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Aligning Fits: Enhancing Employee Engagement and Retention in the It Sector

Lingam Sreehitha
School of Management Studies, University of Hyderabad, India.

Abstract
In the rapidly evolving Information Technology (IT) sector, retaining skilled employees is a significant challenge faced by all the organizations. This study focuses on understanding what can be assed to enhance the Intention to stay by exploring the relationships between Person-Job (PJ) Fit, Person-Organization (PO) Fit, Person-Technology (PT) Fit, Employee Engagement (EE), and their impact on Intention to Stay (ITS) among IT professionals. Utilizing a cross-sectional research design, primary data was collected through an online survey of 495 IT employees in India. The data was analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The findings demonstrate that PJ Fit, PO Fit, and PT Fit positively influence EE, which in turn significantly impacts ITS. This highlights the importance of aligning job requirements, organizational culture, and technological tools with employees' skills, values, and technological comfort. The study extends the theoretical understanding of fit dimensions within the IT sector and underscores the critical role of EE in enhancing employee retention. Practical implications include making fit a top priority when hiring, offering ongoing professional development, cultivating a positive workplace culture, and maintaining competence in technology. This research offers valuable insights for IT organizations aiming to boost employee engagement and enhance Intention to stay.

Keywords: Employee Engagement, Intention to Stay, Person-Job Fit, Person-Organization Fit, Person-Technology Fit, IT Sector.

1. Introduction:

In today's dynamic business environment, organizations face the challenge of retaining skilled employees, particularly in the fast-evolving field of Information Technology(IT). Employee attrition is reported to be higher in the IT industry compared to other industries (Joseph et al., 2007). Employee engagement has emerged as a critical factor influencing not only organizational performance but also employee retention. A possible rationale for this degree of attention in Employee Engagement is the range of good results, including increased productivity, profitability, and performance as well as decreased absenteeism and turnover rates. (Rayton et al., 2012).Thus, Understanding the determinants of employee engagement and its impact on employees' intention to stay is therefore of paramount importance.

According to Gallup (2023), only 23% of employees globally are engaged with their work, highlighting the critical need for effective employee engagement strategies. Additionally, research indicates that engagement dimensions such as culture, leadership, people processes, business alignment, and job characteristics are vital in enhancing engagement levels and influencing outcomes like retention. The relationship between these engagement dimensions is further influenced by factors such as age, years of service, and employment grade, which can lead to varying engagement profiles among employees (Singh et al., 2024).

Employees are an organization's most valuable resource. According to Elegbe (2018), the difficulty in attracting, hiring, and retaining talent is now the main focus, rather than the value of talent as an asset. Finding and retaining talent is the primary concern for most firms, regardless of size (WorldatWork, 2015; Tumasjan et al., 2020).However, existing literature lacks comprehensive studies exploring the relationship between Intention to Stay, Employee Engagement, Person-Job Fit, Person-Organization Fit, and Person-Technology Fit within the context of IT employment. This study aims to fill this gap by investigating these associations specifically from the perspective of IT professionals, thereby contributing valuable insights to the existing body of literature.

This study explores the relationships between Person-Job(PJ) Fit, Person-Technology(PT) Fit, Person-Organization(PO) Fit, and Employee Engagement(EE) among IT employees. Additionally, it examines the impact of Employee Engagement on the Intention to Stay(ITS). By addressing these relationships, the study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the factors that influence Intention to Stays of the employees in the IT sector.

This paper is constructed as follows: Section 2 literature on Employee Engagement, Person-Job Fit, Person-Technology Fit, Person-Organization Fit, and Intention to Stay is reviewed. Section 3 outlines the conceptual framework,theoretical background and hypotheses development. Section 4 details the research methodology. Section 5 presents data analysis and results. Section 6 provides findings and discussions. Section 7 acknowledges Implications. Finally, Section 8 suggests limitations and scope for future research.

