multicollinearity) between items in the same scale do not cause a problem for PCA, low correlations between scale items can indicate that a scale item is not measuring the same underlying dimension as the other items in the same scale. Therefore, the purpose of this analysis was to identify patterns of low correlations, and remove items if appropriate. Field (2013) considers correlations less than .3 as low but notes that what is deemed a low correlation “is very subjective” (p. 685). Two methods were used to perform the correlation analysis.

A correlation matrix was first created in SPSS for each measure. I then scanned each matrix for correlations below .3. For the employee fit unidimensional scale, the person-job items had correlations consistently below .3 with the person-organization, -group, and -supervisor fit items. For the employee engagement scale, the emotional engagement items showed a pattern of correlations below .3 with the physical engagement items. In the continuance commitment scale, the intention to quit item had low correlations (two were negative) with four of the six continuance commitment items. The job satisfaction scale had one item that had four correlations
less than .3. The intrinsic work values scale had one item with four correlations less than .3. Last, the leisure work values scale had one item with two correlations less than .3. See Appendices J-N for each scale’s correlation matrix.

A Bartlett’s test was then performed for each scale. Field (2013, p. 685) states that the objective of the Barlett’s test is to examine “whether correlations (overall) are too small.” In effect, the Bartlett’s test is an objective measure that calculates the overall significance between the items. The Bartlett’s test was significant at $p < .001$ for each of the scales indicating that the inter-item correlations in each scale were adequate.

In sum, the correlation matrix analysis revealed four items that required removal. One item was negatively correlated with two items in the continuance organizational commitment scale. The item, intended to measure intention to quit, had been added to the scale. However, given the lack of correlation of this item with the other items in the continuance commitment scale, it was removed from the data analysis. Additionally, three items in the intrinsic work values scale had low correlations, several of which were well below 2. I determined that the three items did not align with the intrinsic work values definition, and thereby compromised the measure’s face validity. The three intrinsic work value items were therefore removed. In the next section, each scale will be discussed in more detail.

3.5 Variable Measurement Analysis

This study used 86 self-report items, comprising five scales, in addition to seven demographic questions. All scales used in this study have been previously used with acceptable levels of reliability. As summarized in table 3.7, the five scales are employee fit (26 items), employee engagement (18 items), organizational commitment (13 items), job satisfaction (10 items), and work values (19 items). There were seven demographic items; an additional
A demographic item was added for the graduate student sample to identify their employer (e.g., “What is the name of your employer?”). The following section discusses each scale used in this field study.

**Table 3.7: Summary of scales and item count**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employee fit</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee engagement</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational commitment</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job satisfaction</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work values</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>86</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**3.5.1 Independent variable**

Employee fit was measured using the 26-item Perceived Person-Environment Fit Scale (PPEFS) developed by Chuang et al. (2016). The PPEFS measures employee fit across four subscales: organization, job, group, and supervisor (see Appendix C for the complete PPEFS). The four subscales comprising the PPEFS showed inter-correlations ranging from .438 (low) to .930 (high). Employee responses were recorded on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = no match; 4 = fair match; 7 = complete match). Each of the underlying subscales comprising the PPFES are discussed next.

Organization fit refers broadly to the “compatibility between people and the organization in which they work” (Kristof, 1996, p. 1). The compatibility between the person and organization occurs when one of the two provides what the other needs or they share similar characteristics. Organization fit was measured using seven items. Four items measured the perceived congruence of values between the employee and the organization, and three items measured the match between the goals of the employee and the organization. Sample items are: “How would you describe the match between your emphasis and your organization’s emphasis on the following...
values? a) Honesty,” and, “How would you describe the match between your goals and your organization’s goals on the following dimensions? a) Rewards. The coefficient alpha for organizational fit was .90.

Job fit occurs when one’s abilities are congruent or exceed the demands of the job, or the job meets or exceeds the needs of the employee (Cable & DeRue, 2002). Job fit was measured with four items that measure knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs), job characteristics, interests, and personality. Sample items are “How would you describe the match between your professional skills, knowledge, and abilities and those required by the job?” and, “How would you describe the match between the characteristics of your current job (e.g. autonomy, importance, and skill variety) and those you desire for a job?” The coefficient alpha for job fit was .78.

Group fit refers to the compatibility between employees and their work group (Kristof, 1996). The group fit component of employee fit is “concerned with how an individual’s personal characteristics interact with those of other team members to predict individual-level outcomes” (Kristof-Brown et al., 2014, p. 969). Group fit was measured with ten items. The items are divided in three categories: values (four items), goals (three items), and attributes (three items). Sample items are: “How would you describe the match between your emphasis and your group’s emphasis on the following values? a) Honesty,” and, “How would you describe the match between your goals and your group’s goals on the following dimensions? a) Rewards,” and, “How would you describe the match between you and your group members on the following characteristics? a) Personality.” The coefficient alpha for group fit was .92.

Supervisor fit refers to dyadic relationships between employees and their supervisors (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). Supervisor fit was measured using five items that consists of
values, personality, work style, lifestyle, and leadership style. Sample items include: “How would you describe the match between the things you value in life and the things your supervisor values?” and, “How would you describe the match between your supervisor’s leadership style and the leadership style you desire?” The coefficient alpha for supervisor fit was .93.

Although the employee fit measure has a four-factor structure, for this study the factors were combined into an overall measure. There is both theoretical and empirical support for treating employee fit as a unidimensional construct. Using a combined measure is supported by Jansen and Kristen-Brown’s (2006, p. 193) observation that “people do not interact with only one part of their environment. Rather, they are simultaneously nested in multiple dimensions of the environment.” Thus, a unidimensional conceptualization represents a formative model whereas the fit dimensions combine to collectively define (or “form”) an overall fit (Badger & Behrend, 2017).

Empirical support for using a unidimensional measure of fit is based on the work of Badger and Behrend (2017). They tested and found that five levels of fit (i.e., vocation, organization, group, job, and supervisor) are “best characterized by a measurement model in which the dimensions are specified as formative indicators” (Badger, 2014, p. 34). In other words, the dimensions combined to form an overall fit model. In a separate study, Foster (2013) measured employee fit as a unidimensional construct with a 10-item self-report survey adapted from Piasentin and Chapman’s (2006) measure of global fit perceptions. The ten items consisted of four levels of fit (organization, job, team, and supervisor).

Because the hypotheses did not differentiate among the employee fit subscales, I submitted the subscale data to a principle component analysis (PCA) to validate a single, global scale. The results from the component analysis strongly supported my expectations. One factor
had an eigenvalue over Kaiser’s criterion of one, and explained 67.2% of the variance. Based on the PCA results, the scale reliability estimates, and previous theoretical development and empirical results, I concluded that the four subscales used in our study measured a single, global construct of employee fit. The coefficient alpha for the overall measure of employee fit was .95.

3.5.2 Mediating variable

Kahn (1990, p. 694) defines “personal engagement as the harnessing of organization members’ selves to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performance.” For Kahn (1990, p. 700), an individual’s “self and work role exist in some dynamic, negotiable relation in which a person both drives personal energies into role behaviors (self-employment) and displays the self within the role (self-expression).” Kahn’s (1990) perspective conceives of engagement as a function of a person’s allocation of their personal resources (i.e., cognitive, emotional, physical) toward their work (Saks & Gruman, 2014).

Based on Kahn’s (1990) definition of engagement, Rich et al.’s (2010) 18-item self-report Job Engagement Scale (JES) was selected to operationalize employee engagement. The JES measures employee engagement across three sub-scales described in Kahn’s (1990) definition of work engagement: physical, emotional, and cognitive. For each subscale, items were rated on a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree; 3 = neutral; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree). The three subscales of employee engagement are discussed next.

The cognitive dimension of employee engagement is defined as the intensity of mental energy expressed toward positive organization outcomes (Rich et al., 2010; Shuck et al., 2014). Six items comprise the sub-scale that measures cognitive engagement. Sample items are “At
work, my mind is focused on my job,” and, “At work, I pay a lot of attention to my job.” The coefficient alpha for cognitive engagement was .94.

The emotional dimension of employee engagement is defined as an employee’s intensity and willingness to invest emotionality toward positive organizational outcomes (Macey & Schneider, 2008; Shuck et al., 2014). Six items comprise the sub-scale that measures emotional engagement. Sample items are “I am enthusiastic in my job,” and, “I feel energetic at my job.” The coefficient alpha for emotional engagement was .94.

The physical dimension of employee engagement is defined as the psychological state of intention to behave in a manner that positively affects performance (Macey & Schneider, 2008; Rich et al., 2010). Six items comprise the subscale that measures physical engagement. Sample items are “I work with intensity on my job,” and, “I exert my full effort to my job.” The coefficient alpha for physical engagement was .87.

Because the hypotheses did not differentiate between the three employee engagement subscales, I submitted the subscale data to a principle component analysis (PCA) to validate a single, global scale. The results from the component analysis strongly supported my expectations. One factor had an eigenvalue over Kaiser’s criterion of one, and it explained 74.5% of the variance. Based on the PCA results, the scale reliability estimates, and previous theoretical development and empirical results where the subscales were combined (Byrne et al., 2016; Knoll & Redman, 2016; Whittington et al., 2017), I concluded that the three employee engagement subscales used in this study measured a single, global construct of employee engagement. The coefficient alpha for the overall measure of employee fit was .95.
3.5.3 Dependent variable

Employee attitudes were operationalized using validated scales for organizational commitment and job satisfaction. Organizational commitment is defined as “the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization” (Mowday et al., 1979, p. 226). For this study, organizational commitment was measured using Allen and Meyer’s (1990) framework on affective and continuance commitment. Job satisfaction was measured using a 10-item scale developed by Schleicher, Smith, Casper, Watt, and Greguras (2015).

3.5.3.1 Affective organizational commitment

Affective organizational commitment refers to an employee’s emotional attachment to the employing organization and emphasizes a psychological bond or attachment to the organization. Affective organizational commitment was measured using employee responses to the revised six-item affective commitment subscale of the organizational commitment scale developed by Meyer, Allen, and Smith (1993). This self-report scale has been extensively and reliably used in studies measuring affective commitment (Leroy, Palanski, & Simons, 2012; Malhotra, Budhwar, & Prowse, 2007; Ou et al., 2014). Survey items were measured on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = moderately disagree; 4 = neutral; 5 = moderately agree; 6 = agree; 7 = strongly agree). Sample items are “I really feel as if this organization’s problems are my own,” and, “This organization has a great deal of personal meaning to me.” The coefficient alpha for affective commitment was .86.

3.5.3.2 Continuance organizational commitment

Continuance commitment refers to the economic value, or costs, associated with leaving the organization. Continuance commitment is associated with economic factors such as pay and
benefits. Continuance commitment was measured using employee responses to the revised six-item continuance commitment sub-scale of the organizational commitment scale developed by Meyer et al. (1993) plus an additional item on intention to quit from Wayne, Shore, and Liden (1997). The intention to quit item read, “I believe I will be working for my current employer one year from now.” However, an inter-correlational analysis revealed a negative relation between the intention to quit item and two continuance commitment items. Given the lack of correlation, the intention to quit item was removed from the continuance commitment measure. Survey items were rated on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = moderately disagree; 4 = neutral; 5 = moderately agree; 6 = agree; 7 = strongly agree). Sample items are “Right now, staying with my organization is a matter of necessity as much as desire,” and, “It would be very hard for me to leave my organization right now, even if I wanted to.” The coefficient alpha for the remaining six items of the continuance commitment sub-scale was .74.

3.5.3.3 Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction refers to the pleasurable feeling resulting from a person’s positive evaluation across various job-related facets (Spector, 1997). This study measures job satisfaction across two dimensions. First, the affective dimension refers to “how do you feel about your job?” Second, the cognitive dimension refers to, “what do you believe about your job?” (Scheicher et al., 2015, p. 1261). Schleicher et al.’s (2015) job satisfaction scale consists of ten self-report items representing both the affective and cognitive dimensions.

Affective job satisfaction refers to an attitude that is based on a positive emotional evaluation of one’s job, or related aspects (Moorman, 1993). Five items were used to measure affective job satisfaction. Respondents were asked to rate the extent they were satisfied with each statement using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = very dissatisfied; 2 = dissatisfied; 3 = neutral; 4 =
satisfied; 5 = very satisfied). Sample items are “I feel that I am happier in my work than most other people,” and, “I find real enjoyment in my work.” The coefficient alpha for the affective job satisfaction measure was .85.

Cognitive job satisfaction refers to an attitude that is based on the rational assessment of one’s job (Moorman, 1993). Five items were used to measure cognitive job satisfaction. Participants were asked to rate the extent to which they agreed with each statement using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = very dissatisfied; 2 = dissatisfied; 3 = neutral; 4 = satisfied; 5 = very satisfied). Sample items are “The chance to try your own methods of doing the job,” and, “The way your job provides for steady employment.” The coefficient alpha for the cognitive job satisfaction measure was .78.

Because the hypotheses did not differentiate between the two job satisfaction subscales, I submitted the subscale data to a principle component analysis (PCA) to validate a single, global scale. The results from the component analysis strongly supported my expectations. One factor had an eigenvalue over Kaiser’s criterion of one, and it explained 85.1% of the variance. Based on the PCA results and the scale reliability estimates, I concluded that the two job satisfaction subscales used in our study measured a single, global construct of job satisfaction. The coefficient alpha for the overall measure of job satisfaction was .89.

3.5.4 Generational differences

Generational differences were measured in two ways. First, and prior to performing the moderation analysis, generational differences in work values were examined. For this analysis, each generational cohort was assigned a categorical variable based on the time parameters provided by U.S. Census (2015): 1946-1964 (baby boomers = 1), 1965-1981 (GenX = 2), and 1982-2000 (millennial = 3).
Work values were operationalized using 19 self-report items from Twenge et al.’s (2010) time-lag, longitudinal research on generational differences in work values. Based on Twenge et al.’s (2010) analysis of the Monitoring the Future annual survey, five work values were identified and used to examine generational differences: extrinsic, intrinsic, altruistic, social, and leisure. Responses to survey items were measured on a five-point Likert scale (1 = not important; 2 = slightly important; 3 = moderately important; 4 = important; 5 = very important). See Appendix G for the complete scale. Each work value is discussed below.

