



SCHOOL OF
ECONOMICS AND
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Where hype, hope, and reality meet:

The relationships between expectations and experiences of new jobs and work culture

Master Thesis

Master of Management

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ABSTRACT

- Title:** Where hype, hope, and reality meet
- Authors:** Elin Bjurstam & Hanna Samuelsson
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- Problem definition:** Due to labor shortages and an aging workforce, businesses are having difficulty hiring and maintaining talented staff. Employer branding is an important factor in attracting and keeping top employees. However, current research on job seekers' expectations and fulfillment is lacking.
- Purpose:** This study explores job seekers' expectations and how they align with job and organizational culture in reality. It examines the impact of employer branding, the fit between job seekers and companies, and biases in perception and expectations. This study ultimately seeks to provide insights into the factors that drive job seekers' choices and to enlighten employers about the discrepancies between their employer branding and the reality of their organization.
- Methodology:** In this study, both qualitative and quantitative data were gathered through surveys and interviews, which is known as a mixed methods technique. Interviews were performed with a recruitment firm and candidates that have started a job recently, while a survey was administered to a wider sample. The survey collected 100 qualifying replies for analysis, providing insights into job searchers' expectations and experiences.
- Findings:** The findings show that job seekers value organizations with possibilities for development and growth when looking for new job opportunities. Moreover, individuals are more likely to be satisfied when they have a clear understanding of their professional goals and motivations and when these are consistent with their chosen career path.
- Conclusions:** According to the findings of this study, a framework or procedure for determining the best fit between job seekers and roles in terms of incentives, values, and beliefs should be implemented. By aiming for the "dream fit" rather than just a "good fit" between employees and employers, businesses can not only retain staff but also enhance overall satisfaction and engagement.
- Key Words:** Career concepts, Career motives, Employee Expectations, Employee Experiences, Motivation, Employer branding, Job Satisfaction, Organizational Culture

PREFACE

We would like to offer our appreciation to Rikard Larsson, our thesis supervisor, for his support and insightful feedback during the whole procedure, assuring its academic rigor. His knowledge and support were an important resource in this writing process.

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1. INTRODUCTION

This section's objectives are to give an overview of the research issue and its significance, identify the theoretical and practical research problem, explain the justification for the study, and lay out the general structure of the thesis. The introduction strives to intrigue the reader's interest, offer context and background details, and identify the research gap the study intends to fill.

Being young, relatively inexperienced, and soon to be graduates, we understand the difficulty in finding jobs that actually reflect and meet our expectations. We have devoted a lot of our time, energy, and resources to acquiring a higher education degree, which naturally has resulted in us having high expectations for our future jobs and employment. According to Woods (2004), many graduates undergo a major life transition when they graduate and enter the world of work, having to cope with the complex demands of the economy and the competitive labor market. There is also a lot of pressure on job seekers to have the necessary skills and knowledge, as well as the right background and personality to fit into a particular job description or organizational culture, whether they are new graduates, experienced professionals, or people who have been out of the labor market for some time. The recruiting companies are also pressured to live up to the expectations that job seekers have of them and to ensure that their employer branding accurately reflects the organization in order to attract and retain the right candidates.

In the hiring process for a new job, candidates or prospective employees analyze several of their experiences in light of the responsibilities and advantages they anticipate the position will entail (Woods, 1993; Sutton & Griffin, 2004). Job seekers evaluate their potential professional careers based on the assumptions they make during the job search process, and as a consequence of their research into the company, the work environment, and the position, they have already developed their own expectations for the workplace (Handayani & Herwany, 2019). According to Handayani and Herwany (2019), as well as Woods (1993), all candidates, or prospective employees, have pre-entry expectations that appear prior to the

organizational entry, which are based solely on personal experiences, beliefs, and assumptions.

Following the start of the hiring process, the candidate forms both explicit and implicit expectations based on contacts with the employer. These expectations may be predicated on declarations made in the job posting or during interviews, or they may be predicated on unstated agreements or promises that are implicit (Sutton & Griffin, 2004). Hence, the post-entry experiences of the employees are shaped by the explicit as well as the implicit promises made to them, and to the degree their employer manages to live up to these promises and expectations (Sutton & Griffin, 2004). No employer can, however, guarantee that the prospective employee's expectations regarding the job and work culture will be met. Nor can the candidates ensure that they accurately have communicated their aspirations clearly. Those expectations that are validated or met in the workplace will contribute to the employee's sense of satisfaction and fulfillment. In contrast, experiences that fall short of expectations will lead to a feeling of dissatisfaction (Greenhaus, Seidel & Marinis, 1983). This misalignment between an individual's expectations and the reality of their job or work environment can therefore cause employees to disengage from their work, which, in turn, might leave them no option but to seek employment elsewhere.

1.1 Background

Job expectations are an important part of the work relationship as they form the basis of an employee's awareness of their responsibilities and expectations. In this thesis, we define job expectations as people's beliefs, perceptions, and assumptions about their jobs and the benefits they expect from their jobs. An important research area in the field of organizational behavior is how to successfully identify and manage job expectations, which can have a significant impact on employee satisfaction, retention, and engagement. Several studies have been conducted to examine the relationship between job expectations and employee outcomes, such as job satisfaction, career expectations, and employee turnover. For instance, two different studies by Handayani and Herwany (2019) along with Hurst and Good (2009) examine Generation Y, both highlighting the importance of understanding and meeting the criteria that include salary, work environment, colleagues, recognition, and training to retain employees. According to Handayani and Herwany (2019), Generation Y – individuals born

between 1980-1995 – prefer to seek jobs that align with their abilities and knowledge, and they derive personal pleasure and responsibility from their work.

Furthermore, Rousseau (1990) discusses how psychological contracts, which are unwritten expectations and obligations between employees and employers, vary across countries, cultures, and contexts. In order for organizations to manage and align different contracts for successful outcomes, it is necessary to understand how these variations have an impact on components of the employment relationship such as job satisfaction, commitment, and performance (Rosseau, 1990). The relationship between job expectations and job satisfaction may vary between individuals and situations. However, realistic expectations do not always lead to higher job satisfaction than unrealistic expectations, as found in a study by Greenhaus, Seidel, and Marinis (1983). While there is evidence of an interaction between value attainment and realism, it does not explain as much of the variation in satisfaction as value fulfillment alone. Presenting recruits with realistic information may not alleviate long term staffing issues if positions do not align with employees' core values, as realistic expectations may only have a minor impact on job satisfaction (Greenhaus, Seidel & Marinis, 1983).

Furthermore, the subject of organizational culture is closely intertwined with job expectations and satisfaction. Tholen (2023) suggests that hiring practices have a significant impact on unequal outcomes and opportunities in organizations. Organizations function as regimes of inequality where power dynamics, i.e., hiring managers, influence claims about organizational fit, which determine access to opportunities. Those in positions of authority within an organization, such as hiring managers, have a substantial influence on the recruitment process and may decide who is a good match for the firm based on their own values and beliefs. Tholen (2023) asserts the critical importance of implementing processes to identify and mitigate potential biases, as this is instrumental in reducing inequality in evaluation and decision-making. Furthermore, being open about the organization's values, beliefs, and expectations and sharing this information with all potential applicants can ensure that applicants who have a good cultural match are drawn to the organization. Those candidates are more likely to succeed in the role (Tholen, 2023).

Job expectations and satisfaction are largely correlated with a concept called the *war for talent*, presented by Mckinsey & Company, whereby companies struggle to attract and retain qualified workers. Employees have high expectations for their employment including

occupation, environment, salary, and growth possibilities in today's fiercely competitive labor market. To recruit and keep the most qualified employees, businesses must recognize these expectations and go above and beyond to meet them. Failure to do so can lead to high staff turnover, low employee engagement, and a negative impact on company performance (Michaels, Handfield-Jones & Axelrod, 2001). To win this talent war, companies need to find effective ways to regulate work expectations. Examples of this can be to offer engaging work which can mean to delegate tasks that demand responsibility and authority, as well as offering possibilities for career growth so that individuals can gain new skills, knowledge, and experience. It is important to offer a competitive pay package that includes not only monetary rewards but also recognition for good performance. In addition, to properly manage psychological contracts and ensure positive outcomes for both employees and companies, businesses need to understand the unique needs and expectations of different generations, cultures, and circumstances (Beechler & Woodward, 2009).

