



The impact of Social Dominance Orientation and Right-Wing Authoritarianism on the relation between Person–Organization fit with commitment, satisfaction, and turnover intentions[☆]

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ABSTRACT

This research examined whether Person–Organization fit would mediate the relationships of Social Dominance Orientation and Right-Wing Authoritarianism with the outcome variables of turnover intentions, satisfaction, and commitment. The study was conducted with a military sample and found that both Social Dominance Orientation and Right-Wing Authoritarianism predict greater satisfaction, continuance and normative commitment and that these relationships were mediated by perceived Person–Organization fit. Furthermore, this relation was moderated by the interaction between Social Dominance Orientation and Right-Wing Authoritarianism such that lower scores on Social Dominance Orientation increased the relation between Right-Wing Authoritarianism and P–O fit while higher scores on Social Dominance Orientation lowered that relation.

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1. Introduction

Person–Organization fit (P–O fit) is frequently operationalized as congruence between organizational values and the values of the person (Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005). P–O fit has been found to be significantly correlated with numerous organizational variables such as commitment and satisfaction to the organization, organizational identification, and intentions to quit (Hoffman & Woehr, 2006; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). Comparatively, little research has examined the relation between individual difference variables and P–O fit (e.g., Deng, Guan, Bond, Zhang, & Hu, 2011; Erdogan & Bauer, 2005; Resick, Baltes, & Shantz, 2007). Nevertheless, the values, attitudes, and personality traits that people hold could be key to determining congruence between the person and the organization. Two individual difference variables that we believe may play an important role in determining P–O fit are Social Dominance Orientation and Right-Wing Authoritarianism. Both represent different ideological views that people have of the

world (Duckitt, 2006) that potentially influence how they perceive and interact with their environment. These ideological views have important implications for organizations as they could influence the nature and culture of the organization as well as individuals' behaviors.

Social Dominance Theory (Pratto, Sidanius, Stallworth, & Malle, 1994; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999) suggests that certain socio-political attitudes or traits such as Social Dominance Orientation are important for determining a good person–job fit. Social Dominance Orientation is an indicator of the extent to which an individual prefers relationships between groups to be on an equal or unequal footing (Pratto et al., 1994) and its ability to predict prejudice and discriminatory behavior has been extensively studied (e.g., Kahn, Ho, Sidanius, & Pratto, 2009; Mata, Ghavami, & Wittig, 2010; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). The theory posits that organizations can be categorized as either hierarchy-attenuating (HA) or hierarchy-enhancing (HE) (Haley & Sidanius, 2005). HA organizations support equality for their members regardless of gender, ethnic, or age differences. HE organizations prefer and require hierarchical relations among various groups. Haley and Sidanius provide evidence that HE organizations attract people with high Social Dominance Orientation scores; some people appear to self-select into these types of organizations, and those with low Social Dominance Orientation scores will be either socialized into the organization or may leave.

Another socio-political attitude or trait that may play a role in P–O fit is Right-Wing Authoritarianism. Right-Wing Authoritarianism is an indicator of the extent to which an individual follows what

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authority figures dictate, is supportive of aggressive actions as long as they are supported by established authorities, and prefers existing, traditional social conventions (Altemeyer, 1988). Research has demonstrated that Right-Wing Authoritarianism, like Social Dominance Orientation, can predict indicators of prejudice but is conceptually different from Social Dominance Orientation and has different correlates (Altemeyer, 1998; Duckitt, 2006; Duriez & Van Hiel, 2002; Nicol, 2007; Passini, 2008). Because Right-Wing Authoritarianism measures a person's desires to follow authority figures and their actions, and prefer traditional ways, it is reasonable to expect that this characteristic would be important in determining an individual's sense of fit between their values and that of the organization for which they work.

P–O fit for a military institution may be, in particular, strongly influenced by both Social Dominance Orientation and Right-Wing Authoritarianism. Military organizations are believed to be HE organizations that attract and retain individuals with high Social Dominance Orientation and/or high Right-Wing Authoritarianism scores. Positive correlations have been found between Social Dominance Orientation and support for military programs and policies (Pratto, Stallworth, & Conway-Lanz, 1998; Pratto et al., 1994). Authoritarianism has been found to predict support for military aggression (Crowson, 2009). Both Social Dominance Orientation and Right-Wing Authoritarianism have been found to be related to punitiveness (Capps, 2002). Research has demonstrated that those who scored high on Right-Wing Authoritarianism or high on Social Dominance Orientation tended to be more likely to support the attack on Iraq in 2003 (McFarland, 2005) and involvement in Iraq (Lyall & Thorsteinsson, 2007). Cross-sectional and longitudinal research conducted at a military educational institution demonstrated that Officer Cadets' scores on Social Dominance Orientation increased over their 4 years in the military college while Right-Wing Authoritarianism scores actually decreased (Nicol, Charbonneau, & Boies, 2007).