3.5.4.1 Extrinsic work values

Extrinsic values often refer to pay, benefits, and job security (Lyons, 2004; Ros et al., 1999). As a distinguishing characteristic, “extrinsic rewards like pay have to be given by someone else” (Lawler, 1970, p. 226). Extrinsic work values were measured with four items. Sample items for extrinsic rewards include: “A job that has high status and prestige,” and, “A job that most people look up to and respect.” The coefficient alpha for the extrinsic work values scale was .80.

3.5.4.2 Intrinsic work values

Intrinsic work values refer to the rewards that “are given to a person by himself when he performs well” (Lawler, 1970, p. 227). Intrinsic work values produce “a positive psychological state within individuals generally accompanied by feelings of passion, energy, and enthusiasm” (Tymon et al., 2010, p. 111). Intrinsic work rewards relate to the extent to which one finds their work interesting and derives meaning from work. Four items were used to measure intrinsic work values. Sample items for intrinsic rewards include: “A job that is interesting to do,” and, “A job where you can learn new things, learn new skills.” The reliability of the intrinsic work value items was (α = .80).
3.5.4.3 Social work values

Social work values relate to having contact with people, having good relations with co-workers, being respected at work, and contributing to the workplace (Sagie & Elizur, 1996; Schwartz, 1999). Two items measured social values. The items for social values are “A job that gives you a chance to make friends,” and, “A job that permits contact with a lot of people.” Following the recommendation of Eisinga, Grotenhuis te, and Pelzer (2013, p. 8), “the most appropriate reliability coefficient for a two-item scale is the Spearman-Brown statistic.” The Spearman-Brown reliability coefficient for the social work values measure was .74.

3.5.4.4 Altruistic work values

Altruistic values are characterized by a desire to help others and society through work (Twenge et al., 2010). Altruism is often thought of in terms of social services (Lofquist & Dawis, 1978), and are most associated with the vocation work values literature (Pryor, 1982; Super, 1970). Pryor (1982, p. 44) defines altruism as “a concern for assisting others.” Two items measured altruistic values. The items in the altruistic values measure are: “A job that gives you an opportunity to be directly helpful to others,” and, “A job that is worthwhile to society.” The Spearman-Brown reliability coefficient for the social work values measure was .72.

3.5.4.5 Leisure work values

Leisure work rewards refer “to the opportunity for free time, vacation, and freedom from supervision” (Johnson & Elder, 2002, p. 120). Four items were used to measure leisure rewards. Sample items for leisure rewards are “A job where you have more than two weeks’ vacation.” and, “A job that leaves a lot of time for other things in your life.” The coefficient alpha was .62. Twenge et al. (2010) observed a similarly low coefficient alpha of .67 for the identical scale. Although the reliability coefficient is less than the .70 cutoff often recommended (Nunnally,
1978), others have stated that a coefficient alpha between .6 and .7 is generally accepted as a moderately reliable scale (Hair, Celsi, Money, Samouel, & Page, 2011; Hinton, Brownlow, McMurray, & Cozens, 2004).

3.5.5 Moderating variable

For the moderation analysis, a dummy variable was created for each generation cohort. The parameters for each dummy variables were defined by the time periods provided by U.S. Census (2015): 1946-1964 (baby boomers), 1965-1981 (GenX), and 1982-2000 (millennials). The millennial cohort was the largest with 81 individuals (41.3%; average age 28), followed by GenX with 77 individuals (39.3%; average age 43), and boomers with 38 individuals (19.4%; average age 56).

3.6 Summary

In summary, this chapter provided a framework for the various research processes, methods, and techniques, necessary for conducting this field study. Data collection consisted of self-report responses to 86 items measuring five constructs. All constructs were measured (Mode Y) using validated scales. Mode Y lets the value of each construct measured to vary freely. Three of the five constructs were treated as unidimensional (employee fit, employee engagement, and job satisfaction), whereas two constructs were treated as multidimensional (organizational commitment and work values).

The total sample was obtained by combining data from three sources (N = 196). Sample size was deemed adequate based on a power analysis and the KMO statistic. The power analysis indicated that an adequate one-sample size—holding constant the significance at the .05 level and power at .80—was N = 196, based on conventional effect size interpretation (Myors, 2006).
For this study, three subsamples were combined into one; hence, acceptable sample adequacy was achieved.

Acceptable levels of reliability were observed in each of the scales used to test the hypothesized model. Following the “rules of thumb about Cronbach’s alpha coefficient size” (Hair et al., 2011, p. 237), a coefficient > .9 is excellent, .8 to < .9 is very good, .7 to < .8 is good, .6 to < .7 is moderate, and < .6 is poor. Four items were removed (one item from the continuance commitment measure and three items from the intrinsic work values measure) which resulted in a good and very good reliability coefficient for those scales respectively. The scale reliability for the extrinsic work values was also very good, whereas the scale reliability for the social and altruistic work value scales was good. The scale reliability for the leisure work value was moderate. The scale reliability for affective commitment was very good, and the scale reliability for employee fit and engagement were excellent. These scales were used to test the hypotheses developed in chapter two. The results of the hypotheses tests are reported in the following chapter.
CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

Table 4.1 presents the means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations of the study’s scales and subscales. The reliabilities for each of the study variables appear on the diagonal of the correlational matrix. Employee fit was correlated with employee engagement ($r = .509, p < .001$), affective organizational commitment ($r = .579, p < .001$), job satisfaction ($r = .681, p < .001$), extrinsic work values ($r = .145, p < .05$), social work values ($r = .169, p < .05$), and altruistic work values ($r = .211, p < .01$). Employee fit was not significantly correlated with continuance organizational commitment, intrinsic work values, or leisure work values.

The relationship between employee fit and employee engagement was positive and significant for each generation with millennials showing the strongest correlation ($r = .600, p < .001$), followed by GenX ($r = .412, p < .01$), and then boomers ($r = .340, p < .05$). Similarly, the relationship between employee fit and employee attitudes (job satisfaction and affective organizational commitment) was significant for each generation. Millennials had the strongest correlation between employee fit and job satisfaction ($r = .764, p < .001$) followed by boomers ($r = .642, p < .001$), and then GenX ($r = .580, p < .001$). Boomers had the strongest correlation between employee fit and affective organizational commitment ($r = .674, p < .001$), followed by GenX ($r = .548, p < .001$), and then millennials ($r = .523, p < .001$). Only millennials had a significant correlation for the relationship between employee fit and continuance organizational commitment ($r = -.235, p < .05$).
Employee engagement was significantly correlated with affective organizational commitment ($r = .539, p < .001$), job satisfaction ($r = .711, p < .001$), intrinsic work values ($r = .180, p < .01$), social work values ($r = .162, p < .05$), and altruistic work values ($r = .321, p < .001$). Employee engagement was not significantly correlated with continuance organizational commitment, extrinsic work values, or leisure work values. The relationship between employee engagement and employee attitudes (job satisfaction and affective organizational commitment) was significant for each generation.

Millennials had the strongest correlation between employee engagement and job satisfaction ($r = .751, p < .001$) followed by GenX ($r = .636, p < .001$), and then boomers ($r = .432, p < .001$). GenX had the strongest correlation between employee engagement and affective organizational commitment ($r = .586, p < .001$), followed by millennials ($r = .493, p < .001$), and then boomers ($r = .349, p < .05$). No generation had a significant correlation for the relationship between employee engagement and continuance organizational commitment. In the following sections, the hypotheses are tested, and the results are reported.
Table 4.1: Correlation matrix

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*p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001. Italics represent subscales.
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*p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001. Italics represent subscales.
4.2 Hypothesis One

Hypothesis one posited a positive relationship between employee fit and employee engagement. A simple linear regression was performed in SPSS using the forced entry method to determine the relationships between employee fit ($M = 4.92, SD = .985$) and the level of employee engagement ($M = 4.22, SD = .653$). Using the mean for each construct, the value of $R^2_{Adj}$ was .256 ($p < .001$), indicating that employee fit accounted for 26% of the variance in employee engagement. The standardized coefficient indicated that employee fit ($\beta = .51, p < .001$) represented a significant and positive relationship with employee engagement. Therefore, employee fit was shown to positively correlate with employee engagement. H1 was supported.

4.3 Hypothesis Two

Hypothesis two posited a positive relationship between employee engagement and employee attitudes: H2(a1) affective organizational commitment, H2(a2) continuance organizational commitment, and H2(b) job satisfaction. A simple linear regression was performed in SPSS using the forced entry method to determine the relationship between the employee engagement and employee attitudes. The relationships were tested using the mean for each construct.

The first relationship tested was between employee engagement and affective organizational commitment ($M = 4.71, SD = 1.31$). The model’s fit value ($R^2_{Adj} = .287, p < .001$) showed employee engagement significantly accounting for 29% of the variance in affective organizational commitment. The standardized coefficient indicated that employee engagement ($\beta = .54, p < .001$) represented a significant and positive relationship with affective organizational commitment. Therefore, the relationship between employee engagement and affective organizational commitment was positive and significant. H2(a1) was supported.
The second relationship tested was between employee engagement and continuance organizational commitment ($M = 3.96$, $SD = 1.18$). The model’s fit value ($R^2_{Adj} = -.005$, $p = .904$) indicated that employee engagement did not significantly account for any variance in continuance organizational commitment. Therefore, the relationship between employee engagement and continuance organizational commitment was not significant. H2(a2) was not supported.

The third relationship tested was between employee engagement and job satisfaction ($M = 3.68$, $SD = .77$). The model’s fit value ($R^2_{Adj} = .502$, $p < .001$) showed employee engagement significantly accounting for 50% of the variance in job satisfaction. The standardized coefficient indicated employee engagement ($β = .71$, $p < .001$) represented a significant and positive relationship with job satisfaction. Therefore, the relationship between employee engagement and job satisfaction was positive and significant. H2(b) was supported.

In sum, employee engagement was shown to have a positive and significant relationship with affective organizational commitment and job satisfaction. However, the relationship between employee engagement and continuance organization commitment was not significant. Hence, H2(a1) and H2(b) were supported, whereas H2(a2) was not supported. Therefore, H2 was partially supported.

4.4 Hypothesis Three

Hypothesis three posited a positive relationship between employee fit and employee attitudes: H3(a1) affective organizational commitment, H3(a2) continuance organizational commitment, and H3(b) job satisfaction. A simple linear regression was performed in SPSS using the forced entry method to determine the relationship between employee fit and employee attitudes: H3(a1) affective organizational commitment, H3(a2) continuance organizational
commitment, and H3(b) job satisfaction. The relationships were tested using the mean for each construct.

The first relationship tested was between employee fit and affective organizational commitment. The model’s fit value ($R^2_{Adj} = .332, p < .001$) showed employee fit significantly accounting for 33% of the variance in affective organizational commitment. The standardized coefficient indicated that employee fit ($\beta = .58, p < .001$) represented a significant and positive relationship with affective organizational commitment. Therefore, the relationship between employee fit and affective organizational commitment was positive and significant. H3(a1) was supported.

The second relationship tested was between employee fit and continuance organizational commitment. The model’s fit value ($R^2_{Adj} = .004, p = .193$) indicated that employee fit did not significantly account for any variance in continuance organizational commitment. Therefore, the relationship between employee fit and continuance organizational commitment was not significant. H2(a2) was not supported.

The third relationship tested was between employee fit and job satisfaction. The model’s fit value ($R^2_{Adj} = .462, p < .001$) showed employee engagement significantly accounting for 46% of the variance in job satisfaction. The standardized coefficient indicated employee fit ($\beta = .68, p < .001$) represented a significant and positive relationship with job satisfaction. Therefore, the relationship between employee fit and job satisfaction was positive and significant. H3(b) was supported.

In sum, employee fit was shown to have a positive and significant relationship with affective organizational commitment and job satisfaction. However, the relationship between employee fit and continuance organization commitment was not significant. Hence, H3(a1) and
H3(b) were supported, whereas H3(a2) was not supported. Therefore, H3 was partially supported.

4.5 Hypothesis Four

Hypothesis four posited that employee engagement mediated the relationship between employee fit and employee attitudes: H4(a1) affective organizational commitment, H4(a2) continuance organizational commitment, and H4(b) job satisfaction. Mediation is observed if the direct path (c) for the total effect, as shown in Figure 4.1, is less than the direct effect (c’) for the indirect effect, as shown in Figure 4.2. For complete mediation, Baron and Kenny (1986, p. 1176) assert that the “strongest demonstration of mediation” occurs when path c’ is zero. Partial mediation, in contrast, occurs when path c’ is not zero. Other measures are used to determine the significance and magnitude of the mediation effect.

Statistical inference of the indirect effect (ab) is often observed in the Sobel test, which tests the significance of the indirect effect of the predictor on the outcome. In other words, “if the Sobel test is significant it means that the predictor variable significantly affects the outcome variable via the mediator” (Field, 2013, p. 411). Additionally, kappa-squared (k^2) is often used to assess the size of the indirect effect; kappa-squared expresses the “indirect effect as a ratio to the maximum possible indirect effect that you could have found given the design of your study” (Field, 2013, p. 413). The size conventions for k^2 are similar to R^2: small effect is .01, a medium effect is approximately .09, and a large effect is around .25 (Feld, 2013).
The mediation analysis was performed in SPSS using Hayes (2013) \textit{PROCESS} macro with model four to test the mediation effect of employee engagement. The mediation tests were based on 1,000 bootstrap samples using the bias corrected method and 95\% confidence level for confidence intervals. Mediation was tested using the mean for each construct.