1.2 Practical Problem

Due to an aging workforce, a lack of skilled workers, and labor shortages, organizations are now struggling to find and retain top talent for their businesses (Richardson, 2007; King & Grace, 2009). In today's challenging and ever-changing environment, companies are still searching for the "holy grail" of competitive advantage (Richardson, 2007; Maurya & Agarwal, 2017; King & Grace, 2009). Organizations are dependent on having talented and highly qualified employees that make a significant contribution to the business's efficient operations and profitability while serving as the company's main competitive enabler (Maurya & Agarwal, 2017). The ability of many firms to keep key employees is therefore a difficulty that is receiving more and more attention. A high level of employee turnover can therefore be linked to a low level of job satisfaction, where the employer, or the organization at large, has not lived up to the employee's expectations. Organizations can incur significant expenditures as a result of employee turnover, including direct costs such as recruiting and training new employees, as well as indirect costs such as decreased productivity and demoralized staff (Allen, Bryant & Vardaman, 2010).

Strong employee attraction and retention are therefore a growing interest, thus organizations are making strategic investments to address the issue by implementing a variety of talent

management initiatives. Employer branding is one such initiative that has become important for attracting and keeping talents (Maurya & Agarwal, 2017; Lievens & Highhouse, 2003). A company's reputation and image can significantly impact a job seeker's decision to apply for a job and accept an offer. Today, many companies use impressive and grand work titles to attract new candidates. When overselling a certain position in this way, the job seeker might have expectations of the role that doesn't relate to the actual responsibilities it includes. This could be misleading for the job candidates, who all have different perceptions of what the role actually includes, which may result in companies hiring the wrong candidates for the position (Maurya & Agarwal, 2017). Larsson and Kling (2017) reported that, in Sweden, approximately 60 percent of the working population pursue careers that do not align with their actual motivators. Therefore, it is essential to examine the career-related drivers and motives of job seekers and current employees to gain new insights into how biases and perceptions contribute to job satisfaction.

Job seekers are increasingly seeking out work environments that align with their values, goals, and preferences (Handayani & Herwany, 2019; Schneider, 1987; Petitta & Martínez-Córcoles, 2022). However, it's not just about companies creating a perception of ideal work culture and job description through a job ad or first interview; it's also about delivering on those promises. If the company is unable to live up to its promises, and if the job seeker's expectations regarding the position and the workplace are not realized, it may lead to disappointment and dissatisfaction (Greenhaus, Seidel & Marinis, 1983). Employees may become disengaged in their work, feel unsatisfied and then start looking for work elsewhere as a result of the mismatch between pre-entry expectations and post-entry experiences (Sutton & Griffin, 2004; Greenhaus, Seidel & Marinis, 1983). This raises the question of how employers can successfully match jobseekers' expectations with their employment to solve the difficulties of attracting and retaining talented employees in today's ever-changing landscape.

1.3 Theoretical problem

There is not only a practical problem that will be addressed by this study but also a theoretical one. After a review of 27 of the existing theoretical literature studies used in this paper, it appears that the majority (80 percent) of research studies have used quantitative methods. Only 20 percent of previous studies have used a qualitative approach. This leads to a noticeable gap in the theoretical analysis, making it necessary to use multiple methods to fill this gap. With such an approach, we can not only compare the quality of our study with previous quantitative surveys but also reveal unique insights from qualitative viewpoints.

There have, throughout decades, been many studies examining the phenomenon of job expectations, satisfaction, and retention. However, we have acknowledged that there is an inconsistency in the current theories, models, and frameworks regarding this topic, that calls for additional research. While much of the previous research has focused on topics related to employer branding, job expectations, and job experiences as separate entities, this study will investigate these aspects in relation to each other. Considering Figure 1:1 below, this study will, in combination with theories related to the concepts of Hype, Hope, and Reality, explore the impact of these factors when they converge. Through this exploration, the research has the potential to significantly contribute to the advancement of our understanding of the intricate relationships between these factors, and shed light on the outcomes that emerge when they intersect.

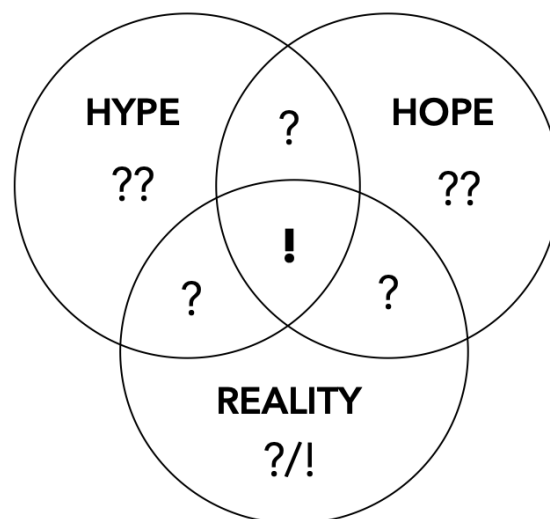


Figure 1:1 - Theoretical Problematization of employer branding, candidate expectations, and actual experiences

Additionally, previous research has been focused on addressing this topic from the company's point of view (Allen, Bryant & Vardaman, 2010; Blau & Boal, 1989; Breugh, 2013; Maurya & Agarwal, 2017; Tholen, 2023). The interest of these types of research usually regard topics such as; employer branding, talent retention, and internal employer branding (Maurya & Agarwal, 2017); recruitment methods and applicant attraction (Breugh, 2013); employee turnover and retention management strategies (Allen, Bryant & Vardaman, 2010). Like much of the previous research in this field, this study will highlight the role of employer branding in attracting top talents (i.e. individuals who excel in their particular fields, stand out from the crowd, and are highly valued by employers). We will, however, direct our focus on how job seekers' expectations can be shaped by different types of employer branding, without considering the company's internal branding efforts. By putting the candidates in the spotlight, we have the opportunity to provide new and valuable insights to companies looking to improve their employer branding. By exploring these topics, we hope to find an answer to the following question; How do individuals' career-related views and motivations shape their job-related expectations, and how do these expectations, in turn, influence their present or future employment experiences, considering the identified gap in current theories and frameworks?

Furthermore, by identifying and resolving theoretical issues, we have the chance to enhance knowledge in this area which, ultimately, may contribute to a solution for the practical problem that was discussed in the previous section.

1.4 Purpose and Research Questions

In order to address both the practical and theoretical issues, the purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between job seekers' expectations prior to joining a company and their experiences after joining. By examining job seekers' occupational and organizational expectations, this study aims to provide a deeper understanding of the impact of employer branding, the compatibility between job seekers and organizations, and the role of bias in job seekers' decision-making process. This study ultimately seeks to provide insights into the factors that drive job seekers' choices and to enlighten employers about the discrepancies between their employer branding and the reality of their organization. A better understanding of the match between candidates' expectations and experiences can allow employers to develop more effective recruiting strategies to meet the needs and desires of job seekers.

Furthermore, we believe this research can help job seekers understand their own values and motivations when looking for a job, which in turn can help companies attract the perfect candidates for their businesses. By matching candidates' expectations with the reality of the organization, one can identify potential gaps and work to bridge them, ultimately leading to higher job satisfaction, employee retention, and a stronger overall organizational culture. Therefore, the following research questions have formed the basis of this work:

RQ1: What are the most important factors that job seekers consider when evaluating job options?

RQ2: How does the relation between pre-entry expectations and post-entry job experiences affect employees' job satisfaction?

RQ3: How does the relation between pre-entry expectations and post-entry organizational experiences affect employees' job satisfaction?

1.5 Disposition for the Remainder of the Thesis

Chapter 2: Theory

The purpose of this section is to give a comprehensive overview and critical examination of the relevant theories and concepts that form the study's foundation. It also establishes the study's theoretical framework and indicates the researcher's knowledge of related prior research. This chapter includes an analytical model that forms the foundation of the work as well as a critique of the theories that were employed.

Chapter 3: Method

A thorough explanation of the procedures used to gather the empirical data is given in this chapter. It also describes how the data were coded and how the study was carried out. The considerations concerning how we as researchers kept a high quality through establishing a neutral perspective are presented. Lastly, an alternative research method is offered.

Chapter 4: Empirical Data & Results

This chapter's objective is to provide and explain the findings of the research based on the information gathered during the research process. We provide a neutral presentation of the results showing what the qualitative and quantitative data gave us.

Chapter 5: Analysis & Discussion

In this section, an analysis of the empirical data is drawn to discover parallels with the theory. We draw connections between different pieces of information and identify patterns. Additionally, we provide insights into what the data means, giving an interpretation of the findings.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

We answer the research questions related to the purpose of this thesis in this chapter. We also provide an overview of the important findings and explain the research's practical contributions. We also make a suggestion for future research that will help further develop this field of study.

