Revisiting Our Roots: Exploring Culturally Informed Dimensions to Enhance Person-Job Fit

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ABSTRACT

This paper responds to challenges organizations face in implementing hiring practices emphasizing person-job fit by introducing a practical, low-cost framework of fit factors grounded in the cultural dimensions of collectivism and individualism. Person-job fit is crucial for enhancing performance and shaping key outcomes such as employee engagement, job satisfaction, and pro-social behaviors. This translational research paper offers organizations an accessible starting point for improving hiring practices, leading to a more engaged and cooperative workforce. This, in turn, enhances overall performance and fosters organizational cohesion. By incorporating culturally informed insights into their recruitment strategies, organizations can align hiring practices with broader cultural contexts, promoting more effective and harmonious work environments.

Keywords: person-job fit, person-organization fit, collectivism, individualism, allocentrism, idiocentrism

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INTRODUCTION

How do a person's cumulative experiences shape not only their identity but also their practices and preferences in the workplace? This paper examines this question through the lens of behavior influenced by cultural dimensions, specifically collectivism and individualism. Once a vibrant area of study, research on how cultural dynamics shape behavior and personality has lost some momentum. This paper will revisit foundational works on these dimensions to explore their relevance in improving hiring practices. This research is valuable because it moves beyond a purely rational and utilitarian perspective of individuals and instead considers fundamental human needs, such as relationship connectedness and interpersonal affiliation (Sui & Wang, 2014). Building on a solid tradition of cross-cultural research, the paper investigates the significant differences between collectivists and individualists in processing experiences and setting priorities. For instance, collectivists tend to prioritize in-group harmony, while individualists often emphasize personal needs over those of the group (Carpenter & Radhakrishnan, 2000). The findings provide insights and a framework to improve candidate screening processes to enhance hiring effectiveness for job fit.

Hiring employees is a significant organizational investment (Navarra, 2022). Table 1 provides an overview of standard internal and external costs. A conservative evaluation of the hiring process would be a basic search without the cost of assistance from a hiring/recruitment firm. Costs during a basic search may include posting the position (monitoring and maintenance of), screening at all levels (resume, interview, on-site interview, etc.), travel and accommodations for out-of-area applicants, background checks, relocation, onboarding, low productivity time (learning the position), and then salary upon hire. According to Navarra (2022), "If you're hiring for a job that pays $60,000, you may spend $180,000 or more to fill that role" (para. 2).

If a person works well and performs according to the job requirements, then the salary and benefit costs match the expectations of the work produced in the position. However, when it comes to poor performance, the salary and benefit costs may not match expectations if an employee underperforms due to misalignment or poor fit for the position. These are costs passed on to the organization. For many organizations that struggle to hold people accountable or exit employees who are not performing, this is a derailer of sorts as it relates to mission and objectives. Inefficiency and ineffectiveness can be massive liabilities for organizations, resulting in tangible costs (ex., lost time, loss of productivity, turnover costs) or intangible costs, such as cultural disruptions and morale (Bressler, 2014).

The concept of fit has garnered significant attention over the years (Barrick & Parks-Leduc, 2019; Carless, 2005; Kristof, 1996; Lu et al., 2014; Scroggins, 2007). The dimensions of fit include person-job, person-organization, and person-environment. The idea of hiring for fit stems from the belief that individuals may or may not align well with various aspects of an organization or the work itself. This perspective has led human resource departments and recruitment firms to expand their hiring criteria beyond knowledge, skills, and abilities (Morley, 2007). Compatibility, considered crucial for individual success (Kristof, 1996), focuses on aligning values, beliefs, expectations, and practices between the individual and the organization or job. Employee motivation improves when there is a good match (Barrick & Parks-Leduc, 2019), leading to increased discretionary effort in work-related and pro-social activities (Lion & Burch, 2018). As fit improves, employees tend to experience more positive outcomes (Barrick & Parks-Leduc, 2019). Fit is a multidimensional concept encompassing personality, needs, and values (French et al., 1982).

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Screening candidates is essential for all organizations, whether conducted internally or outsourced. While scholarship forms the foundation of effective practice, bridging the gap between research and implementation is often neither straightforward nor timely. This raises a critical question: Are there overlooked frameworks in the literature that could guide and enhance our screening and hiring processes? One promising area lies in the extensive cross-cultural research on collectivism and individualism and the subconstructs of allocentrism and idiocentrism.

Although research supports categorizing dimensions and attributes, the author observes limited evidence of culturally specific and culturally informed concepts—such as individualism, collectivism, allocentrism, and idiocentrism—being integrated into hiring assessments or fit frameworks for screening purposes. In Western societies, characterized by diverse identities, cultures, and ethnicities, it is valuable to recognize that individuals may approach work, activities, and relationships through a complex and sometimes contradictory set of perspectives.