The first test examined the mediating effect of employee engagement on the relationship between employee fit and affective organizational commitment. As presented in Figure 4.3, the total effect explained 33\% of the variance in affective organizational commitment ($R_{adj}^2 = .335$; $p < .001$). In comparison, the indirect effect explained 42\% of the variance in affective organizational commitment ($R_{adj}^2 = .416$; $p < .001$).
In review of the indirect effect, the analysis of the standardized coefficients showed significant relationships between employee fit and employee engagement ($\beta = .338$, $t(194) = 8.243$, $p < .001$), and employee engagement and affective organizational commitment ($\beta = .662$, $t(193) = 5.156$, $p < .001$). Since the direct path in the indirect effect was greater than zero ($c' = b = .548$, $t(193) = 6.448$, $p < .001$), employee engagement is said to partially mediate employee fit’s effect on affective organizational commitment. The indirect path ($ab$) was significant ($Z = 4.349$, $p < .001$). The size of the indirect effect was in the medium region, $k^2 = .178$. Therefore, the

![Figure 4.3: Summary of mediation analysis where affective organizational commitment is Y](image)

**TOTAL EFFECT**

(Adj.$R^2 = .335$***)

Direct Path: $c = .772$***

**INDIRECT EFFECT**

(Adj.$R^2 = .416$***)

Indirect Path ($ab$)

$a = .338$***

$\text{Employee Engagement} \ (M)$

$b = .662$***

Path denoted by unstandardized coefficient and significance

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$
effect of employee fit on affective organizational commitment was significantly mediated by
employee engagement. However, since employee engagement partially mediated employee fit’s
effect on affective organizational commitment, and was not fully mediated as hypothesized,
H4(a1) was not supported.

The second test examined the mediating effect of employee engagement on the
relationship between employee fit and continuance organizational commitment. The total effect
explained .8% of the variance in continuance organizational commitment ($R^2_{Adj} = .008; p = .193$). In comparison, the indirect effect explained 2% of the variance in continuance
organizational commitment ($R^2_{Adj} = .018; p = .169$). Therefore, the effect of employee fit on
continuance organizational commitment was not significantly mediated by employee
engagement. H4(a2) was not supported.

The third test examined the mediating effect of employee engagement on the relationship
between employee fit and job satisfaction. As presented in Figure 4.4, the total effect explained
46% of the variance in job satisfaction ($R^2_{Adj} = .464; p < .001$). In comparison, the indirect effect
explained 64% of the variance in job satisfaction ($R^2_{Adj} = .643; p < .001$).

In review of the indirect effect, the analysis of the standardized coefficients showed
significant relationships between employee fit and employee engagement ($\beta = .34, t(194) = 8.243, p < .001$), and employee engagement job satisfaction ($\beta = .58, t(193) = 9.822, p < .001$).

Since the direct path in the indirect effect was greater than zero ($c' = b = .339, t(193) = 8.631, p < .001$), employee engagement is said to partially mediate employee fit’s effect on job satisfaction. The indirect path ($ab$) was significant ($Z = 6.296, p < .001$). The size of the indirect effect was in the large region, $k^2 = .294$. Therefore, the effect of employee fit on job satisfaction was
significantly mediated by employee engagement. However, since employee engagement partially
mediated employee fit’s effect on job satisfaction, and was not fully mediated as hypothesized, H4(b) was not supported.

In sum, employee engagement was shown to significantly and partially mediate the effect employee fit had on affective organizational commitment and job satisfaction. However, since full mediation was hypothesized, rather than partial mediation, H4(a1) and H4(b) were not supported. Additionally, as hypothesized in H4(a2), employee engagement was not shown to
significantly mediate the effect employee fit had on continuance organizational commitment. Therefore, H4 was not supported.

4.5 Hypothesis Five

Hypothesis five posited that there are significant differences in work values between generations. To test this hypothesis, an independent t-test was performed on the same five measures of work values previously tested in Twenge et al.’s (2010) time-lag, longitudinal study on generational differences (i.e., extrinsic, intrinsic, social, altruistic, and leisure). Twenge et al. used archival survey data from the University of Michigan’s Monitoring the Future (MTF) ongoing study to perform their test. The archived data had previously been collected from random samples of graduating U.S. high school seniors (N = 16,507) during years 1976, 1991, and 2006. Hypothesis five sought to replicate the findings of Twenge et al. using a cross-sectional sample of participants of varying age.

An independent t-test was the statistical method selected to test H5. The independent t-test is used to examine how significant the difference is between groups (i.e., generations) based on a condition (i.e., work values). Following each independent t-test, the effect size was calculated for the t-statistic using Pearson’s correlation coefficient (r). The effect size, as shown by r, quantifies the magnitude of the relationship between two generation cohorts. Cohen (1992) suggest that the effect size for Pearson’s correlation coefficient falls in the range of small (r = .1 to .2) intermediate (r = .24 to 33) and large (r = .37-.45). Following Field (2013), the t-value was converted into an r-value using the following equation:

\[ r = \frac{t^2}{\sqrt{t^2 + df}} \]
4.5.1 Extrinsic work values

Three independent samples $t$-tests were performed to examine the differences in extrinsic work values between the three generations. On average, millennials reported having greater extrinsic work values ($M = 3.90, SE = .09$) than GenX ($M = 3.69, SE = .09$) and boomers ($M = 3.45, SE = .12$).

The independent samples $t$-test showed a statistically significant difference in extrinsic work values in one pair of generations: boomers and millennials. The difference, -.46, BCa 95% CI [-.775, -.159], was significant $t(117) = -2.99, p = .003$, two-tailed. The significant difference in extrinsic work values between boomers and millennials represented an intermediate size, $r = .26$. Two additional independent $t$-tests showed no significant difference in extrinsic work values between boomers and GenX ($t(113) = 1.53, p = .127$, two-tailed) or GenX and millennials ($t(156) = 1.74, p = .085$, two-tailed). The effect size for the differences in extrinsic work values between the boomer-GenX and GenX-millennial pairings was small ($r = .14, 13$, respectively).

In sum, a significant difference in the extrinsic work values was observed in the boomer-millennial pairing. In contrast, no significance difference in extrinsic work values was observed in the boomer-GenX and GenX-millennial pairings.

4.5.2 Intrinsic work values

Three independent samples $t$-tests were performed to examine the differences in intrinsic work values between the three generations. On average, millennials reported having greater intrinsic work values ($M = 4.59, SE = .06$) than GenX ($M = 4.44, SE = .05$) and boomers ($M = 4.30, SE = .10$).

The independent samples $t$-test showed a statistically significant difference in intrinsic work values in one pair of generations: boomers and millennials. The difference, -.33, BCa 95%
CI [-.585, -.081], was significant $t(91) = -2.91, p = .005$, two-tailed. The significant difference in intrinsic work values between boomer and millennials represented an intermediate effect size, $r = .24$. Two additional independent $t$-tests showed no significant difference in intrinsic work values between boomers and GenX ($t(113) = 1.39, p = .167$, two-tailed) or GenX and millennials ($t(156) = 1.83, p = .069$, two-tailed). The effect size for the differences in intrinsic work values between the boomer-GenX and GenX-millennial pairings was small ($r = .12, 14$, respectively).

In sum, a significant difference in the intrinsic work values was observed in the boomer-millennial pairing. In contrast, no significance difference in intrinsic work values was observed in the boomer-GenX and GenX-millennial pairings.

**4.5.3 Social work values**

Three independent samples $t$-tests were performed to examine the differences in social work values between the three generations. On average, millennials reported having greater social work values ($M = 3.54, SE = .10$) than boomers ($M = 3.12, SE = .17$) and GenX ($M = 3.10, SE = .12$).

The independent samples $t$-test showed a statistically significant difference in social work values in two pairs of generations: boomers and millennials, and GenX and millennials. The difference in the GenX-millennial pair, -.49, BCa 95% CI [-.823, -.096], was significant $t(109) = -2.86, p = .005$, two-tailed. The significant difference between GenX and millennials in social work values represented a low-moderate effect size, $r = .22$. The difference in the boomer-millennial pair, -.51, BCa 95% CI [-.908, -.130], was significant $t(51) = -2.43, p = .018$, two-tailed. The significant difference between boomers and millennials in social work values represented a low-moderate effect size, $r = .21$. An additional independent samples $t$-test showed no significance difference in social work values between boomers and GenX ($t(113) = .09, p = $
.922, two-tailed). The effect size \((r = .009)\) for the difference in social work values between boomers and GenX was insignificant.

In sum, a significant difference in the social work values was observed in the GenX-millennial and boomer-millennial pairings. In contrast, no significance difference in social work values was observed in the boomer-GenX pair.

4.5.4 Altruistic work values

Three independent samples \(t\)-tests were performed to examine the differences in altruistic work values between the three generations. On average, millennials reported having greater altruistic work values \((M = 4.01, SE = .09)\) than boomers \((M = 3.84, SE = .13)\) and GenX \((M = 3.81, SE = .10)\).

The independent samples \(t\)-test did not show a statistically significant difference in altruistic work values for any of the three pairs of generations. No significant difference was observed in altruistic work values between boomers and GenX \((t(113) = .13, p = .894, \text{two-tailed})\), GenX and millennials \((t(156) = -1.38, p = .167, \text{two-tailed})\), and boomers and millennials \((t(117) = -1.03, p = .306, \text{two-tailed})\). The effect size for the three pairs was small \((r = .01, .11, .09, \text{respectively})\). In sum, there was no significant difference between the generations in altruistic work values.

4.5.5 Leisure work values

Three independent samples \(t\)-tests were performed to examine the differences in leisure work values between the three generations. On average, millennials reported having greater leisure work values \((M = 3.62, SE = .09)\) than GenX \((M = 3.51, SE = .08)\) and boomers \((M = 3.45, SE = .09)\).
The independent samples t-test did not show a statistical significant difference in leisure work values for any of the three pairs of generations. No significant difference was observed in leisure work values between: boomers and GenX ($t(113) = -.45, p = .655$, two-tailed), GenX and millennials ($t(156) = -1.02, p = .309$, two-tailed), and boomers and millennials ($t(97) = -1.39, p = .168$, two-tailed). The effect size for the three pairs was small ($r = .04, .08, .11$, respectively). In sum, there was no significant difference between the generations in leisure work values.

4.5.6 Summary

In summary, fifteen independent sample t-tests were conducted to test H5. On average, as presented in Table 4.2, millennials reported having greater extrinsic, intrinsic, social, altruistic, and leisure work values than boomers and GenX.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4.2: Summary results of independent sample t-tests</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work Values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extrinsic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrinsic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altruistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisures</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The 15 independent samples t-tests revealed a statistically significant generational difference in four (27%) t-tests. No significant differences in work values were observed between boomer and GenX. However, three t-tests indicated a significant difference between boomers and millennials in extrinsic, intrinsic, and social work values. This finding suggests the largest significant generational difference in work values is between the millennial and boomer cohorts. The millennial-boomer pairing also has the largest gap in age. Additionally, one t-tests
indicated a significant difference between GenX and millennials in social work values. Since
four of the 15 t-test showed significant differences in generational work values, H5 was partially
supported.

4.6 Hypothesis Six

A moderator is “a qualitative or quantitative variable that affects the direction and/or
strength of the relation between an independent or predictor variable and a dependent or criterion
variable” (Baron & Kenny, 1986, p. 1174). Hypothesis six posited that the relationship between
employee fit and employee engagement is moderated by generational differences. Specifically, I
hypothesized that (a) Baby boomers would have the greatest positive impact on the relationship
between employee fit and employee engagement, and, (b) GenX and millennial cohorts would
decreasingly experience a less positive impact on the relationship between employee fit and
employee engagement.

The moderation test was performed in SPSS using Hayes’ (2013)PROCESS macro with
model one to test the relationship between the interaction effect (i.e., independent variable
multiplied by the moderating variable) with employee engagement. The moderation tests were
based on 1,000 bootstrap samples using the bias corrected method and 95% confidence level for
confidence intervals. Following Field’s (2013) recommendation, I used Hayes’ (2013) PROCESS
macro to center the means on the predictor variable. Centering refers to the process of
subtracting the variable measure’s mean from that same variable so that the transformed mean is
zero. Field (2013, p. 399) recommends centering variables when the model contains an
interaction such that, “Centering will make interpreting the main effects easier.”

Prior to performing the moderation tests, I transformed the generational categorical data
(e.g., three categories: 1 = boomers, 2 = GenX, 3 = millennials) into dichotomous variables.
Referred to as dummy coding, this transformation process, as illustrated in Table 4.3, involves assigning a numerical one to a category (i.e., reference group) and a zero to the other categories (i.e., comparison group). The dummy coding process was performed three times, once for each generational cohort.

**Table 4.3: Summary of transforming categorical variables into dummy variables**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Original Categorical Variable</th>
<th>Dummy Coding (Reference Group (1), Comparison Group (0))</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Boomers (1) GenX (2) Millennial (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boomers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 0 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GenX</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0 1 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Millennial</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0 0 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The hypothesized moderating effect is said to be supported if the relationship between the interaction effect (i.e., independent variable multiplied by the moderating variable) and the dependent variable is significant (Henseler & Fassott, 2010). When a moderation test is performed for a dummy variable (e.g., reference group), the size of the moderation effect is interpreted in relation to the comparison group. For this study, the interaction effect for a specified generational cohort (reference group) is interpreted in relation to the other cohorts (comparison group).