2. Literature Review:

2.1 Person Job (PJ) Fit:

“Person Job Fit can be defined as the fit between the abilities of a person and the demands of a Job or the desires of a person and the attributes of the Job”(Edwards, 1991).Based on the theory of work adjustment, this idea suggests that

people are more likely to be satisfied with their jobs and perform well when their skills align with those requirements and they are able to achieve the results they need from their jobs (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). Research has demonstrated that favorable work outcomes, such as job satisfaction, organizational loyalty, and less intentions to leave the company, are linked to high levels of P-J fit (Biswas &Bhatnagar, 2013; Cable &DeRue, 2002). The alignment of job attributes with an individual's capabilities and needs results in increased employee engagement, an essential component of a successful organization.Employee turnover is one of the work-related attitudes and behaviors that P-J fit is strongly correlated with(Ali Memon et al., 2014).

2.2 Person Organization (PO) Fit:

Kristof (1996) defined P-O fit as "the compatibility between people and organizations that occurs when: (a) at least one entity provides what the other needs, or (b) they share similar fundamental characteristics, or (c) both" .According to Arthur et al. (2006) and Boon et al. (2011), P-O fit is crucial for promoting a feeling of alignment with the organization's objectives and a sense of belonging, all of which can increase organizational commitment, lower turnover, and improve job satisfaction. Strong P-O fits, according to employees, increase the likelihood that they will exhibit Organizational Citizenship Behavior and enhance the work environment (Cable &DeRue, 2002). Although it hasn't been studied as much, P-O fit integration into employee engagement models is essential to comprehending how culture and value congruence affect total employee engagement and Intention to stay (Ali Memon et al., 2014).The meta-analysis conducted by Kristof-Brown et al. (2005) revealed a strong correlation between positive organizational outcomes, such as an individual's improved overall performance, and both PJ fit and PO fit. PJ fit refers to the relationship between an individual's characteristics and those of the job or tasks at work, while PO fit measures the fit between an individual and the entire organization.

2.3 Person Technology (PT) Fit:

"Person technology fit is defined in Information Science literature as a fit or synergy between an individual and technology"(Tomer& Mishra, 2015). P-T fit has grown in importance in the contemporary workplace, where technology plays a crucial role. According to Goodhue and Thompson (1995), a good match can improve job performance, lessen frustration, and raise job satisfaction. These effects can then have a favorable impact on employee engagement and retention. Workers are more likely to be engaged and dedicated to their work when they feel knowledgeable and at ease with the technology tools they utilize, which lowers the risk of turnover (Venkatesh et al., 2003).Positive evaluations of PT fit will enable an employee to function at a greater level if they have a high need for technology and the company integrates progressive technology into their workflow (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005).

2.4 Employee Engagement:

Employee engagement is a broad concept that includes an employee's emotional and cognitive attachment to their job and business.Kahn (1990) defined engagement as the application of an employee's physical,cognitive, and emotional energies to their work jobs; hence, engagement provides a holistic explanation for job performance (Rich et al., 2010). According to Saks (2006), engaged workers are more likely to go above and beyond the call of duty, support the growth of the company, and continue around for extended periods of tenure. Numerous studies have demonstrated the value of EE by connecting it to favorable outcomes like lower absenteeism and turnover rates, as well as better productivity, improved performance, and higher profitability (Rayton et al., 2012; Sorenson, 2023). According to Bailey et al. (2015), there are several factors that affect employee engagement, such as meaningful work, recognition, a supportive work environment, and alignment with company values. Increased job performance, decreased attrition, and better overall organizational outcomes have all been associated with high levels of engagement (Harter et al., 2002). Contributions from Schaufeli et al. (2002), who identify it as "a positive, fulfilling, work-related state characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption", further enhance the conceptual underpinnings of the field. Anitha (2014), highlighted the growing significance of EE in contemporary organizational contexts, reflect this viewpoint. They contend that creating human resource management (HRM) strategies that effectively improve employee performance and well-being requires a deeper knowledge of EE.