THE CONCEPT OF FIT

The concept of fit refers to the alignment or match (Edwards, 2008) between an individual and their job environment based on various personal and environmental factors such as culture, values, norms, and beliefs (De Cooman et al., 2009; Morley, 2007; Sekiguchi, 2004). A fundamental premise in this area of research is that "people are attracted to, selected by, and likely to remain in an environment composed of similar people" (Barrick & Parks-Leduc, 2019, p. 172). Although the sub-domains of fit differ, the person-environment fit is a broad category that includes fit related to the organization, job, or co-workers/teams (Heywood, 2003; Lauver & Kristof-Brown, 2001).

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According to Wachtfogel (2009), person-organization and person-job fit are the two most frequently studied fit categories. Person-organization fit focuses on two main factors: (a) the applicant’s attitudes toward the organization and (b) how well the applicant’s needs and expectations align with what the organization provides. In contrast, person-job fit considers whether the applicant has the specific knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary for success in each position and whether the job fulfills the individual’s needs (Edwards, 1991, 1996; Kristof-Brown, 1996).

Person-organization fit

Person-organization fit refers to the level of compatibility between an individual and an organization (Kristof, 1996; Subramanian et al., 2022). This compatibility can be classified into supplementary fit and complementary fit. Supplementary fit occurs when a person’s skills, values, and attributes are like those of other team members, while complementary fit happens when a person’s characteristics fulfill the organization's specific needs (Carless, 2005). Research on person-organization fit has explored its influence on several critical organizational factors, including employee engagement (de Beer et al., 2017; Lu et al., 2014), ethical practices (Al Halbusi et al., 2021; Lopez et al., 2009), socialization (Cable & Parsons, 2001; Cooper-Thomas et al., 2004), and employee retention (McCullock & Turban, 2007; Yusliza et al., 2021).

According to Carless (2005), implementing person-organization fit in human resources recruitment and screening practices is rooted in Schneider’s (1987) attraction-selection-attrition model. Schneider proposed that individuals are drawn to, selected by, and choose to stay in organizations based on the perceived similarity between themselves and their work environment. As a hiring strategy, person-organization fit allows human resource professionals to evaluate candidates based on their alignment with the organization. Research has shown that person-organization fit impacts several important outcomes, including organizational commitment (Silverthrone, 2004; Jehanzeb & Mohanty, 2018), job satisfaction (Chen et al., 2016; Autry & Daugherty, 2003), organizational citizenship behaviors (Farzaneh et al., 2014; Wei, 2013), and job performance (Das, 2023; Hoffman & Woehr, 2006).

Additionally, person-organization fit influences internal organizational decisions, such as recommending hiring a candidate (Cable & Judge, 1997) and the likelihood that a candidate will accept a job offer (Bretz & Judge, 1994; Judge & Bretz, 1992). From the applicant's perspective, determining complementary fit involves assessing various personal dimensions, such as personality, attitudes, values, and needs, and comparing them with the organization's non-monetary value proposition, which includes aspects like structure, culture, and goals (Schneider et al., 1995). These factors influence the applicant’s attraction to the organization (Bretz et al., 1989; Keon et al., 1982).

Employees who are a good fit with their organization become "globally committed," meaning they wish to stay with the organization even if they seek a different role when the person-job fit is poor (Becker & Billings, 1993, p. 177). In such cases, their commitment to the organization remains strong, and turnover typically occurs within roles rather than the organization itself. The reverse is also true: when person-job fit is high but person-organization fit is low, individuals are more likely to seek similar positions in different organizations (Hollenbeck, 1989). The importance of fit is substantial for individual well-being. However, while there is a robust body of research on person-organization fit, studies examining its benefits for the organization have not progressed as extensively (Subramanian et al., 2002).

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Person-Job Fit

Person-job fit refers to the compatibility between an individual's abilities and the demands of a job, or the extent to which a job meets an individual's needs and desires (Edwards, 1991). It is a key subconstruct within the broader person-environment fit literature, with continued interest due to its relevance to organizational behavior and industrial/organizational psychology (Edwards, 1991; Heywood, 2003). Person-job fit involves assessing an individual's well-being in relation to job demands and examining how personal characteristics, such as personality, values, and goals, align with those demands (Fu & Huang, 2022). Like person-organization fit, person-job fit emphasizes the congruence of skills, knowledge, and abilities, which is linked to more positive work attitudes (Lauver & Kristof-Brown, 2001).

Research has shown that person-job fit contributes to job satisfaction (Gabriel et al., 2013; Lauver & Kristof-Brown, 2001; Memon et al., 2014), organizational commitment (Edwards, 2008; Heywood, 2003; Saks & Ashforth, 1997), and work engagement quality (Lu et al., 2014). De Beer et al. (2017) found that work engagement predicts job fit and that fit, in turn, influences job turnover (Clark, 2017; de Beer et al., 2012; Hoole & Bonnema, 2015; Kumar & Pansari, 2016). Moreover, person-job fit can be a buffer or asset during organizational change initiatives (Caldwell et al., 2004; Niessen et al., 2010). In contrast, a lack of person-job fit is associated with turnover, stress, and adverse workplace outcomes (Hollenbeck, 1989; Vakola & Nikolaou, 2005).