2. THEORY

The purpose of this section is to give a comprehensive overview and critical examination of the relevant theories and concepts that form the study's foundation. It also establishes the study's theoretical framework and indicates the researcher's knowledge of related prior research. This chapter includes an analytical model that forms the foundation of the work as well as a critique of the theories that were employed.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

The investigation of the relationship between expectations and experiences of jobs and work cultures can be viewed through the lenses of the Attraction-Selection-Attrition (ASA) model. This model provides a framework for understanding the decision-making process of job candidates as they apply, join, remain in, or leave an organization (Ehrhart & Ziegert, 2005). By considering this model, we can see that a job seeker's initial attraction to a particular job or organization is often influenced by employer branding and the candidate's perception of the organizational culture. In essence, attraction arises when the organization's culture, values, and interests align with the job seeker's own beliefs and aspirations (Schneider, 1987; Petitta & Martínez-Córcoles, 2022). Once a candidate is selected to join an organization, they will experience a sense of hope that can have a significant impact on their expectations and attitudes towards their new role. If the reality of the job fails to meet these expectations, attrition may become a likely outcome, with candidates ultimately deciding to resign (Ehrhart & Ziegert, 2005; Schneider, 1987; Petitta & Martínez-Córcoles, 2022).

However, the ASA model has been criticized for oversimplifying the complex nature of organizational culture and its impact on attraction, selection, and leaving (Sekiguchi, 2004). Critics argue that culture is diverse and dynamic, influenced by factors such as leadership, norms, values, and the external environment. Because of the ASA model's emphasis on cultural fit, it can lead to monotony, homogeneity, and an overall lack of diversity and variety in the workplace, limiting innovation and creativity (Sekiguchi, 2004).

To provide a clear and structured approach, we will, however, adopt the ASA-model to guide our discussion in the upcoming section. Specifically, we will organize our analysis into three main categories: *Hype*, *Hope*, and *Reality*.

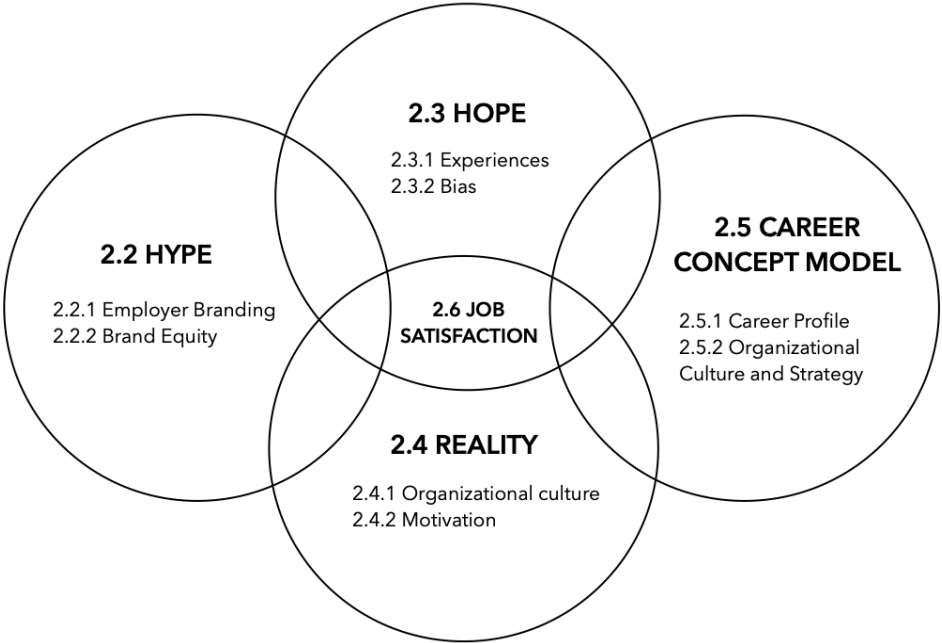


Figure 2:1 - Theoretical Framework

As illustrated by Figure 2:1, the Hype category will explore the theories of employer branding and brand equity, and what impact these factors have on job seekers' initial attraction to a company. Moving on to the Hope category, we will investigate theories that relate to job expectations and biases which can create a sense of hope for the job seeker's future within the company. Lastly, the Reality category will encompass theories that focus on the actual experience of working within the organization, including the organizational culture and factors that have an impact on motivation.

The final part of the Theory section will introduce the Career Concept Model which provides a valuable framework for how different individuals are drawn to, and motivated by, different career paths, jobs, and organizational cultures. It will also address the topic of job satisfaction and provide an insight into the factors that contribute to an individual's satisfaction with his or her professional role.

2.2 HYPE

2.2.1 Employer Branding

Combining both marketing and Human Resource Management, employer branding has become more important in recent years as a crucial component of company strategy (Naz & Zahidi, 2021). Since Tim Ambler and Simon Barrow originally proposed the idea of an "employer brand" in 1996, it has grown to be an essential tool for attracting and keeping top personnel in today's competitive markets (Ambler & Barrow, 1996; Mishra & Sharma, 2021).

Employer branding, according to Naz and Zahidi (2021), is the act of fostering favorable attitudes among both potential and present employees, which ultimately improves the firm by generating a compelling value proposition. According to the *Human Capital Theory*, a company's employer branding has the potential to significantly affect its capacity to find and keep talented people (Wang, Jaw & Tsai, 2012; CIPD, 2017). According to this theory, employees are regarded as important resources with knowledge, expertise, and experience that add to the organization's competitive advantage (Grant, 1996). By emphasizing its commitment to employee development, growth opportunities, and a supportive work environment, successful employer branding can help businesses attract top candidates and retain top talent, resulting in a more capable and competent staff (Wang, Jaw & Tsai, 2012; CIPD, 2017; Naz & Zahidi, 2021; Mishra & Sharma, 2021).

The literature for human resource practitioners outlines employer branding as a three-step process, where the creation of a compelling value proposition is the first step (Naz & Zahidi, 2021; Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004). To create a clear message that truly portrays what the firm offers to its employees, data on the company's culture, management style, employee qualities, and current employment image must be gathered (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004; Maurya & Agarwal, 2017).

In the second step, the company must promote itself to its target market, including potential employees. According to the *Signaling Theory*, companies use a variety of branding methods, such as emphasizing company culture, values, and benefits, to communicate the appeal of working for the company to prospective employees (Turban, 2001). Employer branding can therefore act as a signal or cue to prospective employees regarding the quality of a firm as an

employer (Ehrhart & Ziegert, 2005; Turban, 2001). For instance, candidates may read into certain signals during job interviews, such as the company's reputation, the interviewer's personality, and the office layout, as indicators of the company's characteristics. It is therefore crucial that the employer brand is consistent in order to develop a strong and cohesive brand image and to promote itself as an attractive employer (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004).

Finally, businesses must promote their employer brands *internally* by cultivating a dedicated and devoted workforce (Naz & Zahidi, 2021). This entails fostering an environment that is supportive of the employer branding initiatives on the outside. In doing so, employer engagement can be improved by offering opportunities for career advancement, encouraging work-life balance, recognizing and rewarding employee accomplishments, and cultivating a sense of community and shared values among the workforce (Naz & Zahidi, 2021; Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004). By focusing on internal marketing initiatives, companies have the potential to establish a work atmosphere that appeals to both current and future employees.

2.2.2 Brand Equity

By using brand equity as a lens, which offers a useful theoretical perspective, it is possible to comprehend employer branding more fully. In marketing, "brand equity" refers to a collection of brand assets and liabilities that are associated with a brand and that either increase or decrease the value of a good or service for a company and its customers (Aaker, 1991; Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004). By embracing the concepts of brand equity, organizations may develop a strong employer brand that successfully recruits and keeps top employees.

A company's brand value perceived by existing and potential employees is known in terms of *Employer brand equity*, and it stands for the organization's entire perception and reputation as an employer, as well as its capacity to attract and retain talents (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004; King & Grace, 2009). Through this concept, a more recent theory has been established that is known as *Employee-Based Brand Equity*. According to their theory, employee-based brand equity refers to the experiences and connections that employees have with their employer (King & Grace, 2009). Since this theory focuses on the employees' point of view, it is, unlike employer brand equity, less concerned with the creation of brand identity, and more concerned with employee's response to their work environment. To create a strong

employee-based brand equity, King and Grace (2009) argue that businesses should concentrate on the creation of effective employee brand knowledge structures that support employee recruitment, retention, and incentive to fulfill the brand promise.

2.3 HOPE

2.3.1 Expectations

As mentioned in the introduction, following the start of new employment, candidates often evaluate their former experiences in relation to the expectations for the position and the benefits that should be offered (Woods, 1993; Sutton & Griffin, 2004). By evaluating the organization, its work culture, and the role itself, prospective employees develop their own set of pre-entry expectations for their new work environment (Handayani & Herwany, 2019).