To determine the strength of the moderating effect, Henseler and Fassott (2010) recommend comparing the proportion of variance explained by the determination coefficient $R^2$ in the main effect to the $R^2$ of the moderated model. Additionally, and drawing on Cohen (1988), Henseler and Fassott (2010) suggest calculating the effect size of the moderating effect ($f^2$) using the following formula:

$$f^2 = \frac{R^2_{\text{moderated model}} - R^2_{\text{main effect}}}{1 - R^2_{\text{moderated model}}}$$
Henseler and Fassott offer the following effect size conventions for \( f^2 \): .02 regarded as weak, .15 as moderate, and .35 as strong. However, a small effect size does not mean the moderation effect should be discounted: “Even a small interaction effect can be meaningful under extreme moderating conditions, if the resulting beta changes are meaningful, then it is important to take these conditions into account” (Chin, Marcolin, & Newsted, 2003, p. 211). Notably, research has shown that detection of significant moderation effects in field studies is often difficult (McClelland & Judd, 1993).

McClelland and Judd (1993) observed that interaction effects in field studies have reduced efficiency resulting in greater difficulty in detecting moderation. Several factors are said to contribute to the increased difficulty in detecting moderating effects in field studies. First, model error is typically greater in field studies, resulting in increased noise making it more difficult to detect reliable moderation effects. Second, errors of measurement is exacerbated when the independent variable and moderating variable are multiplied to form the interaction effect. Third, theoretical constraints limit the magnitude of the moderator coefficient, and consequently diminishing the ability to detect moderation effects. Finally, the functional form and the nonlinearity of the independent and moderating variables. Given these factors, McClelland and Judd (1993) suggest that “obvious methods for increasing statistical power are to accept higher rates of Type I errors . . . or to increase the number of observations” (p. 387). Therefore, the level of significance for detecting moderating effects in this study was relaxed to 0.10.

**4.6.1 Moderation effects**

The first moderation test examined the impact of the millennial cohort on the relationship between employee fit and employee engagement. The moderation analysis showed that the
millennial cohort significantly contributed 3.1% to the main effect ($\Delta R^2_{Adj} = .031$, $p = .003$). The millennial interaction effect was positive and significant ($\beta = .289$, 95% $[0.079, 0.399]$, $t = 2.90$, $p < .01$). The moderation effect size was small ($f^2 = .04$).

As a follow-up to the test of interaction, the “pick-a-point” procedure was used to formally probe the interaction effect. When the moderator is dichotomous, PROCESS generates regressions for the values defined by the moderator. For this test, millennials were defined with the value of one, and non-millennials were defined by a zero. These regressions are interpreted as any other regression. Following Field (2013), the values of most interest are the effect ($b$) and its significance. As presented in Table 4.4, the conditional effect of non-millennials on the relationship between employee fit and engagement was significant and positive ($b = .224$, $p < .001$). The conditional effect of millennials on the relationship between employee fit and engagement was significant and positive ($b = .463$, $p < .001$).

Table 4.4: Conditional effect of X on Y at values of the moderator: Millennials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dichotomous Moderator</th>
<th>Effect</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>LLCI</th>
<th>ULCI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-Millennial</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>.224</td>
<td>.051</td>
<td>4.364</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Millennial</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.463</td>
<td>.063</td>
<td>7.382</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.339</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Values for dichotomous moderators are the two values of the moderator. Level of confidence for all confidence internals in output: .95


Figure 4.5 offers a visual representation of the moderation effect of millennials and non-millennials on the relationship between employee fit and employee engagement. As can be seen, the slope linking employee fit to employee engagement is positive for both millennials and non-millennials. Interestingly, the slope is steeper for the millennials ($\theta_{(X\rightarrow Y)|M=1} = .463$) as
compared to non-millennials ($\theta_{(X\rightarrow Y)|M=0} = .224$). Therefore, the relationship between employee fit and engagement is stronger for millennials than non-millennials.

**Figure 4.5: Impact of millennials and non-millennials on relationship between employee fit and engagement**

![Graph showing the impact of millennials and non-millennials on the relationship between employee fit and engagement.]

Next, I tested the moderating effect of GenX on the relationship between employee fit and engagement. Using the relaxed significance level ($p < .10$), the results showed the GenX cohort significantly contributed 1% to the main effect ($\Delta R^2_{adj} = .011$, $p = .091$). Although the slope of the moderated relationship was positive, the GenX interaction effect was negative; hence, GenX’s moderation was less than the comparison group (i.e., millennial and boomer) resulting in a negative standardized coefficient value ($\beta = -.142$, 95% [-0.308, 0.023], $t = -1.69$, $p < .10$). The moderation effect size was weak ($f^2 = .01$).

As a follow-up to the test of interaction, the “pick-a-point” procedure was used to formally probe the interaction effect. GenX was defined with the value of one, and non-GenX was defined by a zero. As presented in Table 4.5, the conditional effect of non-GenX on the relationship between employee fit and engagement was significant and positive ($b = .394$, $p <
.001). The conditional effect of GenX on the relationship between employee fit and engagement was significant and positive ($b = .284, p < .001$).

**Table 4.5**: Conditional effect of X on Y at values of the moderator: GenX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dichotomous Moderator</th>
<th>Effect</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>LLCI</th>
<th>ULCI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-GenX</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>.391</td>
<td>.051</td>
<td>7.57</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.289</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GenX</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.248</td>
<td>.057</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.117</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Values for dichotomous moderators are the two values of the moderator.

Level of confidence for all confidence internals in output: .95

GenX: $n = 77$. Non-GenX: $n = 119$.

Figure 4.6 offers a visual representation of the moderation effect of GenX and non-GenX on the relationship between employee fit and employee engagement. As can be seen, the slope linking employee fit to employee engagement is positive for both GenX and non-GenX.

Interestingly, the slope is slightly steeper for the non-GenX ($\theta_{(X \rightarrow Y)|M=0} = .391$) as compared to GenX ($\theta_{(X \rightarrow Y)|M=1} = .248$). Therefore, the relationship between employee fit and engagement is

**Figure 4.6**: Moderation of the effect of employee fit on employee engagement by GenX
stronger for non-GenX than GenX.

The final moderation test was performed on the boomer data. The moderation analysis showed the boomer cohort significantly contributed 2% to the main effect ($\Delta R^2_{Adj} = .020, p = .019$). Although the slope of the moderated relationship was positive, the boomer interaction effect was negative; hence, the boomer’s moderation was less than the comparison group (i.e., millennial and GenX) resulting in a negative standardized coefficient value ($\beta = -.236, 95\% [-.4342, -.0381], t = -2.352, p < .05$). The moderation effect size was weak ($f^2 = .03$).

As a follow-up to the test of interaction, the “pick-a-point” procedure was used to formally probe the interaction effect. Boomers were defined with the value of one, and non-boomers were defined by a zero. As presented in Table 4.6, the conditional effect of non-boomers on the relationship between employee fit and engagement was significant and positive ($b = .367, p < .001$). The conditional effect of boomers on the relationship between employee fit and engagement was positive ($b = .284, p = .146$), but not significant

Figure 4.7 offers a visual representation of the moderation effect of boomers and non-boomers on the relationship between employee fit and employee engagement. As can be seen, the slope linking employee fit to employee engagement is positive for both boomers and non-boomers. Interestingly, the slope is slightly steeper for the non-boomers ($\theta_{(X\rightarrow Y)|M=0} = .367$) as compared to the boomers ($\theta_{(X\rightarrow Y)|M=1} = .131$). Therefore, the relationship between employee fit and engagement is stronger for non-boomers than boomers. Notably, the boomers’ conditional effect was not significant.
Table 4.6: Conditional effect of X on Y at values of the moderator: Boomers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Moderator</th>
<th>Effect</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>LLCI</th>
<th>ULCI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-Boomers</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>.367</td>
<td>.045</td>
<td>8.111</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.277</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boomers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.131</td>
<td>.089</td>
<td>1.456</td>
<td>.146</td>
<td>-.046</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Values for dichotomous moderators are the two values of the moderator.
Level of confidence for all confidence internals in output: .95

Boomers: n = 38. Non-boomers: n = 158.

Figure 4.7: Moderation of the effect of employee fit on employee engagement by boomer and non-boomer

4.6.2 Summary

H6 made three assertions. The first assertion posited that the relationship between employee fit and employee engagement is moderated by generational differences. The moderation tests showed that each generation significantly impacted the relationship between employee fit and employee engagement. Given that each cohort had a significant interaction
effect on the relationship between employee fit and employee engagement, the first assertion in H6 was supported.

H6(a) further posited that boomers would have the greatest positive moderation on the main effect. Although boomers had a significant interaction effect on the main effect, the effect was negative. Additionally, the pick-a-point procedure revealed that the boomers’ conditional effect on the relationship between employee fit and employee engagement was not significant. As depicted in Figure 4.8, millennials had the most positive interaction effect and strongest conditional effect on the relationship between employee fit and employee engagement. Therefore, H6(a) was not supported.

Next, H6(b) posited that the GenX and millennial cohorts would decreasingly experience a less positive moderating relationship between employee fit and employee engagement. Although GenX was correctly hypothesized to be the second cohort to show a decreasingly positive moderating effect, millennials did not follow suit. Rather, boomers exhibited the weakest moderating relationship as illustrated by its flat simple slope in Figure 4.8 and non-significant condition effect. Therefore, H6(b) received partial support.

As summarized in Table 4.7, each cohort had a significant interaction effect on the relationship between employee fit and employee engagement. Millennials, rather than boomers, had the strongest moderating impact on the relationship between employee fit and employee engagement. Boomers had the weakest moderating impact. Although each cohort exhibited a significant interaction effect on the relationship between employee fit and employee engagement, the sequence of the millennials and boomers was opposite of what was hypothesized. Moreover,
boomer’s conditional effect on the relationship between employee fit and engagement was not significant. Therefore, H6 was partially supported.

**Figure 4.8:** Summary of simple slopes for each generation’s effect of employee fit on employee engagement

![Graph showing simple slopes for each generation's effect of employee fit on employee engagement]

**Table 4.7:** Summary of moderation test results and analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Generation</th>
<th>( \Delta R^2 )</th>
<th>( \beta )</th>
<th>CI[UB, LB]</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>( b )</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>( r )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Millennials</td>
<td>.031</td>
<td>.239</td>
<td>.0793, .3992</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>.463</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.600***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GenX</td>
<td>.011</td>
<td>-.143</td>
<td>-.3088, .0235</td>
<td>.091</td>
<td>.248</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.412***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boomers</td>
<td>.020</td>
<td>-.236</td>
<td>-.432, -.0381</td>
<td>.019</td>
<td>.131</td>
<td>.146</td>
<td>.340*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*\( p = .05 \). **\( p = .01 \). ***\( p = .001 \).

Pearson's correlation coefficient \( (r) \) provided for the employee fit and employee engagement relationship.
CHAPTER 5
DISCUSSION

A primary concern of organizations is the development of an engaged workforce. The cause of concern stems in part from recurring reports that approximately two-thirds of U.S. employees are not highly engaged (Aon, 2016; Gallup, 2015; PwC, 2015). There are two sides to this concern. On one hand, the allure of a highly engaged workforce is undeniable, and is often a top organizational objective (Bersin, 2015). A highly-engaged workforce has been associated with higher revenue growth, increased employee productivity, improved customer loyalty, lower absenteeism, and turnover (Gallup, 2016a; HayGroup, 2016; Mercer, 2014), knowledge sharing, creativity (Eldor & Vigoda-Gadot, 2016), employee well-being (Shuck et al., 2017), and improved firm performance (Barrick et al., 2015). On the other hand, disengaged employees are particularly worrisome because they are said to be withdrawn and detached from their work roles (Kahn, 1990), unhappy and unproductive (Gallup, 2013). Disengaged employees are “physically uninvolved in tasks, cognitively unvigilant, and emotionally disconnected from others in ways that hide what they think and feel, their creativity, their beliefs and values, and their personal connections to others” (Kahn, 1990, p. 702). Surprisingly, employee engagement levels have barely budged from the 30% it was 13 years ago (Gallup, 2015). Given this organizational challenge, scholars (Christian et al., 2011; Saks & Gruman, 2014) have called for more research on identifying factors that lead to high levels of employee engagement.

This study examined the antecedent relationship employee fit has with employee engagement. The concept of employee fit offers a promising and under explored area that has shown glimpses of being a powerful determinant of engagement (Foster, 2013; Rich et al., 2010; Shuck et al., 2011). The concept of employee fit refers to the compatibility (e.g., match or
congruence) of the employee with their work environment (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). According to Gallup (2017, p. 17), poor job fit leads to low levels of engagement because workers are unlikely to believe “they have opportunities to do what they do best every day.” Job fit is one of the most common explanations employees give when voluntarily exiting their job (Gallup, 2017). In contrast, good employee fit is thought to lead to positive employee outcomes (Ostroff & Schulte, 2012). Some believe that an employee’s fit with their work is “the first and perhaps most important part of employee engagement” (Bersin, 2015, p. 151). Despite these indications, little empirical research has been done to substantiate claims that job fit leads to high levels of engagement.

Complicating the relationship between employee fit and employee engagement is the generation diversity present in the contemporary workforce. Generation diversity has always been present in the U.S. labor force, but it has become more prevalent (Standifer et al., 2013). It is not uncommon to see individuals from each of the three main generations in today’s workforce working side by side; and, there is evidence that the levels of engagement experienced by each generation vary. Gallup (2017) reports that millennials are the least actively engaged generation (31%), whereas boomers are the most actively engaged (35%). The low engagement level of millennials is thought to be associated with this cohort’s higher turnover rate (Gallup, 2016b). The generational differences literature states that millennials are more likely to leave their employer than previous generations (Becton et al., 2014; Lyons et al., 2015; Lyons et al., 2012). Gallup (2016b) reports in its recent report, How Millennials Want to Work and Live, that 50% of millennials plan to leave their company one year from now.

To address these phenomena, I employed a field study research design to test an expanded model of employee engagement as presented in Figure 5.1. Self-report data were
collected from three subsamples and analyzed using quantitative methods. Hypothesis testing was performed using correlation and regression applications. Specifically, this study examined the mediating effect engagement has on the relationship between employee fit and employee attitudes, and the conditional impact different generations had on the relationship between employee fit and employee engagement. Existing theory and constructs were applied in new ways to address the low levels of employee engagement common in U.S. organizations.