Edwards (1991, 1996) and Kristof-Brown (1996) have described fit as occurring when an individual possesses the necessary skills to meet job demands, known as demands-abilities fit, which is a primary focus for hiring professionals (Werbel & Gililland, 1999; Kristof, 2000). However, ensuring a good fit does not rest solely with the hiring organization. Individuals must also carefully evaluate the job criteria to determine if the position suits them.

In addition to demands-abilities fit, the other fit measure is needs-supplies fit (Edwards, 1991, 1996; Kristof-Brown, 1996). Whereas the demands-abilities fit requires both the applicant and the hiring group, the needs-supplies fit tends to be more of a factor for the applicant as they weigh the pros and cons of the position's ability to meet the needs and expectations of the applicant (Kristof, 1996). Both demands-abilities and needs-supplies concern the degree to which a match occurs and the individual's and position's objectives are met (Wachtfogel, 2009). Scroggins (2003) and May et al. (2004) took the person-job fit concept of needs-supplies further, resulting in *self-concept/job*. This concept of fit is more nuanced; it goes beyond the simple exchange of providing work in return for having one's needs met. The alignment between self-concept and the job extends past mere need fulfillment. It moves into the identity space and how the position and its work align with specific aspects of self due to "confirming the characteristics, beliefs, values, and roles the individual perceives to be characteristic of the self" (Scroggins, 2007, p. 1651).

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Difference between Person-Job and Person-Organization Fit

At the practitioner level, the distinction between person-job fit and position-job fit can be subtle, often leading to little or no differentiation between the two in hiring practices. Kristof-Brown (2000) noted that there is insufficient evidence to suggest that hiring practices consistently make a clear distinction between these perspectives. However, understanding and appropriately applying these differences is crucial, as overlooking them can have significant implications for an individual's success. For example, if hiring staff are unable to distinguish between these types of fit, or fail to operationalize this difference effectively, it raises concerns about their ability to consistently and reliably align the position's needs with the diverse perspectives and experiences of applicants. Given the complexity of this issue, this paper aims to explore cultural constructs to improve the effectiveness of person-job fit.

FIT AND CULTURE

The concept of culture as it relates to fit is broad and multifaceted. While commonly associated with nationality or identity, culture also encompasses cross-cultural communication (Prodromou, 1992), behaviors and practices (Pant, 2016), cultural intelligence (Moon et al., 2012; Zhang, 2013), colonialism (Lee, 2017; Syed & Metcalfe, 2017), and team dynamics (McAtavey & Nikolovska, 2010). These factors influence fit, even if they are not explicitly addressed in all research streams. Aligning cultural elements with individual attributes and attitudes in relation to job demands and requirements (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; Livingstone et al., 1997) remains a key aspect of assessing fit.

This paper focuses on how the demands of a position may align with an individual's abilities, particularly through the lens of individualist and collectivist perspectives, as well as the related traits of allocentrism and idiocentrism. Allocentrism and idiocentrism are recognized as individual-level expressions of collectivism and individualism, respectively (Triandis et al., 1985). Rego and Cunha (2009) argue that it is appropriate for recruitment and selection processes to consider whether applicants have individualist or collectivist orientations, given the potential impact on fit.

Organizational culture plays a crucial role in promoting various pro-social outcomes (Feygina & Henry, 2015). Culture can be developed intentionally, evolve passively, or through a combination of both. Deliberate cultural development related to fit factors is compelling because it provides a framework for organizations to better understand which individuals are likely to succeed within their environment (Costa et al., 2021). By focusing on fit factors, organizations can align the individual, the job, and the broader work environment more effectively. Research has consistently shown that when fit is achieved, individual well-being and psychological health are positively affected (Follmer et al., 2018; Lamiani et al., 2018; O'Reilly et al., 1998; Vogel et al., 2016).

Like many constructs, research on organizational culture and fit has evolved along two main paths: (1) refining and further exploring the construct itself, and (2) examining its relationship to other constructs and domains. For example, studies have investigated the link between individualism/collectivism and organizational citizenship behaviors (Moorman & Blakely, 1995; Finkelstein, 2012), the impact on specific populations (Bogg, 2017; Liu & Chui, 2018), and practical applications in fields like education (Cagan, 1978; Moss et al., 2007).

Collectivism & Individualism

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Hofstede (1980) was the first to introduce the concepts of individualism and collectivism as we largely understand them today. His research revealed that individualist countries tend to experience higher levels of economic development and occupational mobility compared to collectivist cultures, which exhibit greater societal control. In individualist cultures, there is a strong emphasis on autonomy and independence, which often leads to more decentralized goal setting. Conversely, in collectivist cultures, goal setting is typically more centralized within specific groups, sensitive to higher power distance, reflecting a greater tendency to defer to authority figures (Hofstede et al., 2010). "Perhaps one of the most important applications of the individualism and collectivism constructs is that they provide an objective assessment of what is often a fuzzy concept: culture" (Gouveia et al., 2003, p. 44).