According to the *Expectancy Theory* that was developed by Victor Vroom (1964), individuals have certain expectations about the outcomes of their work, and these expectations influence their motivation and behavior (Gyepi-Garbrah, Preko, Mohammed & Mohammed, 2023). According to this theory, expectancy, instrumentality, and valence are the basis for individuals' motivation and behavior. Expectancy is the notion that one's efforts will result in a successful performance, whereas instrumentality is the conviction that a successful performance will produce certain results. If an individual doesn't expect that their efforts will lead to success and if successful performance doesn't lead to rewards, appraisal, or recognition, they will be less likely to put in their efforts and engage in that behavior. The value that individuals place on the outcomes of their efforts, or valence, will also affect the degree to which individuals engage in that behavior (Gyepi-Garbrah et al. 2023; Osafo, Paros & Yawson, 2021). In summary, this theory emphasizes the significance of the perceived relationship between effort, performance, and outcomes in determining job expectations.

Social exchange theory suggests that people should weigh the advantages and disadvantages of various behaviors and expectations in order to assess their level of motivation. This theoretical framework describes how people make decisions depending on their perceived costs and advantages of activities, as Alfandari, Enoshet, Tzafrir & Regehr (2022) point out. Particularly, the social exchange hypothesis contends that interactions between workers and their employers develop expectations about the nature of jobs. This means that as a result of

their efforts (such as their time, effort, and abilities), employees develop expectations about what they can expect to receive from their employer (such as pay, perks, and recognition). The attitudes, behaviors, and degree of job satisfaction of employees may be impacted by these expectations, which are influenced by earlier encounters and views of justice (Alfandari et al. 2022; Bordogna, 2023; Schermuly & Graßmann, 2019).

2.3.2 Bias

Every individual has different perceptions, expectations, and biases which can affect every step of the *Hype*, *Hope*, and *Reality* phases. However, we have placed this under the Hope section since candidates often start to build a certain presumption after the hyping period that occurs before starting a new job. Job satisfaction and quality of work are inevitably subjective due to different beliefs regarding salary, prestige, title, colleagues, and organizational culture (Poggi & Richiardi, 2008; Thompson & Siess, 1978). An individual's different bias affects multiple decisions throughout their existence that can be life-changing.

A newly hired candidate can be influenced by many “traps” as they start a new job, at the same time, the one’s recruiting can fall into similar ones (Hammond, Keeney & Raiffa, 2006). This can ultimately create a lot of different issues, with expectations of a certain job and organizational culture being a substantial one. *Confirmation bias* is the tendency to selectively seek, interpret or recall information that confirms one's existing beliefs or attitudes while ignoring or disregarding any contradictory information. When considering a new job opportunity, confirmation bias can be demonstrated by seeking information that confirms the decision to accept the offer, such as positive aspects of the job, while ignoring or downplaying potential weaknesses or red flags (Hammond, Keeney & Raiffa, 2006; Kahneman, 2011).

Moreover, the concept of *experienced utility* versus *decision utility* can be very relevant when a candidate is evaluating whether or not to start a new job. These concepts were first introduced by psychologist and theorist Daniel Kahneman in 1979 when he and his colleague Amos-Tversky studied the behavioral and cognitive aspects of making decisions under risk. Their most important discovery found that individuals evaluate choices by comparing them to a reference point, i.e. status quo. According to the theory, people are more cautious when it comes to gains, but take greater risks when it comes to losses. To exemplify, someone may be

more prone to take a potential risk by starting a new job if they think they are in a bad situation, but may be hesitant to take a risk if they believe they are already in a good position (Kahneman & Tversky, 1979). Experienced utility refers to the feelings and emotions that an individual has felt during an event or situation whilst decision utility refers to the perception of the possible outcome that an individual desires (Kahneman, 2011; Wakker & Sarin, 1997). The experience utility can be measured by how much pain or pleasure is associated with the decision and the decision utility can be measured by the expected value of the decision. In decision-making, both experience and decision utility are crucial. However, individuals tend to make decisions that do not maximize their decision utility due to the fact that they are influenced by factors such as biases, emotions, and heuristics (Kahneman, 2011; Carter & McBride, 2013).

Another theory that is relevant to the subject of individuals' perception of different situations and experiences is the *Cognitive Dissonance theory*. The theory proposes that when people hold two or more conflicting values or beliefs, they experience a certain cognitive dissonance i.e. an uncomfortable psychological state. People can adjust their expectations to reflect the reality of their experiences to reduce this discomfort. This theory explains how individuals can change their experiences and perception of a situation to make it seem less harmful or discomfoting (Festinger, 1962).

Exploring the concept of bias reveals that there are many different perceptions of how individuals assess their own and others' careers. This viewpoint can be seen as a type of bias that has a significant impact on the decisions and situations we face in our working lives. However, due to the importance and complexity of this component, it was decided to address it in a separate sub chapter entitled "Career Concept Model" in section 2.5.

2.4 REALITY

2.4.1 Organizational Culture

Organizations are at least as complex as the human body, and the diagnostic categories are less well defined. That means that the quality of your judgments depends on the information you have at hand, your mental maps, and how well you have learned to use them (Bolman & Deal, 2013, p. 13).

Organizations can be viewed as complex power dynamics that have structural, political, and symbolic value. An organization often shares the same norms, values, and beliefs. When employees join a new organization, they rely on the information available for setting work expectations (Bolman & Deal, 2013). This information can include performance expectations, company policies, cultural cues, and engagement. But if the information is incomplete or ambiguous, it can affect the accuracy of expectations, leading to misunderstandings or mismatches between employees and the organizations (Bolman & Deal, 2013).

There are, according to Quinn and Cameron (1983), four sets of values that can be present in organizations; Clan, Adhocracy, Hierarchy, and Market. These values belong to *The Competing Values Framework* (CFV) and can be categorized into two dimensions: internal vs. external focus, and flexibility vs. control. Clan culture values collaboration, teamwork, and personal development for employees. The adhocracy culture values innovation, inventiveness, and adaptability. Structure, regulations, and stability are valued in hierarchical cultures. Market culture values competitiveness, performance, and consumer focus (Quinn & Cameron, 1983).

The type of candidates that an organization will attract is determined by its organizational culture. Hence, the theory of *person-environment (P-E) fit* becomes applicable and meaningful. According to Edwards (2008), the theory examines how the compatibility or congruence between an individual and an organization in terms of values, needs, and characteristics might influence the individual's attitudes, behaviors, and workplace outcomes. The degree of match between an individual's personal characteristics, including values, personality traits, abilities, and preferences, and the business's culture, aims, and objectives is referred to as *person-organization (P-O) fit*. The degree of match between an individual's personal qualities and the job's responsibilities, tasks, and demands is referred to as *person-job (P-J) fit* (Edwards, 2008).

According to this theory, job seekers prefer to seek organizations with the same “personality” as themselves (Mathieu, 2021). The theory describes how people's characteristics and their living environment can influence their well being and success. When a person's characteristics are aligned with their environment, they are more likely to be consistent in their behavior, feel authentic, experience happy emotions, and be satisfied with their life. They are also more likely to be liked and perform well in groups. According to the model,

finding a good fit between oneself and one's environment is crucial for personal development and success. The theory also studies how a good match can affect a person's experience of predictability, authenticity, and acceptance in intrapersonal and interpersonal circumstances (Rauthmann, 2020).

Despite the fact that P-E fit theory has gained popularity among practitioners and scholars, it is not without its detractors. The idea has been criticized for being too simplistic and the fact that it fails to account for the complex and dynamic relationship that exists between individuals and organizations (Kristof, 1996). The concept implies that people have consistent personalities and that businesses maintain a consistent culture over time, which may not be true in reality. Individuals' values, beliefs, and personality traits can shift over time, and corporate cultures can shift due to a variety of factors such as leadership changes or mergers and acquisitions (Cable, 2002). Furthermore, the theory has been criticized for failing to account for the power dynamics that exist between individuals and organizations. Individuals, particularly those from underprivileged backgrounds, may have fewer options when it comes to selecting an organization. Organizations may even use their authority to persuade individuals to change their attitudes and viewpoints in order to conform to the organization's culture, rather than the other way around (Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005).

2.4.2 Motivation

Motivation is a big part of what drives people at work, whether it's doing what's expected of you or how committed you are to the organization you work for (Guillen, 2020). According to Herzberg's *two-factor theory*, you can divide motivations into two different factors - extrinsic (hygienic factors) and intrinsic (motivator factors) (1968 cited in Guillen, 2020). *Extrinsic motivation* is characterized as behavior prompted by rewards or incentives received from outside sources, such as money, compliments, or recognition. To put it another way, people are compelled to engage in a behavior or activity because of the potential rewards or advantages that await them. An action that is driven by internal factors, such as personal pleasure, interest, or a sense of success, is referred to as being intrinsically motivated. *Intrinsic motivation* occurs when someone engages in a behavior or activity because it is rewarding, enjoyable, or fulfilling to them (Legault, 2016).