A series of hypotheses were developed to answer four research questions concerning the relationship between employee fit and employee engagement: (1) What is the relationship between employee fit and employee engagement? (2) How does employee engagement and employee fit relate to employee attitudes (i.e., organizational commitment and job satisfaction)? Two additional hypotheses were developed to answer research questions concerning generational differences: (3) Are there differences between generational cohorts? (4) Does the relationship between employee fit and engagement vary by generational cohort?

For the study’s first hypothesis I drew upon the strong explanatory reasoning of PE fit theory to link employee fit to employee engagement. The results of hypothesis one showed strong support for a positive relationship between employee fit and employee engagement. This
finding suggests that employee fit is a significant factor in facilitating high levels of engagement. Although I used different measures to operationalize both fit and engagement, my findings are consistent with Foster’s (2013). My research validates the importance of employee fit in facilitating high levels of engagement, and provides strong empirical support for Bersin’s (2015, p. 151) claim that fit is the “most important part of employee engagement.”

My second hypothesis offers support for the claim that engagement is not an end in itself; but rather, engagement leads to other important organizational and employee outcomes. The results of this study provide strong support for the importance of engagement as a direct antecedent to organizational outcomes (Byrne et al., 2016; Christian et al., 2011; Shuck et al., 2017). First, this study showed that high levels of engagement lead to affective organizational commitment. This is an important finding for practitioners because previous meta-analytic research has shown that affective organizational commitment has a strong positive relationship with higher task and contextual performance, as well as a negative relationship with employee turnover cognitions (Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & Topolnytsky, 2002). Second, hypothesis two showed that high levels of engagement lead to job satisfaction. This finding is important because prior meta-analytic studies have linked job satisfaction to higher levels of work performance (Judge et al., 2001) and low levels of turnover cognitions (Brown & Peterson, 1993; Schleicher et al., 2015). These findings are consistent with Kahn’s (1990) engagement theory, which argues that employees with high levels of engagement lead to positive outcomes.

However, employee engagement was not significantly related to continuance organizational commitment. This finding is somewhat surprising since continuance commitment often results in feelings and behaviors that indicate apathy (Allen & Meyer, 1996), which would suggest disengagement. Previous meta-analytic research has shown small significant negative
relationships between both continuance commitment and turnover cognitions and job performance (Meyer et al., 2002). Both turnover cognitions and job performance have been significantly associated with employee engagement (Byrne et al., 2016; Mackay et al., 2017; Soane et al., 2012).

For my third hypothesis, I primarily drew upon PE fit theory to explain the relationship between employee fit and employee attitudes. PE fit theory explains that employees will have more favorable attitudes toward their work environment resulting from the compatibility (fit) they have with their work environment. Therefore, when employees experience fit, they will have positive feelings toward their job and a stronger emotional attachment to their organization. This study provides strong support for PE fit theory by showing that employee fit has positive relationships with job satisfaction and affective organizational commitment. These findings validated previous research on these relationships (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005).

Surprisingly, neither engagement or employee fit had a significant relationship with continuance organizational commitment, as posited in hypotheses two and three. Previous meta-analytic research has shown significant relationships between continuance commitment and turnover cognitions and job performance (Meyer et al., 2002); both turnover cognitions and job performance have been significantly associated with engagement (Mackay et al., 2017; Shuck et al., 2014; Soane et al., 2012). Yet, in this study, I found no relationship between engagement and continuance commitment. This finding stands in contrast to previous research that indicated a negative relationship between employee fit and continuance organizational commitment (Foster, 2013). Overall, this study’s finding adds to the few engagement and fit studies that have examined the relationship with continuance organizational commitment.
My fourth hypothesis examined the mediating influence employee engagement had on the relationship between employee fit and employee attitudes. Previous research has shown that engagement significantly mediates the effect of the organizational fit dimension on task and contextual performance (Rich et al., 2010) and turnover intentions (Shuck et al., 2011). To my knowledge, the mediating effect of engagement has not been examined on the relationship between employee fit and the employee attitudes used in this study.

The results of my mediation tests provided strong and significant support for employee engagement’s mediating influence on the effect employee fit had on affective organizational commitment and job satisfaction. Since employee fit had a significant and positive relationship with job satisfaction and affective organizational, engagement did not fully mediate the relationship. Therefore, H4 was not supported. Yet, I was surprised by the large partial mediating effect engagement had on two models. Engagement’s mediating influence added approximately 18% and 8% respectively to the direct relationships between employee fit and job satisfaction and affective commitment. This finding strongly supports the importance of organizational practices aimed at developing an engaged workforce. Consistent with hypotheses two and three, employee engagement did not mediate the effect employee fit had on continuance organizational commitment.

In sum, the first four hypotheses tested the relationships between three individual-level factors: employee fit, employee engagement, and employee attitudes. These hypotheses found a positive and significant relationship between employee fit and engagement, as well as engagement’s partial mediating influence on the relationship between employee fit and two positive employee attitudes (i.e., job satisfaction and affective organizational commitment). The next two hypotheses examined the conditional effect of generational differences.
For the fifth and six hypotheses, I drew from generational theory (Mannheim, 1952) to develop the rationale underpinning the anticipated differences between three generational cohorts in the workforce, commonly referred to as boomers, GenX, and millennials. Generational theory argues that individuals born around the same time and proximity share a similar value structure because they experienced the same chronological, social, and historical context during their formative years (Mannheim, 1952). These social forces imprint a shared memory among individuals of similar birth age, thereby affecting future work attitudes and values (Schuman & Scott, 1989).

To establish the presence of generational differences, this study examined the variance between the generational cohorts’ mean scores on five work values. The analysis showed that the cohorts’ mean scores were different for each work value: extrinsic, intrinsic, social, altruistic, and leisure. However, the quantitative tests indicated that only a quarter of the differences were statistically significant. Specifically, fifteen independent samples t-test were performed to test hypothesis five; this procedure found significant differences in four (27%) of the 15 independent samples t-tests. The study found no significant difference in work values between the boomer and GenX cohorts. However, the independent samples t-test showed that the boomer and millennial cohorts had significant differences in extrinsic, intrinsic, and social work values. GenX and millennials had a significant difference in social work values.

Given the high level of attention to generational differences in the popular press and organizations, I was surprised to see the only significant differences involved millennials. Notably, the social work value was the one only value where differences were observed in both the millennial-GenX and millennial-boomer relationships. Consistent with Turkle’s (2015) ethnographic research, the decline in face-to-face conversations in a work context may help
explain the generational difference observed in social work values. Turkle (2015, p. 22) claims that many young people often shy away from the “real time” inherent in face-to-face conversation in lieu of texting. In a work context, instant messaging and email enable a conversation-less setting. Twenge et al.’s (2010) longitudinal research found that millennials placed the least importance on social work values and boomers placed the most. This study’s finding, however, observed that millennials placed the most importance on social work values and boomers placed the least. One explanation for this conflicting result may be due to age, maturity, and stages of life effects rather than generational differences, which would suggest that the need for social interaction may change over time.

The final hypothesis anticipated that different generations would moderate the relationship between employee fit and employee engagement. Generational theory suggests that employee engagement is the function of the compatibility between generational differences and employee fit. I expected the interaction between boomers and employee fit to result in the highest level of engagement, and the interaction between millennials and employee fit to have the lowest level of engagement.

The moderation tests showed that different generations significantly impacted the relationship between employee fit and employee engagement. Contrary to my hypothesis, the relationship between fit and engagement was strongest in the millennial cohort and weakest in the boomer cohort. The study’s results suggest that an increase in perceived employee fit should result in a stronger effect on millennials’ engagement levels, whereas the same increase in employee fit would have a weaker effect on GenX’s engagement level, and an even weaker effect on boomers’ engagement level.
Since the millennial cohort reported having the least employee fit and the lowest level of engagement, any perceived increase in a millennial’s employee fit would have a much larger positive effect on their engagement level. In contrast, boomers have almost maximized the influence that positive employee fit perceptions have on the relationship with engagement. Therefore, any perceived increase in a boomer’s employee fit would have a much smaller positive effect on their engagement level. This finding makes sense given the historical significance boomers have had on the labor force; boomers had until 2012 represented the largest component of the workforce (Fry, 2015).

Although their participation in the workforce is declining, boomers still make up a large component of the labor force at 29% (Fry, 2015); yet, boomers have the most organizational executives (Korn Ferry, 2017). Since organizational leaders ultimately create the organization’s culture (Schein, 2010), this reasoning holds that boomer executives have established the organizational cultures common in the current U.S. business landscape.

Organizational culture refers “to shared assumptions about how to perform and relate internally” (Schein, 2010, p. 21). Schein (2010) suggest that the assumptions that underpin organizational cultures relate to unconscious, taken-for-granted beliefs and values that influence behavior, perceptions, thoughts, and feelings. Drawing on generation theory (Mannheim, 1952), boomer employees will have an implicit understanding of the organization culture because they are from the same generation as the organization’s leaders. Millennials do not have the same common background to draw on, and will consequently experience less employee fit. Schein (2010, p. 23) states that individuals who do not share the same organizational assumptions that “are so taken for granted that someone who does not hold them is viewed as a “foreigner” or as “crazy” and is automatically dismissed.” Although millennials are not crazy or foreign to
organizational life, generation theory’s connection with organizational culture offers a reasonable explanation for millennials’ weaker employee fit perceptions and lower engagement levels as compared to boomers.

Another explanation for millennials’ weaker employee fit perceptions and lower levels of engagement observed in this study relate to a lack of familiarity of the basic assumptions that characterize organizational culture. As millennials continue to gain organizational experience, one might expect their growing familiarity with the assumptions that reinforce organization culture would result in improved fit and engagement. From this view, the results of the moderation tests in my sixth hypothesis may be more related to career stage rather than generational differences.

In sum, previous engagement research has rarely considered the moderating impact of age or generations. Earlier studies have shown that age diversity moderates the relationship between job conditions and employee engagement (James et al., 2011) and HRM flexibility and engagement (Bal & De Lange, 2015). This study adds to the relatively thin research on the importance of recognizing age diversity in developing high levels of engagement by offering evidence that different generations moderate the relationship between employee fit and engagement.

The model presented in figure 5.1 could be described as an employee fit-centered approach to understanding employee engagement within a generation-diverse work environment. Differences between generations can be explained in terms of the compatibility each cohort has with the work environment. Therefore, to some extent employee engagement can be considered a function of the interaction between a generation and its work environment. This employee fit-
centered approach to understanding engagement within a generation-diverse workplace context represents a new contribution to the engagement literature.

This research provides a response to Christian et al.’s (2011) recommendation for future research on the antecedents to engagement to examine aspects of PE fit. This study’s contribution to the engagement literature includes research findings on (a) the relationship between the PE fit premise and the engagement literature, (b) the mediating effect engagement has on the relationship between employee fit and employee attitudes, and (c) the impact different generations have on the relationship between employee fit and employee engagement. Despite the prevalence of PE fit theory in the management literature, to my knowledge, the engagement literature has not examined or tested the explanatory role PE fit theory has toward facilitating high levels of engagement. Similarly, to my knowledge, this study is the first to examine engagement’s mediating influence on the relationship between a formative model of fit (“employee fit”) and employee work attitudes. Finally, this study is one of a few that have considered the importance of age diversity, and perhaps the first to use generation theory, to consider the conditional impact on employee engagement levels. Although this study has many positive qualities, it is not without limitations.

5.1 Limitations

All research has limitations, and this study is no exception. There are trade-offs in each research strategy, and for the field study, that meant having high contextual realism at the expense of potentially lower generalizability of findings and low precision and control of measurement variables. There are ways of dealing with these and other trade-offs, and this study attempted to maximize those opportunities when possible.
First, low generalizability is often concern in field study research involving a single organization. A little more than half \((n = 103)\) of the study’s 196 participants were from the same financial services organization, which presents an external validity concern. However, the generalizability of the findings was aided by additional subsamples comprising graduate students \((n = 77)\) and museum employees \((n = 6)\). In total, the study’s sample represented employees from 52 different employers, and the demographics were diversified across job description and role, tenure, age, gender, and education.

Although the overall sample size was adequate, the small number of boomers that participated in the study was a limitation of the findings. Only 38 baby boomers, 19% of the total sample, participated in the study. Yet, boomers made up 29% of the workforce a few years ago (Fry, 2015). Notably, and prior to the data collection, many tenured employees of the financial services firm subsample received a voluntary retirement package if they were age 55 and over. Obviously, this early retirement package limited the participation of boomers in this study. A larger sample of the boomer workforce would have been more representative of the current workforce and bolstered the generalizability of the findings. However, the reality of using this organization provided a limitation in this study.

The field study design is also subject to internal validity concerns. Any phenomena in the workplace context that was not measured or controlled for could have influenced the variables of interests. The early retirement of employees at the financial services firm further compounded this problem. This local history event specific to the financial services firm could have left some business units short-handed, which might have resulted in lower job satisfaction for those employees left behind. Similarly, the employees left behind might have experienced a drop in their perceived organizational fit if they thought the voluntary buy-out practice was unfair.
Indeed, employee engagement levels could have dropped following the first days after the boomer retirees’ last day at work.

Perhaps a more serious threat to the study’s internal validity relates to the fact that all measures used in this study were obtained from the same source. Referred to as common-method variance (CMV), this concern is most worrisome because the study’s findings may reflect variance that is attributable to the measurement method, and not the constructs the measures represented. Although the Harman’s single-factor test did not detect any CMV, this test does not negate the possibility of CMV bias. Another common flaw of self-report measures is when individuals inaccurately respond to questions to make them look more socially acceptable (Constantine & Ponterott, 2006). This problem is referred to as social desirability and is related to impression management. This concern exists at varying degrees for all research strategies where there is some obtrusiveness. This study limited this bias by conducting an anonymous survey.