Hofstede's research sparked extensive studies exploring cultural concepts across various domains, including education (Darwish & Huber, 2003; Telhaug et al., 2004), criminology (Kotlaja, 2020; Suzuki et al., 2019), hospitality (Kim et al., 2018; Radojevic et al., 2019), and the performing arts (Holledge, 2006). Researchers have used concepts of individualism and collectivism—dimensions tied to personality (Triandis et al., 1985)—to explain orientations toward different human behaviors. These terms extend beyond individual behavior to describe cultural groups, distinguishing between collectivist and individualist cultures (Triandis, 1983).

This manuscript focuses on how cultural influences shape employee practices and behaviors, such as prioritizing group over self (or vice versa), the nature of interactions and integration, and attitudes toward power (Cheng et al., 2020; Hofstede, 2011; Triandis, 1995). Triandis (1996) emphasizes that these cultural traits should not be considered identities but "syndromes," meaning they are collections of behaviors, characteristics, and factors grounded in lived experiences. These behaviors and perspectives, informed by cultural contexts, result in different responses depending on the situation (Jiao & Zhao, 2023).

People from collectivist cultures, such as China, Japan, and Indonesia, exhibit behaviors that differ significantly from those in individualist cultures (Triandis, 2004; Smit, 2012). Collectivists have a strong sense of group affiliation and prioritize in-group norms and goals over their personal interests (Triandis, 1983, 2001). As noted by Carpenter and Radhakrishnan (2000), collectivists incorporate representations of others into their self-concepts more deeply than individualists do. When there is a conflict between personal and group goals, collectivists typically prioritize the goals of the group, whereas individualists are more likely to prioritize their personal goals (Singelis et al., 1995). Research also indicates that employees who prefer group-based work (i.e., collectivists) experience higher levels of happiness compared to those who prefer to work alone (Rego & Cunha, 2009).

Individualists, on the other hand, frequently but not exclusively, are from countries in the West, such as Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, and Germany (Smit, 2012). Individualists differ from collectivists because they are more independent and autonomous of groups, prioritizing their own interests ahead of in-group interests (Triandis, 2001, 2004). Examples of the exception to the East versus West generalization is that while Mexico and Chile are in the Western Hemisphere, they both tend to embrace the central importance of in-group structures such as community and family (Krassner et al., 2017) and are recognized as collectivist cultures. While the location may not always dictate specific behaviors, it plays a significant role in shaping the development of individuals and communities through the surrounding circumstances. Ecological factors—such as location, climate, terrain, and food availability—impact community development in areas like child-rearing practices, parental roles, and the extent to which individuals rely on one another. These factors contribute to the formation of personality traits among community members. As ecological conditions change, community personality patterns also evolve (Triandis, 2001).

The concepts of collectivism and individualism have evolved as research in this area has progressed. Initially, "collectivist" and "individualist" were used to describe factors reflective of cultural upbringing (e.g., values, perceptions, and other traits observed in people from specific cultures). However, as research became more detailed, collectivism and individualism began to be regarded less as reflections of cultural behaviors and more as distinct personality types. While this evolution is evident in specific research, this trend has been observed in mainstream media outlets, with magazine articles such as *Why Care? Individualistic Culture vs Collective Culture in Democracy* (Clapp, 2021), *How Individualism and Collectivism Impact Team Success* (Jopson, 2019) and *Building a Positive Work Culture Around the Idea of Collectivism vs. Individualism* (Scott, 2023).

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The evolution of the collectivist and individualist dimensions has followed two predominant research paths. The first path involves the continued refinement of these concepts, resulting in a more nuanced understanding and the emergence of four new dimensions: horizontal collectivism, vertical collectivism, horizontal individualism, and vertical individualism.

The second path explores the interaction of these foundational concepts with other constructs, such as prosocial behavior and organizational citizenship behaviors. Additionally, it examines how collectivism and individualism frameworks are applied across various domains, including law enforcement (Kotlaja, 2020; Suzuki et al., 2019) and family studies (Chen, 2015; Georgas, 1989).

Horizontal and Vertical Dimensions

While substantial evidence indicates relatively consistent behaviors and preferences within collectivist and individualist groups, there is still considerable variation within each group

(Kagitcibasi, 1997; Triandis, 1995, 2004). The primary cultural distinction lies in whether a society leans toward individualism or collectivism, with each encompassing various forms influenced by unique cultural traits (Singelis et al., 1995). To enhance the utility of these constructs and improve the accuracy of associating a cultural syndrome with an individual, Triandis (1995) refined the framework into four dimensions: horizontal collectivism (H-C), vertical collectivism (V-C), horizontal individualism (H-I), and vertical individualism (V-I).