2.5 Intention to Stay (ITS):

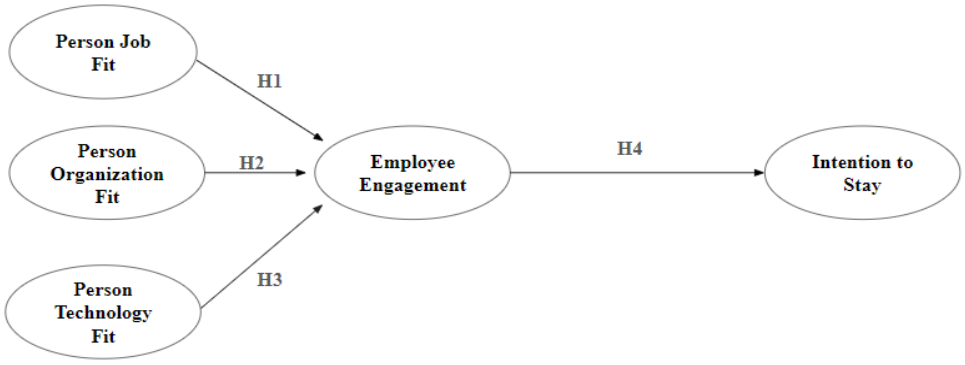
The concept of "intent to stay" refers to the degree of likelihood that an employee will remain employed with the organization.(Tett& Meyer, 1993).The term "Intention to Stay" describes a worker's consciously chosen decision to continue with their present employer. It is a crucial indicator of real employee retention and is impacted by a number of variables, such as organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and general fit with the company, technology, and job (Boswell et al., 2008). Employees who find their employment satisfying, feel that the company culture is aligned with their values, and believe that their contributions are valued are usually those who have a high intention of staying (Meyer & Allen, 1991). According to Ali Memon et al. (2014), efficient management of P-J fit, P-O fit, and P-T fit can greatly increase employee engagement and decrease intentions to leave, which will increase retention rates.

Integrating P-J fit, P-O fit, and P-T fit into a holistic model of employee engagement provides a comprehensive understanding of how these factors collectively influence IT employees Intention to stay in . Organizations that focus on optimizing these fits are likely to foster higher employee engagement and reduce turnover, thereby maintaining a competitive advantage.

3. Conceptual Framework, Theoretical Underpinnings, and Hypotheses Development:

3.1 Conceptual Framework:

The conceptual framework depicted in the model illustrates the relationships between various types of person-environment fit dimensions and their influence on employee engagement, which in turn affects employees' intention to stay with an organization. This model underscores the importance of aligning individual attributes with job requirements, organizational culture, and technological resources to enhance employee engagement and retention.Control variables considered for this model are age category,gender,educationalqualification,current annual salary,employment tenure in the current organization and Mode of working.



3.2 Theoretical Foundation for Conceptual Model:

The conceptual framework depicted in the model illustrates the relationships between various types of person-environment fit dimensions (Person-Job Fit, Person-Organization Fit, Person-Technology Fit) and their influence on employee engagement, which in turn affects employees' intention to stay with an organization. This framework is primarily grounded in Person-Environment Fit Theory, which emphasizes the importance of congruence between individuals and their work environment for positive work outcomes (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005).

Additionally, the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model (Bakker &Demerouti, 2007) supports the inclusion of employee engagement as a critical mediator, suggesting that resources (such as good fit) enhance engagement, leading to lower turnover intentions. Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964) further explains that employees reciprocate positive treatment and perceived fit with increased engagement and commitment to the organization. Lastly, the Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory (Hobfoll, 1989) highlights that fit acts as a valuable resource, reducing stress and fostering engagement, which subsequently influences the intention to stay.

Integrating these theoretical perspectives provides a comprehensive understanding of how person-environment fit dimensions' impact employee engagement and retention outcomes.