Another threat to internal validity relates to the extent to which generational differences were identified in this study. Rival hypotheses make it impossible to differentiate between generational cohort effects (i.e., formative context), age-related effects (i.e., maturation), or conditions of the historical period in which the data was collected. Referred to as the “age-period-cohort confound” (Lyons & Kuron, 2013, p. 142), this limitation is particularly problematic for cross-sectional studies. Only longitudinal designs are capable of isolating cohort effects over time, and have provided compelling support for cohort differences (Kowske et al., 2010; Smola & Sutton, 2002; Twenge et al., 2010). Although cross-sectional studies are poorly suited to examine generational differences, this study did attempt to control for cohort effects by
using the same work values measure in Twenge et al.’s (2010) longitudinal, time-lag study on generational differences.

Finally, three of the ten variable measures had less than desirable reliability, but the majority of the measures exceeded the minimal reliability thresholds. Several of the work value measures had less than desirable inter-item reliability. In one instance, three items in the intrinsic work values had to be removed because of correlations less than .2; it was determined that these questions did not sufficiently align with the construct’s definition. Less than desirable reliabilities were reported for the social (.72), altruistic (.74), and leisure (.62) work value measures. The low reliability may be a result of the few items in these measures. Both the social and altruistic work values were measured with two items each, whereas leisure was measured with four items. Although this study has limitations, its findings have important implications for practitioners and managers.

5.2 Practical Implications

The results obtained in this study have important implications for both organizational hiring practices and initiatives aimed at employee retention. With industries, such as financial services, struggling to attract young talent and cope with higher turnover among millennial employees (CFP, 2017; PwC, 2017), employee fit offers practitioners a viable solution to facilitate higher levels of employee engagement across an age-diverse workforce.

In response to the pervasive low employee engagement levels (Aon, 2016; Gallup, 2015; PwC, 2015) and lack of actionable (employer-based) recommendations on how to address the engagement gap (Whittington et al., 2017), this study proposed and tested a model of engagement that offers several implications for practice. This study’s findings showed that fit happens, and engagement matters for facilitating important employee outcomes. Managers who
are concerned about low engagement levels should, therefore, be encouraged to foster perceptions of employee fit. The combined dimensions of fit strongly influenced engagement; thus, managers should focus on enhancing employee fit perceptions in both pre-entry and post-entry contexts. In the following sections, I first discuss employee recruiting activities (e.g., pre-entry), followed by discussion of socialization, and development activities (e.g., post-entry).

### 5.2.1 Recruiting

This study’s findings suggest there are practical implications for organizational recruitment efforts. All too often an interviewer’s hiring focus is on identifying the best person. The implications of this study, as summarized in Table 5.1, suggest that this common hiring focus should be complemented by also emphasizing topics that influence employee fit perceptions. In other words, fit happens for both the employer and the prospective employee; however, to facilitate high levels of engagement, focus should be placed on the employees’ fit perceptions, and that begins in the recruiting process. Recruiting efforts should, therefore, be used to create an experience where applicants can infer employee fit.

For example, recruiters would be wise to provide information in their social media, website, and job ads about job role attributes, responsibilities, requirements, organizational policies, norms, benefits, rewards, and perks. These topics should also be included in the interview process, as a handout and discussed by the recruiter. Information about the workgroup and the supervisor should be provided early in the recruiting process; and, whenever possible, the supervisor and group members should be included in the interview process so that applicants can begin developing favorable employee fit perceptions. Recruiting efforts that result in strong employee fit perceptions are thought to facilitate high levels of employee engagement for those individuals who are hired.
A realistic job preview (RJP) is also recommended to highlight each of the fit dimensions. An RJP refers to “the presentation by an organization of both favorable and unfavorable job-related information to job candidates” (Phillips, 1998, p. 673). Since fit was shown in this study to relate to engagement, the RJP should include favorable information to cultivate employee fit perceptions. Less than favorable information should also be included in the RJP so that prospective employees could select themselves out before a hiring offer is made or joining the organization. A well-designed RJP should, therefore, highlight the good, bad, and ugly attributes of the supervisor, group, job, and organization.

Table 5.1: Summary of pre-entry activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-Entry</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social media</td>
<td>Provide information on company website and job ads about job roles, responsibilities, requirements, organizational policies, norms, benefits, rewards, and perks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>Communicate organizational and job fit attributes (provide handout). Include supervisor and group members when possible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Realistic Job Preview</td>
<td>Design RJP to include organization-, job-, group-, and supervisor-related fit attributes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.2.2 Socialization

Once hired, early socialization efforts of new employees should further heighten employee fit perceptions. For organization and job fit, onboarding practices should explicitly convey the organizational policies, norms, policies, as well as job roles, responsibilities, and requirements. This practice would help ease uncertainties new employees might have and to reinforce and enhance employee fit perceptions. Moreover, early socialization practices should involve the new hires’ supervisors and coworkers as much as possible. In addition to training, early socialization practices might include social activities and events (e.g., lunches, team
building with co-workers, and development opportunities). These activities and events are thought to enhance employee fit by reducing anxiety about the job tasks and relations with group members and the supervisor.

Socialization of new employees is a four-stage process and occurs over a much longer time than an orientation (Wanous, 1991). Managers would be wise to consider employee fit perceptions during each of the four stages: (1) confronting and accepting organizational reality, (2) achieving role clarify, (3) locating oneself in the organization context, and (4) detecting signposts of successful socialization. Since the organizational socialization process involves the transmission of important norms and values to the newcomers, group members and supervisors should serve as the key “insiders” of the organization, and therefore represent focal points for employee fit perceptions.

5.2.3 Development

Organization and employee development practices have implications for facilitating high levels of engagement. The practical implications discussed below, and summarized in table 5.2, are in concurrence with the four dimensions that form employee fit: organization, job, group, and supervisor.

5.2.3.1 Organization level development

Schneider’s (1987) Attraction-Selection-Attrition (ASA) framework, the prevailing theory at the organization level (Kristof-Brown & Jansen, 2012), integrates the concepts of employee fit to explain the process by which individuals are attracted to, selected by, and either leave or remain in the organization. Schneider (1987, p. 441) proposes that the “attraction to an organization, selection by it, and attrition from it yield particular kinds of persons in an organization.” From this view, this study’s findings suggest that high levels of engagement are
determined in part by employees’ organizational fit. Therefore, organization development practices have implications for facilitating high levels of employee engagement. Some firms, such as ice cream maker Ben & Jerry’s Homemade Holdings Inc., have taken an altruistic approach to organization development with the premise that “doing good led to making good money too” (Pearce & Doh, 2005, p. 31).

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) represents a growing organization development practice whereby corporate social initiatives are embraced. Aguinis and Glavas (2012, p. 933) define CSR as the “context-specific organizational actions and policies that take into account shareholders’ expectations and the triple bottom line of economic, social, and environmental performance.” The “doing well by doing good” goal of CSR has implication for positive employee outcomes, such as higher levels of engagement (Glavas, 2016). Moreover, CSR research shows that employees who participate in CSR practices are likely to have positive perceptions of their organization, which have been associated with increased organizational identification (Carmeli, Gilat, & Waldman, 2007) and less intentions to leave (Tymon et al., 2010).

Volunteer employee programs (VEP) are one CSR development practice that has been adopted by many organizations. In fact, some firms, such as NuStar Energy, Deloitte, Salesforce, and Stryker, pay their employees up to five days for volunteering in the community (Kokalitcheva, 2016). An organization’s commitment to community involvement through VEPs may convey altruistic values that are congruent with their employees’ altruistic needs. This compatibility between an organization’s altruistic values and the altruistic desires of employees is thought to result in high organizational fit (Brightenburg & Miller, 2018). Therefore, VEPs may have implications for facilitating employee engagement.
Organizational culture development practices may also have implications for employee engagement levels. Practitioners should consider conducting an organizational culture assessment to determine whether the current culture is congruent with the desires of the employees. Culture diagnostics, such as the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (Cameron & Quinn, 2011), may help managers understand the degree of organization fit present between employees and the company culture. In the event of substantial discrepancies, managers can take steps to implement a culture change effort based on Cameron and Quinn’s (2011) competing values framework using Kotter’s (1995) eight-step change model.

5.2.3.2 Job level development

The theory of work adjustment (TWA; Dawis & Lofquist, 1984) argues that “employees expect occupations to supply “reinforcers” (rewards) that meet certain needs (the pattern of which reflects their work values)” (Su et al., 2016, p. 83). This study’s findings suggest that job-level practices that focus on meeting the needs of employees have implications for employee engagement. Practitioners should, therefore, be encouraged to enhance employee fit perceptions at the job level through practices designed to satisfy employee needs.

Hackman and Oldham’s (1980) model of job design characteristics provides a framework for practitioners to develop high levels of engagement by focusing on employee needs. Their model presents five core job characteristics that if present is said to lead to positive employee outcomes. The five core job characteristics are task variety, task significance, task identity, autonomy, and feedback. Hackman and Oldham (1980) assert that these five core job characteristics impact critical psychological states (sense of meaningfulness, sense of responsibility, and knowledge of results) that influence people’s internal work motivation.
Drawing on PE fit theory, positive employee fit is thought to result when employees perceive these job characteristics positively.

Additionally, having a reward system that fairly recognizes employees for their performance and satisfies their personal needs has implication for employee engagement (CIPD, 2010). Social exchange theory suggests that organizations and employees are in an employment exchange relationship. As part of this relationship, employees evaluate the rewards in terms of a cost and benefit exchange. Therefore, rewards should be designed to meet the needs of employees. Practitioners would be wise to consider the relationship between various types of rewards (i.e., monetary and non-monetary) and employee fit perceptions.

5.2.3.3 Group level development

Byrne’s (1971) similarity-attraction paradigm explains how common values among co-workers help a group work together. “Conceptually, value congruence is conducive to attraction because agreement on what is important promotes harmony and cooperation among organization members and increases the likelihood that people share goals and agree on tasks and procedures (Edwards & Cable, 2009, p. 656). Therefore, the compatibility of interpersonal characteristics between group members have implications for the development of high levels of engagement.

Workgroup development practices designed to improve member satisfaction and productivity may also have implications for facilitating high levels of engagement. Campion, Medsker, and Higgs (1993) showed that group member effectiveness was associated with five workgroup themes (job design, interdependence, composition, context, and process) comprising 19 characteristics. These workgroup characteristics (e.g., self-management, participation, task variety, etc.) have implications for enhancing employee fit.
For example, a group’s task interdependence refers to how group members interact and depend on one another to accomplish a task. Task interdependence has been related to increased motivation (Campion et al., 1993), and might lead to positive employee fit perceptions because group members sense the responsibility of other members. Similarly, members who believe that their group’s work has significance is said to be motivating for employees (Campion et al., 1993). The development of group task significance, therefore, has implications for facilitating employee engagement.

5.2.3.4 Supervisor level development

Related to the supervisor level is the leader-member exchange (LMX) theory (Dienesch & Liden, 1986; Liden et al., 1993). The basic premise of LMX theory is that leaders develop different types of exchange relationships with their subordinates as the relationship evolves. In Kristof-Brown et al.’s (2005) meta-analysis of employee fit, only LMX studies were examined. Using three studies ($N = 628$), LMX was found to explain 47% of the variance in employee fit at the supervisor level. Therefore, the employee-supervisor relationship has implications for facilitating employee engagement.

A supervisor’s ongoing support for employees’ personal and professional development and success are advised for enhancing supervisor fit perceptions. A supervisor’s support is particularly salient for employees who might not share the same level of similarity with coworkers (supplementary fit) but offer fresh perspectives for decision making and ways of doing things (complementary fit). Where some heterogeneity is often valued in a workgroup, the supervisor should be encouraged to enhance fit perceptions by emphasizing relations with their direct reports, such as through one-on-one meetings. The supervisor-employee relationship is
particularly significant for employees who experience complementary fit with their group as they may perceive a lack a group fit if not supported by their supervisor (Oh et al., 2014).

A supervisor’s leadership style may also have implications for employee engagement. A practice with growing interest and supervisor fit implications is servant leadership (Greenleaf, 1977). For Greenleaf, servant leadership is distinguished by an individual’s conscious decision to serve first rather than lead first. Ten principles make up the servant leadership approach. Whittington and Maellaro’s (2006) case study research on TDIndustries identified specific practices for each of the servant-leadership principles. For example, Whittington and Maellaro identified three activities TDIndustries’ used to develop the principle of listening: (a) employee focus groups used to meet business challenges, (b) employee opinion surveys regularly conducted, with employee issues taken seriously and diligently addressed, and (c) corporate environment of open communication. These activities are said to have contributed to TDIndustries’ success (e.g., increase in stock value, revenue growth, reduced operations cost). Consequently, servant leadership should be a consideration for developing high levels of employee engagement.