Abraham Maslow's (1987) theory regarding the *hierarchy of needs* is also highly related to motivation since it proves that people need to have basic physiological and fundamental needs like shelter and food. Thereafter, safety is the next step in the hierarchy followed by social belonging which can be in the form of love, family, and friendships. Esteem is the next step and involves recognition, respect, and the need to be a unique individual. The last step of the concept leads to self-actualization which ultimately means that an individual reaches their fullest potential and becomes the best version of themselves (Maslow & Lewis, 1987).

Additionally, according to the *self-determination theory*, people are motivated when they have a feeling of autonomy, competence, and belonging in their work. As a result, people are more likely to be motivated when they feel in control of their duties, are confident in their ability to complete them, and have good working relationships with their coworkers and bosses (Ryan & Deci, 2017). However, the self-determination model has been criticized for arguing that all individuals' need are universal, and true satisfaction is of nature highly subjective (Greguras, Diefendorff, Carpenter & Tröster, 2014).

2.5 Career Concept Model

The Career Concept Model was created by Michael Driver and Kenneth Brousseau to comprehend and clarify various viewpoints and professional experiences. The model is founded on the idea that each person has a unique understanding of what a career entails to them and that this understanding can have a substantial impact on their career decisions and employment experiences (Brousseau, Driver, Eneroth & Larsson, 1996; Larsson, Brousseau, Driver, Holmqvist & Tarnovskaya, 2003).

2.5.1 Career Profile

This model suggests that potential and current employees can be divided into four categories, or concepts, depending on how they view and are engaged by their careers. First, those who emphasize deepening their knowledge and competence in a particular profession over obtaining higher-level employment are represented by the "Expert" pattern. Second, the "Linear" pattern refers to people who pursue a traditional career path, steadily moving up the organizational hierarchy. Third, those who prioritize gaining a wide variety of skills and

experiences—often through transfers across several organizations—are those who follow the "Spiral" pattern. The "Transitory" pattern, which prioritizes flexibility and work-life balance over professional progress and frequently has a high turnover rate, portrays people who see their professions as a means to an end (Brousseau et al. 1996; Larsson et al. 2003; Larsson, Brousseau, Kling & Sweet, 2007). A comprehensive overview of the different concepts can be viewed in Table 1.

Career concept	Expert	Linear	Spiral	Transitory
Duration in the field	Life	Variable	5-10 years	2-4 years
Direction of movement	In-depth	Upward	Lateral related	Varied unrelated
Career Motives	Security Expertise	Power Achievement	Creativity Personal growth	Variety Independence
Career Competences	Quality Long-term commitment Specialization	Leadership Competitiveness Efficiency	Teamwork Skill diversity Innovation	Speed Flexibility Networking

Table 1: Different Career Concepts and related Career Motives and Competences.

People might be drawn to different types of concepts depending on their career goals and visions, but that doesn't necessarily mean that they actually are motivated by that concept. According to Larsson and Kling (2017), we need to distinguish between the factors that actually motivate us (our career motives), and what we believe to be our ideal career (career concept). This is because most people are, through biases and others' opinions, lured into a certain belief of what their ideal career should look like (Larsson & Kling, 2017). For instance, someone might believe that they want to pursue a Linear career and advance to more senior positions but actually be motivated by the creativity and the personal growth that is characterized by the Spiral motives. The comparison between individuals' career concepts and career motives is presented as their career profile, which represents the alignment between the two concepts, which in turn, illustrates the degree of self-awareness individuals have (Larsson, 2016). By examining the career choices and employment experiences of different individuals, the Career Concept Model can help us comprehend job seekers' attraction to, expectations, and experiences of different jobs and organizational cultures (Brousseau et al. 1996; Larsson et al. 2003; Larsson et al. 2007).

2.5.2 Organizational Culture and Strategy

Beyond the level of individual career self-awareness and development, the Career Concept can also be strategically applied to classify various organizational directions. According to Larsson et al. (2003), four distinct types of strategies and their associated organizational career cultures can be used to build motivational capital. The degree to which these strategies are concentrated or diversified, and whether the diversity is related to or unrelated from the organization's primary objective, distinguish them from one another (Brousseau et al. 1996; Larsson et al. 2003; Larsson et al. 2007). Table 2 demonstrates the different organizational cultures and strategies in relation to the four career concepts.

	Expert	Linear	Spiral	Transitory
Strategy	Maintaining present position through quality refinement and consolidation	Growth in size, competitiveness and market leadership	Related diversification through new applications of existing core competencies	Immediate new targets of opportunities (unrelated)
Structure	Stable, flat, functional	Tall pyramid	Matrix, project organization	Informal, temporary <i>ad hoc</i> teams
Performance appraisal factors	Quality, accuracy, expertise	Cost efficiency, profit, leadership ability	Creativity, skill diversity, teamwork	Speed, flexibility, opportunity recognition
Rewards	Recognition, job security, skill refinement, own budget	Promotion, managerial bonuses, leadership development	Job rotation, cross-functional projects, creative latitude, personal development	Cash bonuses, job rotation, special assignments, independence

Table 2: Organizational Career Cultures & Strategies (Larsson et al. 2007)

An ongoing focus on sustaining the present strategic position through quality consolidation and improvement characterizes the Expert concept, where the culture is stable and flat. In contrast, the competitive drive for maximum expansion and market supremacy is what distinguishes the Linear concept, where the culture is characterized by hierarchical positions. While the Transitory concept focuses on seizing present chances in many fields, the Spiral concept strategy entails diversification into new uses of existing core capabilities, hence expanding the scope of the business. The Transitory culture distinguishes itself through its informal and temporary structure, while the Spiral culture is more focused on variety and project organization (Larsson et al. 2007).

Consistent corporate career cultures are hard to find in the business sector, claim Larsson et al. (2003). As illustrated by Table, individuals may have varied perspectives on corporate strategies and cultures, and different departments may have their own sorts. Organizational career culture inconsistencies are particularly prevalent in freshly founded or considerably altered businesses.






	 Expert	 Linear	 Spiral	 Transitory
Expert	Serious and stable	Incompetent people in charge	Messy and risky	Chaos
Linear	Dead end	Competitive and efficient	"Schizophrenic" Who is in charge?	Unclear How can I make a career?
Spiral	Very limiting	Boring Hierarchic	Creative and exciting	Wasteful and erratic
Transitory	Slow and formal	Conventional Single-tracked	Complex Hard to understand	Fast and flexible

Table 3: Spectacles on Career Cultures (Larsson, 2013)

Table 3 illustrates how different people, based on their career profile (vertical left column), view the different types of organizational cultures (horizontal top column). An Expert, for instance, might view the Transitory culture as chaotic, while a Transitory person may view the expert culture as slow and too formal. The fit between a person's primary career profile and primary career culture is, therefore, necessary since it has an impact on the employee's level of satisfaction and engagement at their job (Larsson, 2013).

There is a three-way dynamic fit between a company's strategy, its organizational career culture, and its personnel, as shown in Figure 2:2 (Larsson et al. 2007). *Competence capital*, or the *Job-People Fit*, is determined by how well a company's people fit with their assigned duties and job based on their career profiles¹. A company's *organizational capital*, or *Job-Culture Fit*, is displayed by the degree to which the organizational culture aligns with the jobs and duties of the employees. A company's *motivational capital*, or *People-Culture Fit*, is

¹ From an organizational perspective, a strategy constitutes a company's plan to reach their organizational goals. From the employee's perspective, however, the strategy is reflected by the actual job and duties of the employees. For the purpose of this study, we will henceforth focus on the strategy from the employees' perspective, that is to say regard the strategy as the jobs that the employees perform within their organizations.

determined by how effectively the organizational career culture satisfies the career concepts and motives of its workers (Larsson et al. 2007; Larsson et al. 2003).

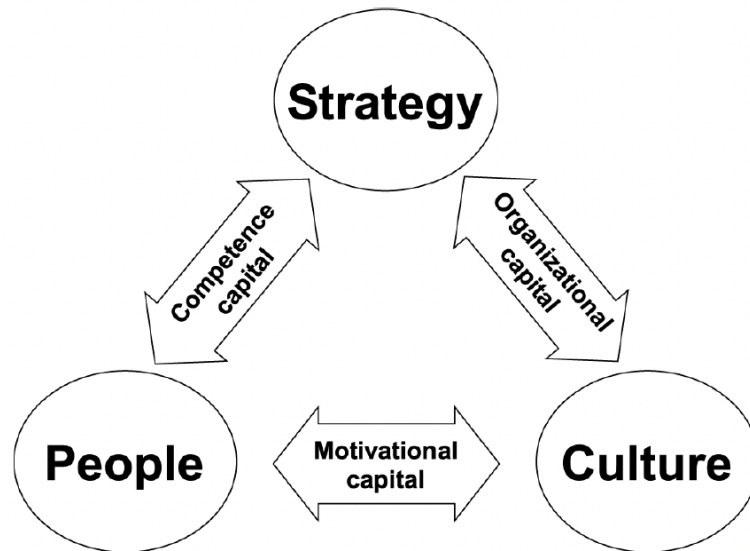


Figure 2:2 - Career-based framework (Larsson et al. 2007)

The Career Concept Model provides a useful framework for comprehending how various job profiles may influence people's experiences with their employment. By following this framework, organizations can better understand how to engage and retain their employees by looking at the fit between people's career profiles and jobs, as well as the fit between people's career profiles and organizational culture. Employees and job seekers can also benefit from this framework since it leads to increased awareness regarding what factors actually contribute to fulfilling careers. A higher level of job happiness, job satisfaction, productivity, and general well-being for both employees and enterprises can result from this (Larsson et al. 2007).