3.3 Hypotheses Development:

H1: Person Job (PJ) Fit has a significant positive relationship with Employee Engagement(EE)

It is hypothesized that a strong person-job fit will positively influence employee engagement. When employees' skills, knowledge, and abilities align well with their job requirements, they are more likely to find their work meaningful and engaging, resulting in higher levels of engagement.

H2: Person Organization (PO) Fit has a significant positive relationship with Employee Engagement(EE).

The second hypothesis posits that person-organization fit positively impacts employee engagement. Employees who share values and beliefs with their organization are likely to feel a sense of belonging and commitment, enhancing their engagement.

H3: Person Technology (PJ) Fit has a significant positive relationship with Employee Engagement(EE).

The third hypothesis suggests that person-technology fit is positively related to employee engagement. When employees perceive that the technology they use is supportive and enhances their job performance, their engagement with work increases.

H4: Employee Engagement (EE) has a significant positive relationship with Intention to Stay(ITS).
Finally, it is hypothesized that employee engagement positively influences the intention to stay. Engaged employees are more likely to develop a strong emotional attachment to the organization, leading to a higher intention to remain with the company.

4. Research Method:

4.1 Sample and Data Collection:

This study adopts a descriptive and cross-sectional research design, utilizing primary data collected through an online survey-based approach. The target population comprises IT employees, chosen purposively and via snowball sampling techniques to ensure representation across diverse organizational contexts and roles. The sample size consists of 495 participants working in various IT companies across India. Data collection is facilitated through an online questionnaire, allowing for efficient and widespread participation. The collected data are analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) techniques, leveraging the Smart PLS4 and SPSS software packages for statistical analysis and modeling. This methodological approach enables a comprehensive examination of the associations between variables, yielding robust insights into the factors influencing Intention to Stay among IT professionals.

4.2 Measures:

In this study, the constructs are measured using established scales sourced from the existing literature. Person-Job (PJ) Fit is assessed using a 4-item scale developed by Lauver and Kristof-Brown (2001). Person-Organization (PO) Fit is evaluated with a 3-item scale devised by Cable and Judge (1996). Person-Technology (PT) Fit is measured using an adopted from Thompson et al. (1991) and Speier and Venkatesh (2002). Employee Engagement (EE) is gauged utilizing the Gallup Survey, consisting of a 12-item questionnaire widely recognized in the literature. Lastly, Intention to Stay (ITS) is quantified through a 3-item scale developed by Milliman et al. (2018).All items measured in this study used a Five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). Demographics of the respondents were also collected including age category, gender, educationalqualification, current annual salary, employment tenure in the current organization and Mode of working.

5. Data Analysis and Results:

5.1 Demographic details of respondents:

Demographic Variable	Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Female	207	41.8
	Male	288	58.2
Age Category	20-30 Years	393	79.4
	31-40 Years	84	17.0
	41-50 Years	15	3.0
	Above 50	3	.6
Level of Educational Qualifications	Graduation	269	54.3
	Post Graduation	215	43.4
	Ph.D	6	1.2
	Others	5	1.0
Employement tenure in current organization	1-5 Years	444	89.7
	6-10 Years	36	7.3
	11-15 Years	6	1.2
	Above 15 Years	9	1.8
Current annual salary	Lessthan 5 LPA	133	26.9
	5-10 LPA	197	39.8
	11-15 LPA	75	15.2
	16-20 LPA	37	7.5
	20 LPA and Above	53	10.7
Mode of working	WFO	224	45.3
	WFH	77	15.6
	Hybrid	194	39.2
Total		495	100.0

Figure 1: Demographic details of respondents

5.2 Measurement Model Assessment

To evaluate the robustness of our measurement model, we performed several statistical tests. Initially, we examined the reflective first-order constructs. As detailed in Table 3, both the indicator loadings and composite reliabilities (CR) for these constructs exceeded the respective thresholds of 0.6 and 0.7, thereby indicating sufficient reliability (Hair et al., 2019). Additionally, the average variance extracted (AVE) for each construct was above the 0.5 threshold, suggesting adequate convergent validity (Hair et al., 2019; Esposito Vinzi et al., 2010) as shown in Table 4.