5.2.3.5 Summary of post-entry development activities

In summary, the four ongoing post-entry development categories are reflective of the four dimensions of fit that define the employee fit construct used in this study. Employee fit’s four dimensions (e.g., organization, job, group, and supervisor) are “specified as formative indicators” that combine to form an overall fit model (Badger, 2014, p. 34). Therefore, the post-entry development activities are not mutually exclusive. That is, activities within the four development categories should occur simultaneously in order to facilitate high levels of employee engagement.
Table 5.2: Summary of post-entry activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Post-Entry</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>On-boarding</td>
<td>Reinforce organizational policies, norms, policies, as well as job roles, responsibilities, and requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socialization</td>
<td>Training, including social activities and events (e.g., lunches, team building with co-workers, and development opportunities). Supervisor and group members serve as key organizational &quot;insiders&quot; involved in the transmission of organizational norms and values.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| On-going | *Organizational*: Corporate social responsibility programs, such as volunteer employee programs.  
*Organizational*: Culture assessment to determine level of congruence between employee perceptions and desires.  
*Job*: Integrate Hackman and Oldham's (1976) five core job characteristics into work: task variety, task significance, task identity, autonomy, and feedback.  
*Job*: Establish reward system that meets the needs of employees.  
Job: Reward systems that fairly recognize employees, and offer rewards that meet the needs of employees.  
*Group*: Integrate five themes into workgroups: job design, interdependence, composition, and context. Campion, Medsker, and Higgs (1993) offer 19 activities associated with these themes.  
*Supervisor*: Principles and activities associated with servant leadership, as exemplified by TDIIndustries (Whittington & Maellaro (2006)). |

5.2.4 Generational differences

The implications for both organizational hiring practices and initiatives aimed at employee retention should be qualified by taking into consideration generational differences. Specifically, different generations were shown in this study to have different levels of employee fit and engagement. An organization’s recruiting, onboarding, and ongoing development practices—with the implication of facilitating high levels of engagement—should consider the impact of generational differences. Leveraging generational differences to enhance fit perceptions should be encouraged.
For example, mentoring and reverse-mentoring programs provide opportunities for members from each generation to interact with each other in a positive way. The resulting effect may enhance employee fit perceptions. Bringing these two groups together in a mentoring relationship may not only enhance fit and engagement levels but also serve as a conduit for transferring organizational knowledge. Organization and job knowledge transfer is a concern for firms as many boomers reach retirement age every day. Likewise, millennials have technological and social media knowledge they could transfer to boomers and GenX.

5.2.5 Summary of practical implications

Fit happens—intentionally or not. My study’s findings offer strong support for organizations to be more intentional in leveraging the fit-engagement connection: hiring for fit, redesigning jobs for fit, promoting for fit, developing for fit, and changing job assignments for fit. Although my study supports practices to facilitate positive employee fit perceptions, the reality is that most employees will not have intentionally taken opportunities to develop the self-awareness necessary to discover their fit with a profession, and then find and take the appropriate actions necessary to enter that profession. Indeed, a person’s individual drive for intentional fit often results in the road less traveled in pursuit of fulfilling a vision of purpose.

“Everybody ends up somewhere in life” (Stanley, 1999, p. 8), however just “a few people end up somewhere on purpose.” Considering this often out of reach purpose, organizations should be encouraged to take the road less traveled by fostering a work environment where developing intentional fit is the norm for all employees. By being intentional with a fit-centric approach to facilitating engagement, more employees will have the opportunity to experience purposeful work seeded in meaningfulness. Building up employees through intentional fit
practices gives credence to the common executive aphorism, “people are our greatest asset,” and will likely yield greater rewards than any business deal could (Christensen, 2010).

5.3 Directions for Future Research

Scholars (Christian et al., 2011; Saks & Gruman, 2014) have called for more research to focus on identifying factors that lead to high levels of employee engagement. This research provided a partial answer to the question about how employee fit relates to employee engagement. Specifically, this study showed that individuals with stronger employee fit perceptions are more engaged. Additionally, engagement matters because it leads to other positive outcomes. These results, combined with the finding that generations moderate the relationship between employee fit and employee engagement at different strengths, suggest there is more than a one-size-fits-all approach to developing high levels of engagement. Future research should continue to examine the relationship between fit and engagement.

Although this study conceptualized employee fit as a unidimensional measure formed by four fit dimensions (organization, job, group, and supervisor), future research should conceptualize employee fit as a reflection of the four dimensions. By conceiving the underlying fit dimensions as reflections of employee fit, future research should assess how the hierarchical pattern of the four fit dimensions relate to engagement and employee attitudes. The patterns obtained in the hierarchical analysis of the fit dimensions would aid practitioners in identifying the fit dimensions that have the strongest positive relationship with engagement. These findings would have implications for pre-entry and post-entry employment practices. For instance, if job fit had the highest impact on employee fit perceptions, then employment practices should consider emphasizing positive job attributes the most.
Future research should also examine whether there are generational differences in terms of the specific hierarchical patterns of the fit dimensions. For instance, one cohort may experience high levels of engagement as a consequent of high supervisor fit and low organization fit, whereas another cohort might experience high levels of engagement because of high job fit and low group fit. Such research would aid in developing employee engagement initiatives tailored to a generational cohort’s preferences.

Additional research is also needed to determine the effects of employee work values on engagement. Although work values were used in this study to examine generational differences, future research should consider the mediating effect of employee fit on the relationship between work values and employee engagement. Previous engagement models have rarely examined the relationship between work values and engagement. Likewise, engagement is seldom used as a dependent variable in a mediated model. Given the theoretical support linking work values to organization- and group-fit dimensions (Chuang et al., 2016), some work values (e.g., intrinsic, social, altruism) may show a positive relationship with engagement. Furthermore, the impact of generations on the relationship between work values and engagement may reveal salient differences, which would provide support for a multi-generational engagement strategy grounded in employee work values.

Previous engagement research has shown that work meaningfulness has a direct and positive relationship with employee engagement (Whittington et al., 2017). Future research should examine work meaningfulness in the context of a broader model of employee engagement, including individual work values and perceived fit. An investigation of the roles that work values and employee fit dimensions have in a model that examines the relationship
between meaningfulness and engagement may reveal important employee outcomes. Additionally, these relationships should consider the impact of generational differences.

As this study has shown, engagement is not a one-size fits all phenomenon. Generational differences were present in work values. Moreover, this study found that boomers had higher levels of engagement than millennials, and that the relationship between employee fit and engagement was moderated by generational differences. Future research should, therefore, consider the impact of other factors that contribute to a diversified workforce on employee engagement. Organizations and practitioners would benefit from a better understanding of how characteristics of a diverse workforce influence engagement.

5.4 Conclusion

This study (a) presented a fit-centered approach to better understand engagement, (b) developed actionable solutions to facilitate employee engagement, and (c) extended the engagement literature. This study offered a rare examination of the explanatory role of PE fit theory in an engagement model, and the findings showed that the combined dimensions of fit strongly influenced engagement. These findings have practical implications for pre-entry and post-entry employee contexts. Actionable employee fit-centered solutions were presented across three employee themes: recruitment, socialization, and development.

Although this study had several limitations, the results offer scholars a new starting point to extend upon a fit-centered approach to understanding employee engagement. For instance, future research should assess how the hierarchical pattern of the four fit dimensions relate to engagement and employee attitudes. A hierarchical analysis of the fit dimensions would aid practitioners in identifying the fit dimensions that have the strongest positive relationship with
engagement. These findings would have implications for the pre-entry and post-entry employment practices.

In conclusion, this study showed that employee fit happens, and engagement matters in developing positive employee attitudes across a generation-diverse workforce. An employee-fit centric approach to understanding engagement offers practitioners and engagement scholars an additional perspective on how to address the low engagement levels of U.S. employees. An employee fit-centered approach to understanding engagement will likely become more salient as the diversity of U.S. workforce grows. Indeed, Bersin’s (2015) claim that employee fit is the first and most important part of employee engagement may take on more significance in the years ahead.
REFERENCES


CEB. (2016). Quality dashboard and metrics spot benchmark survey results.


Chin, W., Marcolin, B. L., & Newsted, P. N. (2003). A partial least squares latent variable modeling approach for measuring interaction effects: Results from a monte carlo simulation study and an electronic-mail emotion/adoption study. *Information Systems Research, 14*(2), 189-217.


July 3, 2017

Mark Brightenburg  
Satish & Yasmin Gupta College of Business  
University of Dallas  
Irving, TX 75062

RE: IRB expedited review of proposal #2017043

Dear Mark Brightenburg:

Thank you for submitting your research proposal for prior approval by the Institutional Review Board (IRB). Your proposal was reviewed under the procedure for expedited review, as it poses minimal risk for participants. You indicate that steps will be taken to obtain informed consent from participants as well as the steps to be taken to protect participants’ identities. The reviewer(s) recommended approval of your request to complete the research described in your proposal under the conditions stated above and under the guidance of your instructor.

As you complete your research, please keep in mind that substantive changes to the research method or participant population will require IRB review, and that any participant injuries or complaints must be reported to the IRB at the time they occur. The IRB policies require that you provide an annual report of the progress of this research project, or a report upon completion, whichever occurs first.

On behalf of the members of the IRB, I wish you success in this project.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Gilbert Garza, Ph.D.  
IRB Chair

1845 East Northgate Drive, Irving, TX 75062-4736
APPENDIX B – DEMOGRAPHIC DATA COLLECTION

Please tell us a little about yourself:

2. What is your gender? (Female or Male)
3. How long have you worked for your current employer? (less than 2 years, 2-5 years, 6-10 years, 11-15 years, 16-20 years, 21-25 years, 26-30 years, more than 30 years)
4. Check the appropriate box? (I am an individual contributor; I am a manager of individual contributors; I am a manager of managers)
5. Check the box for highest level of education obtained: (High School, College Degree, Graduate Degree, Doctorate/PhD)
6. Check the box that best describes your position (Accounting; Customer Service; Consulting, Finance; Human Resources; Information Technology; Operations, Project Management, Sales/Marketing, Security; Relationship Management; Other ______.)
APPENDIX C – PERCEIVED PERSON-ENVIRONMENT FIT SCALE
(PPEFS: Chuang et al., 2016)

All items used a 7-point scale (0 = no match; 1 = bad match; 2 = less bad match; 3 = neutral; 4 = less good match; 5 = good match; 6 = complete match).

**Person–Organization Fit Scale (POFS)**

**POFS-Values**

How would you describe the match between your emphasis and your organization’s emphasis on the following values?

1. honesty
2. achievement
3. fairness
4. helping others

**POFS-Goals**

How would you describe the match between your goals and your organization’s goals on the following dimensions?

5. reward
6. the amount of effort expected
7. competition with other organizations

**Person–Job Fit Scale (PJFS)**

1. How would you describe the match between your professional skills, knowledge, and abilities and those required by the job?
2. How would you describe the match between your personality traits (e.g. extrovert vs. introvert, disagreeable, and dependable vs. undependable) and those required by the job?
3. How would you describe the match between your interests (e.g. social vs. unsocial, artistic vs. inartististic, and conventional vs. unconventional) and those you desire for a job?
4. How would you describe the match between the characteristics of your current job (e.g. autonomy, importance, and skill variety) and those you desire for a job?

**Person–Group Fit Scale (PGFS)**

**PGFS-Values**

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

1. honesty
2. achievement
3. fairness
4. helping others

**PGFS-Goals**

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

5. reward
6. the amount of effort expected
7. competition with other groups
PGFS-Attributes
How would you describe the match between you and your group members on the following characteristics?
8. personality
9. work style
10. lifestyle

Person–Supervisor Fit Scale (PSFS)
1. How would you describe the match between the things you value in life and the things your supervisor values?
2. How would you describe the match between your personality and your supervisor’s personality?
3. How would you describe the match between your work style and your supervisor’s work style?
4. How would you describe the match between your lifestyle and your supervisor’s lifestyle?
5. How would you describe the match between your supervisor’s leadership style and the leadership style you desire?
APPENDIX D – JOB ENGAGEMENT SCALE  
(JES: Rich et al., 2010)

The instrument’s author report a strong overall internal consistency of the job engagement scale ($\alpha = .95$); the reliability coefficients ranged from .89 to .94 for the three factors. All items are measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neutral; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree).

Please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:

**Physical engagement**
1. I work intensity on my job.  
2. I exert my full effort to my job.  
3. I devote a lot of energy to my job.  
4. I try my hardest to perform well on my job.  
5. I strive as hard as I can to complete my job.  
6. I exert a lot of energy on my job.

**Emotional engagement**
7. I am enthusiastic in my job.  
8. I feel energetic at my job.  
9. I am interested in my job.  
10. I am proud of my job.  
11. I feel positive about my job.  
12. I am excited about my job.

**Cognitive engagement**
13. At work, my mind is focused on my job.  
14. At work, I pay a lot of attention to my job.  
15. At work, I focus a great deal of attention on my job.  
16. At work, I am absorbed by my job.  
17. At work, I concentrate on my job.  
18. At work, I devote a lot of attention to my job.
APPENDIX E – ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT
(Meyer et al., 1993)

All items are measured on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = moderately disagree; 4 = neutral; 5 = moderately agree; 6 = agree; 7 = strongly agree).
The instrument’s authors report acceptable reliability coefficients for the affective commitment scale (α = .85) and continuance commitment scale (α = .83).

Affective Commitment
Please rate the extent you agree with the following statements:
1. I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization.
2. I really feel as if this organization’s problems are my own.
3. I do not feel a strong sense of “belonging” to my organization. (R)
4. I do not feel “emotionally attached” to this organization. (R)
5. I do not feel like “part of the family” at my organization. (R)
6. This organization has a great deal of personal meaning to me.

Continuance Commitment
Please rate the extent you agree with the following statements:
7. Right now, staying with my organization is a matter of necessity as much as desire.
8. It would be very hard for me to leave my organization right now, even if I wanted to.
9. Too much of life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave my organization now.
10. I feel that I have too few options to consider leaving this organization
11. If I had not already put so much of myself into this organization, I might consider working elsewhere
12. One of the few negative consequences of leaving this organization would be the scarcity of available alternatives.

Intentions to Quit (Wayne et al., 1997)
Please rate the extent you agree with the following statement:
13. I believe I will be working for my current employer one year from now. (R)
APPENDIX F – JOB SATISFACTION
(Schleicher et al., 2015)

Shortened *Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire* (MSQ: Weiss et al., 1967). Schleicher et al. (2015) report acceptable internal consistency reliability ($\alpha = .89$). All items are measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = very dissatisfied; 2 = dissatisfied; 3 = neutral; 4 = satisfied; 5 = very satisfied).

Please rate the extent to which you are satisfied with…
1. The competence of your supervisor in making decisions.
2. The way your job provides for steady employment.
3. The chances for advancement on your job.
4. The chance to try your own methods of doing the job.
5. The feeling of accomplishment you get from the job.