A limitation of the career concept model is that it assumes that individuals' career motivators and goals are static over time. This perspective can also be put on companies that have a consistent organizational culture which might not be the case. Furthermore, the model does not include the external factors of impact such as discrimination, bias, and limited opportunities for decisions and experiences that relate to an individual's career.

2.6 Job Satisfaction

As mentioned previously, job satisfaction is highly individualistic due to different beliefs regarding organizational culture, salary, title, and more (Poggi & Richiardi, 2008). Job and work are a big part of identity formation. As Judge, Klinger, and Glerum (2020) write, if an individual is asked the question “What do you do?”, many people tend to answer with their job title and profession. Even though well-being and quality of work are highly subjective and complex there have been numerous studies that examine the phenomenon of job satisfaction (Judge, Klinger & Glerum, 2020).

Porter and Lawler (1967) present a model that describes the relationship between performance and satisfaction as linked through other sets of rewards, such as intrinsic and extrinsic (Figure 2:3).

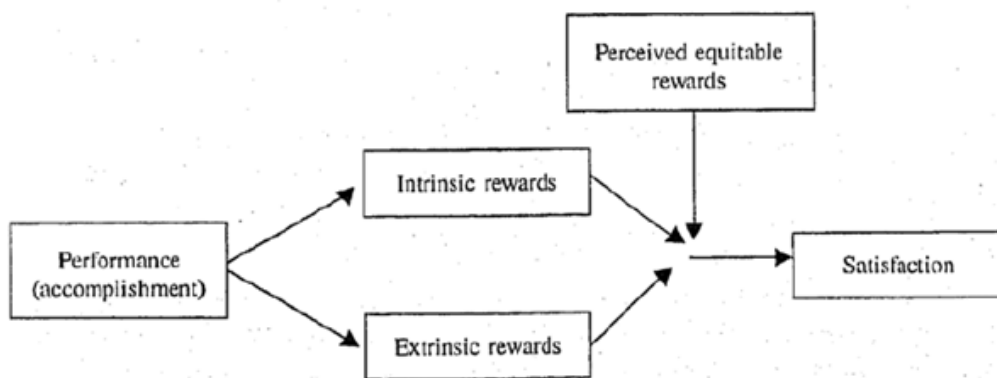


Figure 2:3 - Porter and Lawler Theory of Motivation

The intrinsic rewards can be correlated to Maslow's higher-level needs being fulfilled such as internal satisfaction and feeling accomplishment from the job itself that can lead to personal growth. Extrinsic rewards, on the other hand, are related to external motivations such as salary and promotion. Lawler and Porter (1967) did, however, point out that contentment does not always directly correlate to greater performance. Other elements that can influence performance outcomes include individual abilities, task complexity, and environmental limits. For example, a person may be extremely delighted with their employment but face resource or support limits, which can impede their performance despite their happiness (Lawler & Porter, 1967; Miner, 2015).

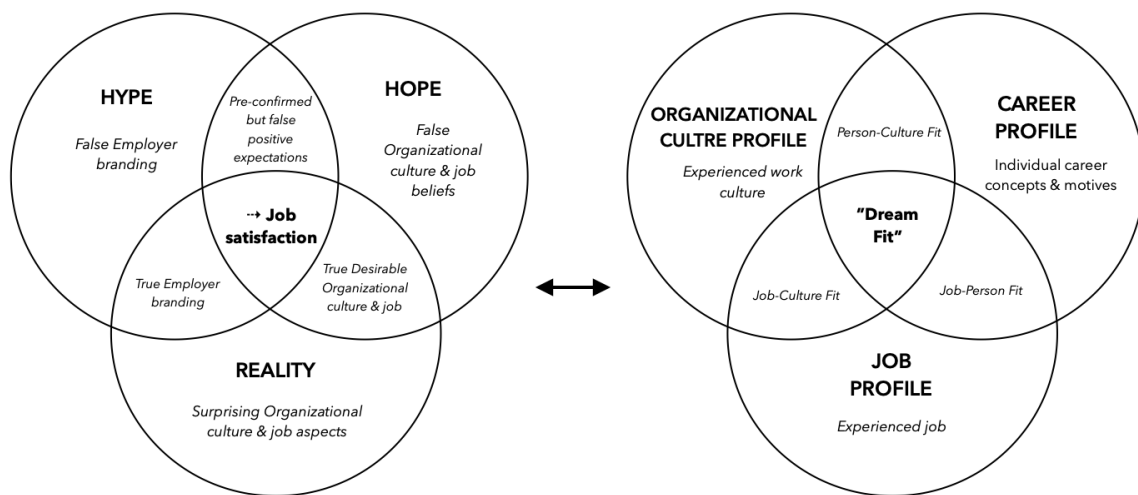
2.7 Critical Analysis

As mentioned before, critics highlight how theories such as the ASA model, P-E fit theory, and the self-determination theory seem to overlook that humans are dynamic and not static, and that work and organizations do not have consistency over time. The theories lack to consider that individuals have subjective views on satisfaction and contentment (Sekiguchi, 2004; Greguras et al. 2014). Another perspective that some of the theories seem to lack to consider is external factors, similar to the ones described in the previous paragraph such as biases, discrimination, and others. In summary, the evaluation of multiple of these theories and models reveals that they have limitations and implications for real-world applications (Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman & Johnson, 2005). Understanding these limitations is essential for using these theories and models effectively and avoiding potential negative consequences.

The analytical model in Figure 2:4, presented in the following chapter, shows how the components of Hype, Hope, and Reality are related to each other and demonstrates the complex dynamic of the Career Concept Model. While these averages provide some information, they may fall short of reflecting the subtle interplay between these ideas. The drawbacks of utilizing simple averages, such as the potential for hiding differences and complexities within each component, should be investigated. Examining what is missing in Hype, Hope, and Reality fields can offer light on the model's possible weaknesses in reflecting the complexities of topics of interest. For example, in the Hype field, the absence of other aspects that might influence an individual's perception could be of social and cultural contexts such as socioeconomic background, cultural values, and societal expectations. Ultimately, the result of focusing simply on these particular components may oversimplify the dynamic nature of employee experiences. Looking at the average of the diagrams there are other factors that can affect job satisfaction than only the interaction of the content in Hype, Hope, and Reality. This study does, however, focus on how true branded and desirable organizational cultures and jobs drive job satisfaction, while untrue hype, unfulfilled hope, and negative surprising reality drive job dissatisfaction. Additionally, there can be other dimensions of fields in the Career Concept Model diagram that may impact the process of finding the “dream fit”. Nonetheless, we examine how this theory can identify and match candidates to a job and organizational culture that aligns with their personal concepts and motives.

2.8 Analytic Model

An analytical model that serves as the basis for this work has been established after the extensive literature review and empirical description. The theoretical framework presented above will provide insightful information on the subject of employer expectations, experiences, and related concerns. The analytic model that is produced condenses the thesis's various elements and characteristics and acts as a roadmap for the subsequent analysis. Overall, the comprehensive theoretical framework and analytical model provide a strong foundation for making conclusions and expanding the body of information already known about this topic.



→ There are of course other explanatory factors of job satisfaction than the interaction of these three aspects. This study does, however, focus on how true branded and desirable organizational cultures and jobs drives job satisfaction, while untrue hype, unfulfilled hope and negative surprising reality drive job dissatisfaction

Figure 2:4 - Analytic model

Based on the analytic model presented in Figure 2:4, the job seeker's expectations and experiences will be analyzed through two related types of perspectives; one that examines the employees' job satisfaction and one that examines the fit between the employee and the organization. The Venn Diagram on the left-hand side demonstrates the relationship between Hype, Hope, and Reality, and how these concepts, when interacting with each other, have the potential to result in a higher degree of job satisfaction. The Venn Diagram on the right-hand side does, in contrast, illustrate the interaction between a person's career profile and their experiences in their job and organizational culture. If there is a fit between the employee, the job, and the organizational culture, both the employee and the employer will experience a "dream fit".