The differentiation between vertical and horizontal orientations has been supported by empirical research, demonstrating the value of distinguishing between these factors. According to Singelis et al. (1995), individuals on the vertical dimensions acknowledge that differences among people necessitate some level of conformity to support hierarchical structures. In contrast, horizontal dimensions emphasize equality and the belief that individuals should act independently of others' influence.

Singelis et al. (1995) recommend measuring vertical collectivism, horizontal collectivism, vertical individualism, and horizontal individualism separately rather than using the broader categories of collectivism and individualism. These refined dimensions have been validated across various countries (Györkös et al., 2013). This differentiation allows for more precise predictions about how individual traits may align with specific structures, tasks, or practices, facilitating a deeper understanding of cultural fit.

Horizontal and vertical collectivism align with the core values of collectivism, emphasizing the prioritization of the in-group over the individual self, where the self is closely intertwined with in-group members (Singelis et al., 1995). However, while both embrace communal sharing, the V-C group prefers authority ranking, whereas horizontal collectivism prefers equality matching (Fiske, 1990, 1992). H-C also prioritizes interdependence and having goals consistent with group members (Györkös et al., 2013). A potential consequence of this in-group matching for the H-Cs is that the in-group care required in maintaining social relationships can have a negative effect on a person's energy level, compromising overall performance. In contrast, the V-C's preference towards authority ranking and resigning to people in power/authority positions within the group could result in undesirable behaviors such as marginalization and objectification of members. It is important to acknowledge that one is not inherently worse than the other (Triandis & Gelfand, 1998). As with any personality trait, they equally have their risks of overextension.

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As established, individualists prioritize self-needs over in-group needs, with a belief in a high level of self-sufficiency and independence. However, although they see themselves as separate from the group, H-I believes there is equality in status, unlike V-I (Singelis et al., 1995). One of the differences observed between horizontal and vertical individualists is that H-I does not have the same need for high status or competition as V-I (Györkös et al., 2013). Since the vertical dimensions come with an understanding of the inequality among individuals, the V-Is are more susceptible to peer pressure and more likely to violate the social standard of equality (Triandis, 1995, 1998). In analyzing the traits of H-I and V-I, Fiske's (1990) findings, which align with Hofstede's (1980) work, reveal that both H-I and V-I favor market pricing. Additionally, H-I, similar to H-C, tend to prefer equality matching, whereas V-I emphasize authority ranking more, resembling V-C.

The distinctions among the four categories offer insights into how individuals might react to various factors, including competition, working independently, locus of accountability, hedonism, interdependence, the value of relationships, sociability, and status. Table 2 highlights the significant and predictable findings (noted with *) and those inferred from the literature (in italics). Blank spaces indicate areas where the literature review was inconclusive.

Allocentrism & Idiocentrism Overview

Concurrent research on the cultural dimensions of collectivism and individualism has highlighted personality-like traits that align with these cultural syndromes, specifically allocentrism and idiocentrism (Lay et al., 2012; Parkes, 2000; Triandis, 1989; Triandis et al., 1995). Allocentrics adopt collectivist values in their relationships with others, while idiocentrics embrace individualist perspectives (Triandis et al., 1985; Triandis et al., 1995). It is important to distinguish these traits from the cultural syndromes because the dimensions of collectivism and individualism encompass more than individual traits, relying on cultural-level information (Jung & McCormick, 2011). Therefore, when examining individuals outside a culturally specific context, the terms allocentrism and idiocentrism are preferred for greater precision, whereas collectivism and individualism should be reserved for contexts with relevant cultural data (Triandis, 1983; Triandis et al., 1995).

Multiple studies have demonstrated the connection between cultural syndromes and the traits of individuals (Carpenter & Radhakrishnan, 2000; Lam et al., 2002; Lay et al., 1998; Triandis et al., 1995). Triandis's (1982) early research and subsequent studies (e.g., Carpenter & Radhakrishnan, 2000) examined how individuals living in Western countries but with collectivist cultural backgrounds exhibit different responses to practices and processes. These studies highlighted the importance of individual freedoms for idiocentrics, in contrast to the group-oriented values of allocentrics. Triandis (1995) also emphasized the role of acculturation, demonstrating these cultural dimensions' situational and adaptable nature.

The premise is that allocentrism is analogous to collectivism and idiocentrism with individualism (Carpenter & Radhakrishnan, 2000). As collectivists prioritize in-group relations and individualists prioritize self-interests, these perspectives influence decisions against values and attitudes specific to the dimension (Cheng et al., 2020; Hofstede, 2011). People with allocentric traits place "greater emphasis on the views, needs, goals, and concerns of the ingroup than of oneself," with a consideration of their behavior's impact on others (Triandis, 1983, p. 16). They place a high value on social connectedness with increased sensitivity to social rejection (Oyserman et al., 2002; Yamaguchi et al., 1995). The inherent value for allocentrics is that belonging to an "entitative group provides greater satisfaction for belongingness needs than inclusion in a mere aggregate" (Carpenter & Radhakrishnan, 2002, p. 1529). The higher the level of allocentrism, the greater the affinity towards the group and the greater the belief in group homogeneity. Furthermore, this perception of group membership is important to individuals' self-esteem (Carpenter & Radhakrishnan, 2002).