No research to date has examined the influence of Social Dominance Orientation and Right-Wing Authoritarianism on P–O fit and organizational outcomes. It is reasonable to assume a relation as both reflect a person's view of the world which can influence that person's tastes and preferences. In this study, because these constructs are closely aligned with attitudes and beliefs supporting the military and HE organizations, we hypothesized that Social Dominance Orientation and Right-Wing Authoritarianism would influence P–O fit perceptions, which in turn, would influence the outcome variables of turnover intentions, satisfaction, and

commitment. That is, P–O fit would act as a mediator of these relationships. Moreover, because previous research suggested that both Social Dominance Orientation and Right-Wing Authoritarianism did not function in a similar manner in a military context (Nicol et al., 2007), we believed that there would be an interaction effect between Right-Wing Authoritarianism and Social Dominance Orientation and that this interaction would moderate the relationship that perceived P–O fit has on turnover intentions, satisfaction, and commitment. Therefore, we sought to identify a pattern of responses of Social Dominance Orientation and Right-Wing Authoritarianism that may influence P–O fit, which in turn, influences the three organizational outcome variables of turnover intentions, satisfaction, and commitment.

2. Methods

2.1. Participants and procedure

Approximately 1000 Officer Cadets attending a military institution working on their Bachelor's degree were asked via e-mail to participate in an online study. Officer Cadets who graduate from the Royal Military College of Canada receive their commission as an Officer in the Canadian Forces.

Of the 171 participants who completed this study, one participant was excluded because he was missing answers (>50%) for several of the dependent variables. Thus, the final sample consisted of 170 participants with an average age of 20.8 years old ($SD = 3.42$, Median = 20 years). This group was predominantly male (72%, $n = 108$), and Caucasian (87%, $n = 128$). The average number of years spent in the Canadian Forces was 2.93 years ($SD = 2.07$) and the average number of completed years at the Royal Military College of Canada was 2.24 ($SD = 1.27$).

2.2. Materials

Participants responded to each of the following measures using a seven-point scale ranging from (1) *Strongly Agree* to (7) *Strongly Disagree*. The means, standard deviations, and Cronbach's alphas for each scale are presented in Table 1.

2.2.1. Social Dominance Orientation

The Social Dominance Orientation scale (SDO₆; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999) measures intergroup relations and group dominance. The

Table 1
Correlation matrix, alpha coefficients, means, and standard deviations of all major study variables.

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Predictor variables											
1. Right Wing Authoritarianism	–										
2. Social Dominance Orientation	0.580**	–									
3. Person–Organization fit	0.132	–0.071	–								
Outcome variable											
4. Turnover intentions	–0.077	0.065	–0.283**	–							
5. Satisfaction	0.254**	0.052	0.699**	–0.387**	–						
6. Affective commitment	0.067	–0.079	0.698**	–0.516**	0.870**	–					
7. Continuance commitment	0.305**	0.357**	0.118	0.098	0.192*	0.057	–				
8. Normative commitment	0.462**	0.358**	0.349**	–0.229**	0.472**	0.341**	0.536**	–			
Demographic and background variables											
9. Age	–0.126	–0.116	–0.052	0.190*	–0.247**	–0.216**	0.096	–0.200**	–		
10. Gender	–0.163*	–0.243**	0.067	0.171*	0.046	0.038	0.086	–0.098	–0.020	–	
11. Years in the Canadian Forces	–0.003	0.094	–0.229**	0.183*	–0.338**	–0.366**	0.165*	–0.197**	0.548**	–0.121	–
Mean	41.9	49.5	14.7	9.5	14.8	31.8	28.8	27.4	20.8	n/a	2.9
Standard deviation	12.23	20.70	4.58	5.59	4.93	8.17	9.87	9.73	3.42	n/a	2.07
Cronbach's alpha	0.82	0.93	0.91	0.84	0.89	0.91	0.81	0.80	n/a	n/a	n/a

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

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