Subsequently, we assessed the second-order formative constructs, namely Employee Engagement and Person-Technology Fit, by evaluating multicollinearity and indicator relevance. The significance of the outer weights for all second-order constructs exceeded the critical value of $t > 1.96$, indicating adequate indicator relevance (Esposito Vinzi et al., 2010).

Furthermore, we analyzed multicollinearity for the entire structural model, focusing on the remaining three reflective constructs. Utilizing variance-based partial least squares-structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) and established procedures to test for multicollinearity, we evaluated the inner variance inflation factors (VIFs). As presented in Table 2, all constructs had VIFs below the threshold of 5, demonstrating that multicollinearity is not an issue in our model (Hair et al., 2013).

Factor Loadings

Table1: Factor loading of the constructs

	PJ	PO	PT	EE	ITS
PJ1	0.813				
PJ2	0.841				
PJ3	0.860				
PJ4	0.846				
PO1		0.895			
PO2		0.880			
PO3		0.845			
PT1			0.775		
PT2			0.709		
PT3			0.564		
PT4			0.711		
PT5			0.720		
PT6			0.744		
PT7			0.698		
PT8			0.759		
PT9			0.795		
PT10			0.815		
PT11			0.814		
EE1				0.516	
EE2				0.568	
EE3				0.723	
EE4				0.665	
EE5				0.727	
EE6				0.638	
EE7				0.691	
EE8				0.837	
EE9				0.699	
EE10				0.599	
EE11				0.693	
EE12				0.742	
ITS1					0.749
ITS2					0.711
ITS3					0.652
ITS4					0.871

MultiColinearity statistics of the constructs (VIF)

Table2: *MultiColinearity statistics of the constructs (VIF)*

	VIF
PJ1	2.007
PJ2	2.178
PJ3	2.113
PJ4	2.080
PO1	2.243
PO2	2.058
PO3	1.874
PT1	1.888
PT2	1.865
PT3	1.695
PT4	2.338
PT5	2.687
PT6	2.552
PT7	2.194
PT8	2.836
PT9	3.311
PT10	3.169
PT11	2.261
EE1	1.447
EE2	1.528
EE3	1.910
EE4	1.688
EE5	1.920
EE6	1.930
EE7	2.274
EE8	1.944
EE9	1.864
EE10	1.258
EE11	2.050
EE12	2.038
ITS1	1.429
ITS2	1.432
ITS3	1.300
ITS4	1.817

Reliability Analysis:

Table 3: Construct Reliability Analysis (Cronbach's alpha and Composite reliability)

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability
ITS	0.740	0.836
PJ	0.861	0.905
PO	0.845	0.906

Validity Analysis

Table 4: Construct validity Analysis (AVE)