Idiocentric traits place "greater emphasis on own views, needs, goals" of self (Triandis, 1983, p. 16) and a level of separateness or difference from others (Lam et al., 2002). Research on allocentrism reflects higher tendencies towards equality, cooperation, and honesty, whereas idiocentrics tend to value equity more than equality. They also valued competition, pleasure, and social recognition more than the allocentrics (Triandis et al., 1985). The values exhibited by allocentrics align with Rokeach's (1973) values measurement of obedience, love, helpfulness, and responsibility. The idiocentric values include ambition, independence, and pleasure.

The prioritization of self and personal goal fulfillment over others reveals other attributes central to idiocentrics. "When feelings of obligation towards the group and concerns for in-group harmony are contrasted, the difference between allocentrics and idiocentrics emerges" (Chen et al., 2007, p. 281). Idiocentrics were found to cooperate less, be more self-reliant, have lower interest in socialization, less commitment to group ambitions and interests, and are somewhat more aloof in social situations (Chen et al., 2007; Singelis et al., 1995; Triandis & Gelfand, 1998).

Upon reviewing the research on vertical and horizontal dimensions compared to allocentrism and idiocentrism (individual trait data), it becomes evident that the case for using allocentric and idiocentric concepts as reliable factors for assessing fit is weakened. This is because the vertical and horizontal data offer more nuance and specificity than the broader individual trait data. This highlights the complexity of human behavior and the challenges inherent in this line of research, which may explain why these dimensions have yet to be adapted into commercialized tools. Nevertheless, while not fully developed for commercial application, the categories outlined in Table 2 and the associated dispositional responses provide a foundational basis for constructing a person-job fit framework.

FIT FRAMEWORK

A standard function of human resources is assessing fit during the hiring and screening process (Oh et al., 2014). Understandably, hiring professionals primarily focus on evaluating the skills and abilities fit when selecting candidates for a position (Werbel & Gililland, 1999; Kristoff, 2000). This paper aims to present a framework for fit factors based on well-founded concepts that can improve the rigor of fit analysis and candidate evaluation. This approach does not pertain to cultural elements associated with nationality but instead considers cultural traits that may be fixed or adaptable within individuals.

Many studies have examined the relationship between collectivism and individualist attributes and affective well-being (Rego & Cunha, 2009;), engagement (Roy et al., 2018; Yan et al., 2023), socialization (Iacoviello & Lorenzi-Cioldi, 2019; Mone et al., 2016), turnover and retention (Feldman & Bolino, 1998; Mutsuddi & Sinah, 2017; Ramesh & Gelfand, 2010; Shaffer & Harrison, 1998), ethical practice (Husted & Allen, 2008; Oumlil & Balloun, 2017), organizational citizenship behaviors (De León & Finkelstein, 2011; Fu & Huang, 2023), organization-based self-esteem (Gardner et al., 2018; Sui & Wang, 2014), leader-member exchange (Magnini et al., 2013; Sui & Wang, 2014), affective commitment (Fischer & Mansell, 2009; Wang et al., 2015), job satisfaction (Chiu & Kosinski, 1999; Hui et al., 1995), organizational commitment (Abraham, 1997; Taştan & İşçi, 2013), transformational leadership (Mittal, 2015; Taştan & İşçi, 2013), as well as ingroup entitativity & homogeneity (Carpenter & Radhakrishnan, 2002). Table 3 illustrates that the fit and cultural content discussed in this paper focus on pro-social and pro-work constructs. These constructs emphasize behaviors and values that support collaborative, effective, and positive work environments, reinforcing the alignment between fit assessment and cultural traits.

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Research on fit and culture highlights a relationship between the two; however, this connection does not always follow a clear and consistent logical stream. As a result, it cannot be assumed that fit research on a specific construct, such as engagement, and cultural research on engagement demonstrate a reliable relationship between fit and culture on the same construct. While this area of study is still developing, and more empirical research is needed to make strong assertions about behavior predictions, this does not preclude us from exploring ways to operationalize the current insights to inform and enhance practical applications.