Shortened *Overall Job Satisfaction Scale* (OSJ: Brayfield & Roth, 1951). Schleicher et al. (2015) report acceptable internal consistency reliability ($\alpha = .86$). All items are measured on a 7-point Likert scale, where 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree.

Please rate the extent you agree with the following statements:
1. I am often bored with my job. (R)
2. Most of the time I have to force myself to go to work. (R)
3. I feel that I am happier in my work than most other people.
4. Most days I am enthusiastic about my work.
5. I find real enjoyment in my work.
APPENDIX G – WORK VALUES SCALE
(Twenge et al., 2010)

The below items are from the Monitoring the Future annual survey form four. The form reads: “Different people may look for different things in their work. Below is a list of some of these things. Please read each one, then indicate how important this thing is for you.”

Respondents are then asked to rate the importance of each item on a five-point Likert scale (1 = not important; 2 = slightly important; 3 = moderately important; 4 = important; 5 = very important.

**Extrinsic Rewards**
1. A job that has high status and prestige
2. A job that most people look up to and respect
3. A job that provides you with a chance to earn a good deal of money
4. A job where the chances for advancement and promotion are good

**Intrinsic rewards**
5. A job that is interesting to do
6. A job where you can learn new things, learn new skills
7. A job where the skills you learn will not go out of date
8. A job where you can see the results of what you do
9. A job that uses your skills and abilities—lets you do the things you can do best
10. A job where you do not have to pretend to be a type of person that you are not
11. A job where you have the chance to be creative

**Social Rewards**
12. A job that gives you a chance to make friends
13. A job that permits contact with a lot of people

**Altruistic rewards**
14. A job that gives you an opportunity to be directly helpful to others
15. A job that is worthwhile to society

**Leisure rewards**
16. A job where you have more than 2 weeks’ vacation
17. A job that leaves a lot of time for other things in your life
18. A job with an easy pace that lets you work slowly
19. A job that leaves you mostly free of supervision by others
APPENDIX H – SURVEY INVITATION EMAIL #1

Subject: University of Dallas Alum - Dissertation Survey Request

Dear Colleague and fellow UD alum,

I hope this email finds you well. As part of my doctoral dissertation at UD, I am conducting research on the importance of employee engagement with a focus on generational differences and various aspects of our working lives.

I would be grateful for 7-10 minutes of your time to complete the survey. Since you are free not to participate, your voluntary participation is greatly appreciated. Your responses are anonymous, so please answer each question honestly. Your completion of the survey constitutes your permission to use your data.

<Link to Survey>

As a gesture of my appreciation for completing the survey, I will enter your name in a drawing for a chance to win one of ten $20 gift certificates or one of 30 meal vouchers. If interested in the drawing, and since the survey is anonymous, please reply to this email confirming your interest in the drawing and I will record your name. The drawing will be held on <DATE>. Regardless of the drawing, all survey responses will be anonymous.

Sincerely,

Mark Brightenburg
University of Dallas MBA ‘11, DBA Candidate (’17 expected)
APPENDIX I – SURVEY INVITATION EMAIL #2

Subject: Doctoral Dissertation Survey Request

Dear <Name>,

I hope this email finds you well. As part of my doctoral dissertation research at the University of Dallas, I am conducting a study on the importance of employee engagement with a focus on generational differences and various aspects of our working lives.

I would be grateful for 7-10 minutes of your time to complete the survey. Since you are free not to participate, your voluntary participation is greatly appreciated. Your responses are anonymous, so please answer each question honestly. Your completion of the survey constitutes your permission to use your data.

<Link to Survey>

As a gesture of my appreciation for completing the survey, I will enter your name in a drawing for a chance to win one of ten $20 gift certificates or one of 30 meal vouchers. If interested in the drawing, and since the survey is anonymous, please reply to this email confirming your interest in the drawing and I will record your name. The drawing will be held on <DATE>. Regardless of your participation in the drawing, all survey responses will be anonymous.

Sincerely,

Mark Brightenburg
Candidate, Doctor of Business Administration
University of Dallas, Gupta College of Business
Figure 1. Estimated number of divorces and children involved in divorce: United States, 1950–87
## APPENDIX K – EMPLOYEE FIT CORRELATION MATRIX

Correlation matrix for Employee Fit items

|   | 1   | 2   | 3   | 4   | 5   | 6   | 7   | 8   | 9   | 10  | 11  | 12  | 13  | 14  | 15  | 16  | 17  | 18  | 19  | 20  | 21  | 22  | 23  | 24  | 25  | 26  |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 1 | 1.00|     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| 2 | .623| 1.00|     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| 3 | .623| .651| 1.00|     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| 4 | .619| .552| .729| 1.00|     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| 5 | .535| .593| .632| .572| 1.00|     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| 6 | .442| .525| .555| .525| .678| 1.00|     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| 7 | .353| .441| .470| .434| .640| .642| 1.00|     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| 8 | .305| .192| .236| .282| .337| .336| .305| 1.00|     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| 9 | .205| .138| .231| .212| .262| .220| .197| .473| 1.00|     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| 10| .184| .270| .223| .269| .217| .174| .168| .347| .375| 1.00|     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| 11|    |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| 12|    |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| 13|    |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| 14|    |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| 15|    |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| 16|    |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| 17|    |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| 18|    |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| 19|    |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| 20|    |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| 21|    |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| 22|    |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| 23|    |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| 24|    |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| 25|    |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| 26|    |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
### APPENDIX L – EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT CORRELATION MATRIX

Correlation matrix for Employee Engagement items

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### APPENDIX M – ORGANIZATION COMMITMENT CORRELATION MATRIX
# APPENDIX N – JOB SATISFACTION CORRELATION MATRIX

**Correlation matrix for Affective Commitment**

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**Correlation matrix of Contiunance Commitment**

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### APPENDIX O - WORK VALUES CORRELATION MATRIX

#### Correlation matrix for Extrinsic Work Values items

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#### Correlation matrix for Intrinsic Work Values items

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#### Correlation matrix for Altruistic Work Values items

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#### Correlation matrix for Leisure Work Values items

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APPENDIX P – SPSS MEDIATION OUTPUT: AFFECTIVE COMMITMENT

Model = 4
Y = AffComm
X = EEFit
M = EEE

Sample size
196

**************************************************************************
Outcome: EEE
Model Summary
R       R-sq        MSE          F        df1        df2          p
.5093      .2594      .3176    67.9530     1.0000   194.0000      .0000

Model
coeff         se          t          p       LLCI       ULCI
constant     2.5638      .2056    12.4693      .0000     2.1583     2.9693
EEFit         .3376      .0410     8.2434      .0000      .2569      .4184

**************** DIRECT AND INDIRECT EFFECTS *****************************
Direct effect of X on Y
Effect         SE          t          p       LLCI       ULCI
.5481      .0852      6.4373      .0000      .3802      .7161

Indirect effect of X on Y
Effect    Boot SE   BootLLCI   BootULCI
EEE      .2237      .0479      .1421      .3379

Preacher and Kelley (2011) Kappa-squared
Effect    Boot SE   BootLLCI   BootULCI
EEE      .1775      .0353      .1188      .2623

Normal theory tests for indirect effect
Effect         se          Z          p
.2237      .0514      4.3490      .0000
APPENDIX Q – SPSS MEDIATION OUTPUT: CONTINUANCE COMMITMENT

Model = 4
Y = ContCom
X = EEFit
M = EEE

Sample size
196

**************************************************************************
Outcome: EEE
Model Summary
R  R-sq    MSE    F   df1   df2  p
.5093  .2594  .3176  67.9530 1.0000  194.0000  .0000

Model
  coeff   se    t   p   LLCI   ULCI
constant  2.5638  .2056  12.4693  .0000  2.1583  2.9693
EEFit    .3376  .0410   8.2434  .0000  .2569  .4184

**************************************************************************
Outcome: ContCom
Model Summary
R  R-sq    MSE    F   df1   df2  p
.1349  .0182  1.3813  1.7894 1.0000  193.0000  .1698

Model
  coeff   se    t   p   LLCI   ULCI
constant  3.9914  .5755   6.9360  .0000  2.8564  5.1264
EEE    .2045  .1497   1.3658  .1736  -.0908  .4998
EEFit  -.1808  .0992  -1.8221  .0700  -.3766  .0149

**************************************************************************

Direct and Indirect Effects

Direct effect of X on Y
  Effect  SE  t   p  LLCI   ULCI
-.1808  .0992 -1.8221  .0700  -.3766  .0149

Indirect effect of X on Y
  Effect  Boot SE  BootLLCI  BootULCI
EEE  .0690  .0526  -.0243  .1838

Preacher and Kelley (2011) Kappa-squared
  Effect  Boot SE  BootLLCI  BootULCI
EEE  .0503  .0333  .0027  .1271

Normal theory tests for indirect effect
  Effect  se  Z   p
.0690  .0516   1.3379  .1809

184
### APPENDIX R – SPSS MEDIATION OUTPUT: JOB SATISFACTION

Model = 4  
Y = JobSat  
X = EEFit  
M = EEE

Sample size  
196

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<th>F</th>
<th>df1</th>
<th>df2</th>
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<th>LLCI</th>
<th>ULCI</th>
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**DIRECT AND INDIRECT EFFECTS**

Direct effect of X on Y  
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<th>LLCI</th>
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Indirect effect of X on Y  
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Preacher and Kelley (2011) Kappa-squared  
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Normal theory tests for indirect effect  
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APPENDIX S –SPSS MODERATION OUTPUT: BOOMERS

Model = 1
Y = EEE
X = EEFit
M = Boomers

Sample size
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**************************************************************************
Outcome: EEE

Model Summary
R      R-sq       MSE       F        df1        df2          p
.5546  .3075      .3001    28.4234     3.0000   192.0000      .0000

Model
        coeff       se       t          p       LLCI       ULCI
constant 4.241      .0397   106.9252      .0000     4.1629     4.3193
Boomers  .3395      .1035     3.2815      .0012      .1354      .5436
EEFit    .3210      .0404     7.9478      .0000      .2413      .4006
int_1   -.2362      .1004   -2.3521      .0197    -.4342     -.0381

Interactions:

int_1  EEFit  X  Boomers

R-square increase due to interaction(s):

R2-chng       F        df1        df2          p
int_1   .0200     5.5322     1.0000   192.0000      .0197

**************************************************************************
Conditional effect of X on Y at values of the moderator(s):

Boomers  Effect       se       t          p       LLCI       ULCI
-.1939  .3668      .0452   8.1107      .0000     .2776     .4559
.8061  .1306      .0897   1.4565      .1469    -.0463     .3074

Values for quantitative moderators are the mean and plus/minus one SD from mean.
Values for dichotomous moderators are the two values of the moderator.
APPENDIX T – SPSS MODERATION OUTPUT: GEN-X

Model = 1
Y = EEE
X = EEFit
M = GenX

Sample size
196

******************************************************************************
Outcome: EEE

Model Summary
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>R</th>
<th>R-sq</th>
<th>MSE</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>df1</th>
<th>df2</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.5223</td>
<td>.2728</td>
<td>.3151</td>
<td>24.0108</td>
<td>3.0000</td>
<td>192.0000</td>
<td>.0000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Model coeff se t p LLCI ULCI
constant 4.2265 .0401 105.3986 .0000 4.1474 4.3056
GenX .0679 .0821 .8267 .4095 -.0941 .2298
EEFit .3349 .0408 8.2035 .0000 .2544 .4154
int_1 -.1427 .0842 -1.6938 .0919 -.3088 .0235

Interactions:

int_1 EEFit X GenX

R-square increase due to interaction(s):
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>R2-chng</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>df1</th>
<th>df2</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>int_1</td>
<td>.0109</td>
<td>2.8690</td>
<td>1.0000</td>
<td>192.0000</td>
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</table>

******************************************************************************
Conditional effect of X on Y at values of the moderator(s):
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GenX</th>
<th>Effect</th>
<th>se</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>LLCI</th>
<th>ULCI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-.3929</td>
<td>.3910</td>
<td>.0516</td>
<td>7.5704</td>
<td>.0000</td>
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<td>.6071</td>
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<td>.0003</td>
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<td>.3795</td>
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</table>

Values for quantitative moderators are the mean and plus/minus one SD from mean.
Values for dichotomous moderators are the two values of the moderator.
APPENDIX U – SPSS MODERATION OUTPUT: MILLENNIAL

Model = 1
Y = EEE  
X = EEFit  
M = Millenni

Sample size
196

Outcome: EEE

Model Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>R</th>
<th>R-sq</th>
<th>MSE</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>df1</th>
<th>df2</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.5694</td>
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<td>.0000</td>
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Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>constant</th>
<th>coeff</th>
<th>se</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>LLCI</th>
<th>ULCI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.2424</td>
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<td>108.6112</td>
<td>.0000</td>
<td>4.1653</td>
<td>4.3194</td>
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<tr>
<td>Millenni</td>
<td>-.2343</td>
<td>.0794</td>
<td>-2.9501</td>
<td>.0036</td>
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<td>-.0777</td>
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<tr>
<td>EEFit</td>
<td>.3229</td>
<td>.0398</td>
<td>8.1241</td>
<td>.0000</td>
<td>.2445</td>
<td>.4013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>int_1</td>
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<td>.0811</td>
<td>2.9506</td>
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<td>.3992</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interactions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>int_1</th>
<th>EEFit</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>Millenni</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

R-square increase due to interaction(s):

| int_1 | .0306 | 8.7058 | 1.0000 | 192.0000 | .0036 |

Conditional effect of X on Y at values of the moderator(s):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Millenni</th>
<th>Effect</th>
<th>se</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
<th>LLCI</th>
<th>ULCI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>.5871</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Values for quantitative moderators are the mean and plus/minus one SD from mean.
Values for dichotomous moderators are the two values of the moderator.