	Average variance extracted (AVE)
ITS	0.562
PJ	0.705
PO	0.763

5.3 Structural Model Assessment:

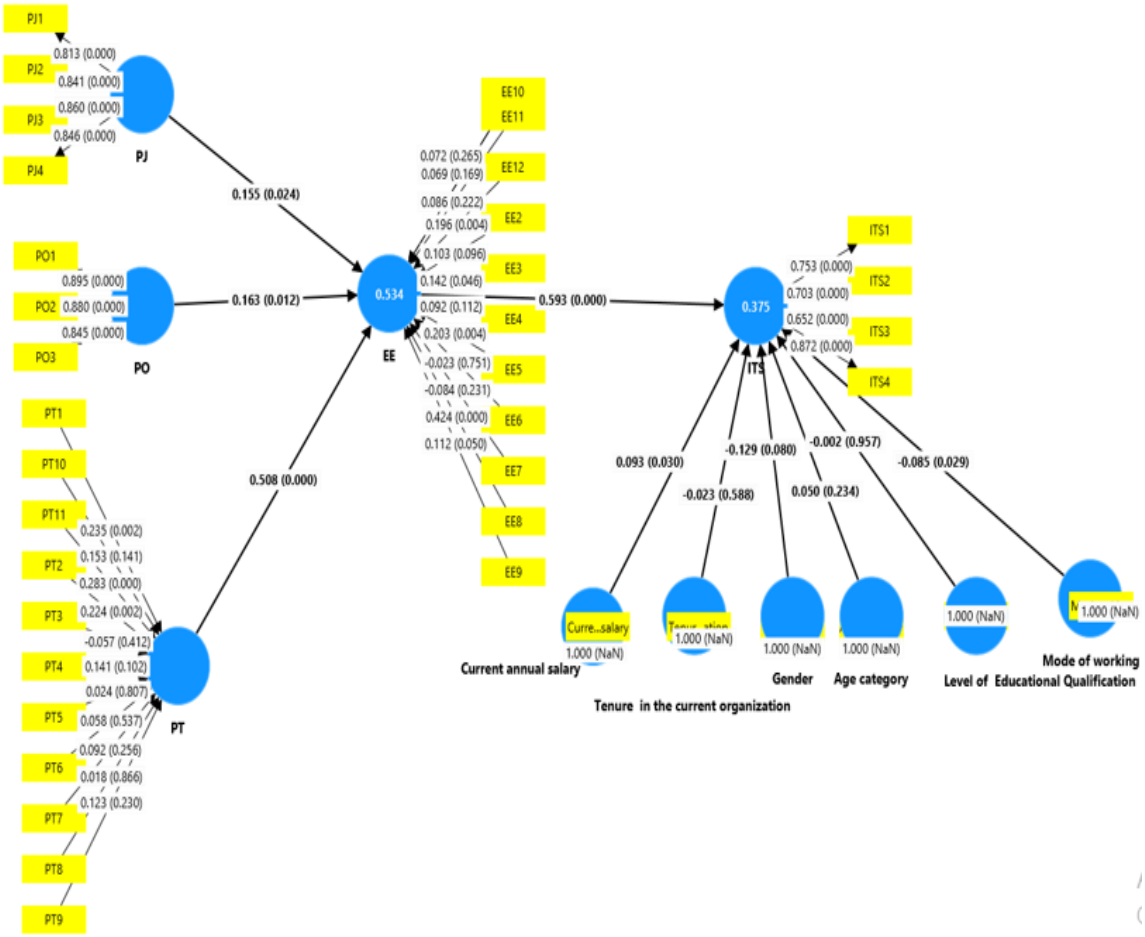


Figure 2: Structural Model

To evaluate our structural model and test the hypotheses, we calculated the path coefficients, their significance levels, and the coefficients of determination (R^2) for the endogenous constructs (see Fig. 2). The model demonstrates a good fit with the data, as indicated by the R^2 value of 0.375 for Intention to Stay and 0.534 for Employee Engagement.

The path coefficients and their significance levels provided empirical support for all the proposed hypotheses. Hypothesis H1, which posited a significant positive relationship between Person-Job Fit (PJ Fit) and Employee Engagement (EE), was supported ($\beta = 0.155$; $p < .05$). Similarly, Hypothesis H2, which predicted a positive significant relationship between Person-Organization Fit (PO Fit) and Employee Engagement, was also supported ($\beta = 0.163$; $p < .05$). Hypothesis H3, linking Person-Technology Fit (PT Fit) with Employee Engagement, was supported as well, showing a significant positive relationship ($\beta = 0.508$; $p < .05$). Finally, Hypothesis H4, which posited a link between Employee Engagement and Intention to Stay (ITS), was supported ($\beta = 0.593$; $p < .05$).