Cultures and the attributes tied to cultures are not pure. Various contextual factors influence these factors. However, factors such as teamwork, camaraderie, and shared decision-making are concepts that will experience some differentiation according to individuals' orientations and tendencies toward the dimensions (Rego & Cunha, 2009; Singelis et al., 1995). For example, the framework can be used when hiring for a position that prioritizes civic engagement and requires a level of compatibility (Edwards, 1991) between the position's ambitions and individual experience and interest (Fu & Huang, 2022). The promise of operationalizing a fit framework based on the fit factors found in Table 2 will assist hiring groups with methodically working through factors with a level of consistency. Triandis and Gelfand (1998) suggest these characteristics exist on a continuum. They can be pronounced and are situationally oriented, meaning they may be utilized more or less based on situation factors (Triandis et al., 1995). Part of the situational nature of this information relates to how people process information. Some individuals view themselves mainly through their relationships with others, while others define themselves primarily by their distinctive traits (Madson & Trafimow, 2001).

Table 4 includes items collected from various studies that examine factors relevant to cultural dimensions and the internalized cognitive structures influencing decision-making (Chen et al., 2007; Oyserman et al., 2002). These categories aim to assist in thinking through screening elements related to different work aspects (e.g., self-versus-group-versus-organization). Individuals can exhibit a blend of various dimensions. Without further analysis to define absolute categories, it is reasonable to expect that a person might deviate from a predicted category due to skill development or other influencing factors. This phenomenon is evident in many psychometric assessments, where a person may be classified in one way but has developed skills that enable them to perform differently from how they score. For instance, introverts might cultivate strong communication and social skills to meet job demands, such as selling, presenting, or impressing. The goal of person-job fit is to determine the alignment between an individual’s skills and dispositions and the job's requirements, which creates a “tautological relationship” (Edwards, 2008, p. 206).

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The fit factor framework is a valuable starting point for organizations striving to implement a fit model that ensures consistency and equality while minimizing the risk of discrimination-related lawsuits. The key lies in using these categories to contemplate fit factors. Although additional research is needed, existing studies provide a framework to understand concepts like commitment and fit better, enabling organizations to begin operationalizing these ideas.

CONCLUSION

How can organizations articulate and effectively screen for fit? Numerous personality assessments have been developed over the years to enhance the screening and hiring process by evaluating fit. However, psychometrically validated personality assessments are often expensive and may be financially unfeasible for many organizations. Despite the absence of such tools, organizations can still strive to improve fit by employing systematic approaches. Organizations must develop structured screening processes based on demands-abilities fit (Edwards, 1991, 1996; Kristof-Brown, 1996), which match candidates’ abilities to the specific demands of the position.

The candidate screening process can vary widely, from computer-assisted keyword analysis to comprehensive live reviews of credentials and experiences. It can include brief interviews lasting less than an hour or extend to multi-day interview engagements that expose candidates to multiple stakeholders through activities such as tours, job talks, and social events. The significance of incorporating fit categories and their attributes in relation to specific job requirements lies in creating a structured framework to assess candidate behaviors and tendencies. For instance, some leaders exhibit self-focused behaviors and a strong obsession with power and authority (Waldman et al., 2011). These traits may be incompatible with certain organizations, and without a system in place to identify tendencies toward dominance, crucial fit variables could be overlooked, leading to a poor person-job fit.

The goal of this paper was not to operationalize cultural syndromes such as collectivism and individualism or allocentrism and idiocentrism. Instead, it aimed to synthesize existing literature on these cultural and fit concepts to identify and categorize essential factors. These factors can be used to create affordable, science-based frameworks that support organizations in their hiring processes. It is important to note that while personality traits, skills, and behaviors influence certain fit aspects, they can also be developed independently of inherent personality tendencies. In these cases, skill development can significantly improve fit and work outcomes (Ramamoorthy & Flood, 2004).

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APPENDIX

Table 1. Cost-per-hire Variables

External Costs	Internal Costs
Advertising and marketing expenses	Cost of recruiting staff
Background checks expenses	Cost of sourcing staff
Campus recruiting expenses	Internal overhead for government compliance
Consulting services	Non-labor office costs
Contingency fees: contingent to regular	Recruiting learning and development
Drug-testing expenses	Secondary management cost of time for events
Employee referral awards/ payments	Secondary management cost of time for recruiting
Immigration expenses	
Job fair/recruiting event expenses	
Pre-hire health screens	
Pre-screening fees	
Recruitment process outsourcing fees	
Relocation fees	
Sign-on bonuses	
Sourcing costs	
Travel and expenses, candidate	
Travel and expenses, recruiter	
Technology costs	
Third-party agency fees	
Verification work eligibility expenses	

(SHRM, n.d.)