3. METHOD

A thorough explanation of the procedures used to gather the empirical data is given in this chapter. It also describes how the data were coded and how the study was carried out. The considerations concerning how we as researchers kept a high quality through establishing a neutral perspective are presented. Lastly, an alternative research method is offered.

The primary data collection methods were a survey and semi-structured interviews, resulting in our study's multi-methodological nature. We gained a more comprehensive understanding of the research issue by combining qualitative and quantitative research approaches to collect and analyze both qualitative and quantitative data. As mentioned previously, we see the need for using a multimethod approach since previous literature has mostly used a quantitative research method. By multimethod we can fill a gap in the theoretical field, where data triangulation, complementarity, and integration of qualitative and quantitative findings are all possible in mixed-methods research (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016; Easterby-Smiths, Thorpe, & Jackson, 2015). Furthermore, we were able to create a clear link between our findings and existing conceptions or hypotheses by applying a deductive approach. This method enabled us to develop evidence-based conclusions, which ultimately increased the credibility of our research (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016).

By conducting a literature review, we began to build themes from the main data that we acquired by doing an evaluation of the research topic in order to discover existing theories, models, concepts, and research gaps. A literature review supplemented the research by assisting us in identifying the research problem, research questions, and research objectives (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016).

3.1 Data Collection

In the context of examining job candidates' expectations of the job and culture that they are applying to, primary data collection involved conducting surveys and interviews with both the recruitment company Academic Solutions and recruited employees. It is worth mentioning that these interview participants have no connection to the recruitment company Academic

Solutions. Collecting data from a survey is an effective means of gathering large amounts of data from a diverse range of participants, while interviews can provide more detailed and nuanced information about the experiences and perspectives of individual participants (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). By gathering empirical data from both the recruitment company as well as job candidates and employees, we gained a more comprehensive understanding of the factors that influence job seekers' expectations of work culture and how well these expectations align with the reality of organizations.

Survey

In order to get a better understanding of job seekers' and employees' general opinions, expectations, and experiences regarding the research topic, a quantitative method was used. The aim of the survey was to gather measurable information (Bryman & Bell, 2017) about individuals' job expectations, organizational expectations, motivation, satisfaction, and perceptions of their current organization and job. Additionally, the survey aimed to identify the interest and attraction of developing deep expertise, reaching higher positions, learning quickly, and having a wide range of skills to perform well, which ultimately linked to the four career concepts. Please see Table 4 in the Appendix for a detailed breakdown of the survey's structure, questions, and response options.

The survey was published on the social media platforms LinkedIn and Facebook on April 4th, 2023. Due to their potential to reach a sizable pool of informants and provide a greater volume of responses, Facebook and LinkedIn were chosen as the survey platforms. With help from Academic Solutions and their CEO's large network, the survey was spread and shared through the CEO's LinkedIn account, enabling us to reach a larger proportion of suitable participants. The survey's descriptive text included a succinct summary of the study's objectives and encouraged users to distribute the questionnaire within their networks, resulting in widespread dissemination and 101 study participants. To make the results of the survey as reliable as possible, we estimated that insights collected from 100 participants would be sufficient. The survey had been open to the public for 23 days when we had reached our target amount of participants. There was, however, one survey respondent that did not fulfill the qualifications for participation due to the lack of a formal educational background. Since this study only focuses on the expectations and experiences of individuals with a

background from a recognized university, this individual's participation was not valid. In total, the survey gathered 101 responses, where the unqualified participant's responses were removed in the data cleansing process. This left us with a total of 100 qualified responses that could be analyzed.

Interviews

The interviews were semi-structured since this allowed us to be flexible while having some outlines of the subjects that we wanted to get insights on. The interview guide (see Appendix Table 4) was constructed so that both the respondents and the interviewers were free to explore, explain, and elaborate on a particular subject (Bryman & Bell, 2017). Since the recruiter interview with Academic Solutions was held at an early stage of the study, it was important to understand the phenomenon of recruitment and how it looks on the inside. We reached out to Academic Solutions through email where we presented the purpose of the study and that we wanted their contribution on the matter. The decision to interview a recruitment company appeared to be a significant decision for our study since it provided us access to insights from two crucial perspectives - that of the job employees and organizations.

From the candidate survey, we got in contact with five informants who were willing to share their experiences regarding the expectations and reality of their jobs and the organizational culture at the workplace. It is important to mention that only candidates in the age groups 18-28 and 29-39 contacted us to participate in the interview. At the end of the questionnaire, there was a field to fill in their email address and be contacted for an interview. The respondents were contacted via email prior to the interviews to clarify the objectives of the paper, what input was needed, and the time and location of the meeting. We chose to provide our participants the option of having their interviews carried out in either Swedish or English, depending on their preference. This enabled us to meet the needs of participants and make the study available to a diverse group of people. All of the interviews, however, were later translated into English to guarantee a consistent understanding and analysis of the data. Although an effort was made to precisely translate the information, nuances or subtleties may have been lost in the translation process. Furthermore, we choose to record the audio of each interview, which all participants approved, in order to fully concentrate on the semi-structured nature of the interviews. This also allowed us to ask follow-up questions to subjects we

wanted to delve deeper into and listen to what the participants had to say multiple times which allowed us to ensure that we understood what they intended to convey.

The outline of the interview guide was divided into two different sections. Gaining knowledge of candidates' existing positions, initial expectations, and how these aligned with reality were the goals of the first phase of the semi-structured interview with candidates. When interviewing candidates, our goal was to learn what matters to them when thinking about new career options and how their present work may have influenced these considerations. The candidate's impression of their work-life and the elements that contribute to their current job happiness were also topics we wanted to understand. The second section of the interview was directed to explore the candidate's motivation and drive in their career. The candidate's personal goals for their short- and long-term professional development, any potential barriers to reaching these goals, and what motivates and drives them in their current work were also explored. Ultimately, the objective of the interviews was to learn more about the elements that influence people's motivation, career advancement, and job satisfaction.

Literature Review

In addition to primary data collection, we also conducted a literature review, which involves a comprehensive and critical analysis of published research and other relevant sources on a particular topic (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson, 2015). By reviewing existing literature, we could identify gaps in existing knowledge, and gain a deeper understanding of key concepts and theories, as well as contextualize our own research within a broader scholarly context. Data obtained through a literature review can also provide a useful baseline or standard for comparing our own findings (Efrat & Ravid, 2019). Furthermore, by integrating and embedding existing research, we identified best practices and potential areas for improvement in employer branding, which could inform recommendations for employers seeking to attract top talent. Overall, incorporating existing discoveries through a literature review can enrich the study by providing a broader perspective and grounding primary data findings in a theoretical and empirical framework (Efrat & Ravid, 2019).

3.2 Data Sampling

In our research, we chose to focus on individuals who were older than 18 years and had graduated from a recognized Swedish university. This population is relevant to our research question, as we are interested in understanding job candidates' expectations of the job and culture that they are either currently working in or are applying to. Additionally, specifying that participants must live and work in Sweden was important for contextualizing the findings within a specific cultural and geographic context. However, it is worth mentioning that this could have influenced the findings of this study since we decided to narrow down the demographic area. Nonetheless, this was essential since it helped us to avoid generalizability and allowed us to get a deeper understanding of the context studied. See Chapter 6.4 Future Research for our suggestions regarding this subject.

Survey Sampling

Of the 100 participants who took part in the survey, the majority –63 percent– belonged to the age group between 18 and 28 years. The lowest number of participants, one percent, were over 60 years old. 27 percent of the participants were in the age group of 29 and 39 years, four percent were between 40 and 50 years old and five percent were between 51 and 60 years old. Given the differences in the ages of the participants, this survey does not attempt to compare the different age groups, as no valid conclusions could be drawn based on this information. However, it is important to mention the different ages of the participants as this may have influenced the outcome of their answers, which the reader needs to bear in mind.

In terms of length of employment, 22 percent of participants reported that they had been in their current job for one to three months, 33 percent for four to seven months, and 24 percent for eight to twelve months. In addition, 21 percent of participants reported that they had been employed for more than 12 months. As the breakdown between the number of participants and their length of employment is evenly distributed, this data will be used to make valid and reliable comparisons.

Interview Sampling

As mentioned previously, the informants that participated in the candidate interview included five informants who also had already answered the survey. Three of them were in the age group of 18 to 28 and two were from the age group of 29 to 39. A majority of the informants had been at their organization for five months. One candidate had been at their job for two months and the last one had stayed for one year and nine months. See Table 6 for a full overview of the qualitative informants' backgrounds.