Among the control variables examined in the study, which included age category, gender, educational qualification, current annual salary, tenure in current employment, and mode of working, only current annual salary and mode of working were found to significantly impact Intention to Stay, while the other variables were not significant.

6. Findings and Discussion:

The findings of this study contribute to a deeper understanding of the factors influencing employee engagement and retention within the IT sector.The positive relationships between PJ Fit, PO Fit, PT Fit, and EE underscore the multifaceted nature of employee engagement. Each fit dimension plays a crucial role in fostering an engaging work environment. Our results confirm previous research that aligning job requirements with employees' skills enhances job satisfaction and engagement. This alignment helps employees find meaning and value in their work, which translates to higher engagement levels. The positive impact of PO Fit on EE highlights the importance of value congruence between employees and their organization. Organizations should focus on building a culture that aligns with the values and beliefs of their employees to foster a sense of belonging and commitment. The strong relationship between PT Fit and EE emphasizes the critical role of technology in the IT sector. Ensuring that employees are comfortable and proficient with the technology they use can significantly boost their engagement and reduce turnover intentions. The significant positive relationship between EE and ITS reaffirms the importance of engagement as a key predictor of retention. Engaged employees are more likely to remain with their current employer, driven by their emotional and cognitive attachment to the organization.

7. Implications:

7.1 Practical Implications:

The study offers several practical implications for IT organizations. Organizations should prioritize fit during the recruitment and selection process. Ensuring that new hires align with the job requirements, organizational culture, and technological demands can enhance engagement and reduce turnover. Continuous professional development opportunities that align with job requirements and technological advancements can help maintain high levels of engagement among IT professionals. Building and maintaining a supportive organizational culture that aligns with employees' values and beliefs can foster a sense of belonging and commitment .Providing adequate training and support for new technologies can ensure that employees feel competent and comfortable, thereby enhancing their engagement and retention .This research also helps organizations to formulate their polices and employees can also be benefited by understanding their alignment with the work environment and thereby evaluation their intention to stay with their current employer.

7.2 Theoretical Implications:

This study extends the theories of Person-Job (PJ) Fit, Person-Organization (PO) Fit, and Person-Technology (PT) Fit by empirically demonstrating their significant impact on Employee Engagement (EE) within the IT sector. It provides evidence that these fit dimensions are crucial determinants of EE, thereby enriching our understanding of how different types of fit influence employee behavior and attitudes. By examining PJ Fit, PO Fit, and PT Fit simultaneously, this research integrates multiple fit models into a single framework. This holistic approach provides a comprehensive view of how various aspects of fit contribute to EE and Intention to Stay (ITS), offering a more nuanced understanding of employee engagement dynamics. The positive relationship between EE and ITS supports existing theories on employee engagement, such as the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model. This model posits that job resources (e.g., fit with job, organization, and technology) enhance employee engagement, which in turn reduces turnover intentions. The study highlights the importance of PT Fit in the IT sector, a relatively under-explored area in fit literature. This finding suggests that technology compatibility is particularly critical for engagement in technology-intensive industries, adding a sector-specific perspective to fit theories.

8. Limitation and Scope for Future Research:

Despite its many insightful findings, this study is not without limitations. The cross-sectional design makes it more difficult to determine causal relationships. Longitudinal designs may be used in future studies to provide more light on the causal links between the variables. Furthermore, investigating sectors other than IT might yield a more thorough comprehension of these interactions. Further research endeavors may examine additional potential mediators and moderators, such as job characteristics and management approaches, to furnish a more sophisticated comprehension of the ways in which these variables converge to impact employee engagement and retention. Employee engagement can be increased and turnover can be decreased using customized solutions developed using person-centered methodologies (Singh et al., 2024).In order to gain a deeper understanding of the temporal nature of the constructs and gain significant insights, time lag studies can also be conducted in the context of the present research environment.

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