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Table 2. Examination of Attributes Tied to Cultural Dimensions

Collectivism/Allocentrism		Category	Individualism/Idiocentrism	
H C	*V C*		*H I*	*V I*
To group		Accountability		To self
Likely*[3]	Likely*[3]	Acknowledge other’s success	Likely*[3]	
Not likely*[3]	Not likely*[3]	Act according to personal interest, not in accord of other’s beliefs	Likely*[3]	
	Likely[3]	Act according to other’s expectations, despite disliking the action		Likely*[3]
Equality	*Ranking*	Authority	*Equality*	*Ranking*
Very low	*Low*	Autonomy	*High*	*Very high*
Lowest	*Low*	Competition	*Moderate*	High*[1]
High*[2,3]		Conform with expectations of others	Low*[2,3]	
Very high*[2,3]		Cooperation		
		Cultural Tightness	*Low*	*Low*
Highest group orientation	*High group orientation*	Decision making	*High self*	*High self*
	Low*[2,3]	Disagreeableness	High*[2,3]	
		Distinct from group (view of self)	High*[1]	
Very low*[1]	*Low*	Emotional Distance (from in-groups)	*Moderate*	*Highest*
High		Equality	*High*	
	High	Equity		*High*
Group		Goal Priority		*Self*
Low	*Lowest*	Hedonism	*Somewhat high*	High*[1,2,3]
		Hierarchy		
Low	*Low*	Independence	*High*	*High*
Very important	*Not as important*	In-group harmony		
Very high*[1]	*High*	Interdependence	*Low*	*Very Low*
High*[2,3]	High*[2,3]	Loyalty to employer		
	High*[2,3]	Turn blink eye (relative)		High*[2,3]
		Self-reliance	Very High*[1,2,3]	*High*
Highly likely*[3]	Likely*[3]	Sharing (information/items/etc.)	Likely[3]	
High1*	High*[1]	Sociability	*Lowest*	*Low*
		Status (importance of)	*Low*	High*[1]
Very high	*Very high*	Value of Relationships		
		View of Self in relation to others		High*[1]

Italics = deductions based on synthesized literature, Blanks = inconclusive, * = predictive based on findings
1 – Triandis & Gelfand, (1998)
2 – Singelis, (1994)
3 – Singelis et al., (1995)

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Table 3. Constructs Included in Paper Representative of Fit and Culture

Fit Literature	Construct	Collectivism/Individualism Literature
de Beer et al., 2017; Lu et al., 2014	Engagement	Roy et al., 2018; Yan et al., 2023
Al Halbusi et al., 2021; Lopez, 2009	Ethical practice	Husted & Allen, 2008; Oumlil & Balloun, 2017
Cable & Parsons, 2001; Cooper-Thomas et al., 2004	Socialization	Iacoviello & Lorenzi-Cioldi, 2019; Mone et al., 2016
de Beer et al., 2012; Clark, 2017; Hoole & Bonnema, 2015; Kumar & Pansari, 2016; McCullock & Turban, 2007; Yusliza et al., 2021;	Retention/turnover	Feldman & Bolino, 1998; Mutsuddi & Sinah, 2017; Ramesh & Gelfand, 2010; Shaffer & Harrison, 1998
Autry & Daugherty, 2003; Chen et al., 2016; Gabriel et al., 2013; Lauver & Kristof-Brown, 2001; Memon et al., 2014	Job satisfaction	Chiu & Kosinski, 1999; Hui et al., 1995
Edwards, 2008; Heywood, 2003; Jehanzeb & Mohanty, 2018; Saks & Ashforth, 1997; Silverthrone, 2004	Commitment (affective, org, etc.)	Abraham, 1997; Fischer & Mansell, 2009; Taştan & İşçi, 2013; Wang et al., 2015;
Farzaneh et al., 2014: Wei, 2013	Organizational citizenship behaviors	Moorman & Blakely, 1995; Finkelstein, 2012; De León & Finkelstein, 2011; Fu & Huang, 2023

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Table 4. Fit Factors Framework

Category	Key Elements
1. Individual Identity and Self-Perception	Autonomy, Emotional distance, Emotions, Evaluation of self/self-esteem, Freedom, Hedonism, Independence, Identity, Individual achievement, Locus of control, Personal goals, Personal identity, Personality, Preferences, Privacy, Self-esteem, Self-reliance, Shame, Survival needs, Values, View of self (in relation to others)
2. Group Dynamics and Social Relations	Accountability, Collegiality, Conflict and justice, Conflict resolution, Conformity, Cooperation, Cultural tightness, Distinct from group (need of), Family integrity, Group processes, In-group harmony, Interdependence, Organizational loyalty, Quality of relationships, Reliance/dependence on others, Sharing information, Sociability, Social attributions, Social behavior influence, Social desirability, Social identity, Status (importance of), Trust, Value of relationships, View of self (in relation to others)
3. Workplace and Organizational Contexts	Accountability, Competition, Consequences, Conflict resolution, Cooperation, Decision-making, Goal priority, Goal setting, Goals and feedback, Job satisfaction, Leadership, Organization citizenship behaviors, Organizational loyalty, Persuasion, Rewards, Sharing information, Social identity, Status (importance of), Trust, Work motivation
4. Emotional Wellbeing and Satisfaction	Emotions, Equality, Happiness, Hedonism, Life satisfaction, Quality of relationships, Rights, Wellbeing

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