Informants	Role	Age Group	Time of Employment	Planning of Resigning	Interview form
Person 1	Talent Agent	29-39	5m	Yes	In-person
Person 2	Legal Assistant	18-28	1y and 9m	Yes	Online
Person 3	Proposition Manager	29-39	2m	No or I don't know	Online
Person 4	HR Generalist	18-28	5m	Yes	In-person
Person 5	Communicator	18-28	5m	No or I don't know	Online

Table 6: Background information of the interview participants

3.3 Data Analysis

Examining and interpreting the data gathered during initial data gathering constitutes data analysis (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). Data coding, data transformation, and data modeling are according to Sekaran & Bougie (2016), typically included in the process of data analysis. To analyze our data we used IBM SPSS Statistics, which, according to Pallant (2020), is a powerful tool for data analysis that handles complex statistical methods. After the data cleansing had been performed, that is to say when the participants that did not fulfill the stated requirements for participating in this study had been removed, the data was coded to facilitate analysis. The process of coding entailed giving the various variables in the data collection numerical or descriptive values which made the process of understanding our data easier. Some survey questions did, for instance, ask participants to rate their level of agreement on a scale of one to seven, with one denoting "very little" and seven denoting "very much". By

coding these responses, statistical methods could be used to analyze the data and draw conclusions that were more understandable.

Once the data was coded, we transformed it to make it more suitable for analysis. Data aggregation, data scaling, and the development of new variables were all required for this. This process was particularly important for the survey's second part which addressed questions regarding the Career Concept Model. In order to make the data more meaningful, the participants were, based on their responses, categorized into the four different career, culture, and job concepts using a specific process presented in Figure 8:1 in the Appendix. Once the concepts had been calculated, another method had to be applied to calculate the participants' level of self-awareness, culture fit and job fit. The method and associated formula for this process can also be viewed in Appendix: Figure 8:1. By transforming the data we were provided with additional information on the connections between the variables in the data, which allowed us to comprehend the material more thoroughly. We also chose to test the statistical significance of the data using the non-parametric Spearman correlation, as this is a more cautious statistical method that does not rely on, for example, a normally distributed sample.

We used statistical methods to model the data and test the hypotheses in the final stage. For example, we used factor analysis to determine the underlying factors that explain data fluctuations, and correlation analysis to determine the direction and degree of association between two variables. These strategies gave us valuable information about the data and allowed us to draw beneficial conclusions from our investigation. By modeling the data in this way, we were able to better understand the correlations between the variables, and we were also able to discover patterns and trends that were difficult to detect at the beginning of the analysis process.

Regarding the interviews, a few steps were taken to analyze the content of them where we performed a so-called content analysis. The first step was to transcribe the interviews where we typed spoken words into written text. Once the transcribing was completed, the coding of the data was done. The coding involved finding themes and patterns which then were categorized. This was achieved by highlighting relevant sections from the different interviews (McLellan, MacQueen & Neidig, 2003). The next step of the process involved an interpretation of the data. During this step a comparison between the interviews was

completed, to identify either commonalities or differences in responses. Lastly, the data could be reported where the main findings and key themes were presented in a summary (Friedman, 2011).

3.4 Research Quality

We are aware that there are risks associated with this study, as with all research. However, understanding possible hazards brings us one step closer to mitigating or possibly preventing them. The results of research undertaken in a particular sector or geographic area may not be generalizable to other industries or countries. We considered this, as well as the constraints of our sample and the general context of our study when interpreting the data. The potential pitfalls associated with personal prejudices were already highlighted in chapter 2.3.2, Bias. This is something that we, as researchers, must be aware of since we might add our own biases and presumptions into the study, which could have an impact on how the data are interpreted and what conclusions might be formed from them. We might not have simple access to data on what job seekers think about particular professions and workplace cultures, which is another thing to take into account. This can make it difficult to make informed judgments regarding the elements that influence job seekers' expectations. With that in mind, the steps that were taken to minimize and prevent potential biases and implications are presented below under *objectivity*, *reliability*, and *validity*.

Objectivity

By identifying the risks, we are aware that this study brings multiple ethical considerations. Therefore, we have chosen to adhere to certain principles to protect the privacy of the participants and maintain the integrity and credibility of the research. Participants had the freedom to voluntarily participate in the study and had the opportunity to withdraw at any time. Furthermore, the participant's personal information and data are protected and de-identified in the form of anonymization (Denscombe, 2010; Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). Finally, we maintained transparency and honesty in all aspects of our research.

In our study, we maintained a neutral approach, acknowledging our preconceptions and taking steps to prevent them from influencing our findings. We noticed, however, that our

observations are invariably influenced by our own consciousness. Although the fundamental nature of observation does not always result in bias or contamination of research, it is crucial to be aware of this potential influence and take steps to reduce any unintended biases in our study design and data processing.

Reliability

Reliability refers to the consistency and stability of research findings over time and across different conditions or settings. To achieve reliable results, several measures were taken. First, the survey items used in the research were carefully designed and validated. This involved crafting survey questions that accurately measured the constructs of interest and have been rigorously tested for validity and reliability in previous research. The survey items were consistent in wording, format, and response options to avoid confusion or ambiguity among respondents. By using validated survey items, we could remain confident that the data collected would accurately reflect the intended constructs and ensure consistent results (Denscombe, 2010).

Second, the interview protocol was standardized to ensure consistency in the data collection. This included developing a structured interview guide that outlined the process of the meeting with specific themes and questions to be followed during the interviews. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2016), interviewers should receive thorough training on the use of the interview guide and be provided with clear instructions on how to conduct interviews in a consistent and coherent style. Regular checks were implemented to ensure that we adhered to the established protocol and maintained consistency in the data collection procedure.

Validity

We have taken a number of steps to improve the accuracy and reliability of our findings in order to guarantee the validity of our study. As a way to ensure that the dimensions of interest were adequately captured, we first carefully designed and validated the measures we utilized in our survey and interviews. This required preliminary discussions with subject-matter experts (Academic Solutions) and a thorough examination of existing literature.

Secondly, we took great care in designing the interview questions to assure accuracy and meaningful responses from our participants. The questions were structured in a standardized manner and are designed to align with our research objectives and theoretical framework. We provided clear instructions to our interviewers to ensure consistency in the management of the interviews, and we conducted feedback from the participants to constantly improve the interview sessions (Bryman & Bell, 2017). This helped us to minimize potential bias and variation in the data collection process, enhancing the validity of our findings.

Third, precautions were made to ensure that the participants, sample methodologies, and data collection methods were consistent with our study objectives, allowing us to draw legitimate conclusions from our findings. We ensured that the sample for the study was representative of the target group of interest and that the data collection procedures were acceptable to capture the complex nature of job expectations and organizational culture, and how well they matched reality. As a result, we were able to generalize our findings to a larger group. Last but not least, the career concept model we used in our study is well known for its strong predictive validity. This increased the study's validity, as well as its credibility and reliability.

Cross-Validation of Survey and Interviews

By combining surveys and interviews, we were able to examine the topic from different perspectives and gain a more comprehensive understanding of the subject. The overlap of data from each method provides crucial evidence that supports and reinforces the results obtained. This convergence of findings gives validity to the results by indicating consistency and coherence that a single technique approach may not have been able to achieve. Moreover, the mixed method design reveals insights that would have been overlooked if only one method had been used (Almalki, 2016).

3.5 Alternative Research Methods

Exploring alternative methods is a crucial step in the study because it contributes to the credibility of the research. Engaging with alternative methods helps to identify potential biases and limitations of the chosen approach. To consider that we might have gotten other results by conducting the methods in another order is valid. If we would have completed the

candidate interviews as a first step, it might have resulted in another perspective of the study. Although, the decision to complete the recruitment interview with Academic Solutions as a first step allowed us to minimize the potential risk of letting our individual pre-assumptions affect the direction of the study. Furthermore, it helped us ensure that we kept a neutral way from the beginning.

An alternative research method to the combination of survey and interviews could have been an ethnographic study, which involves observing participants in their natural habitat to gain a deeper understanding of their behaviors and experiences. Rather than depending on interviews and a survey, we could have monitored job hopefuls and their contacts with recruitment firms and recently started jobs. By collecting real-life events and circumstances, this method would provide rich qualitative data, allowing for a deeper understanding of the phenomena under inquiry. It would also allow us to detect patterns, cultural norms, and unexpected factors that could influence job candidates' expectations and alignment with business culture (Kaijser & Öhlander, 2011).

4. EMPIRICAL DATA & RESULTS

This chapter's objective is to provide and explain the findings of the research based on the information gathered during the research process. We provide a neutral presentation of the results showing what the qualitative and quantitative data gave us.

4.1 Employment Landscape

As mentioned previously, the recruiter interview was conducted with the aim of gaining insights into the current job market landscape from the perspectives of both employers and employees. During the interview, it became evident that many companies struggle with their employer branding. Some businesses claim to be the finest, but fall short of these claims, while others might need to enhance how well they present their brand and what they have to offer. As a result, candidates are left with certain expectations that are not met. This trend of mismatches has been observed by the interviewees, who predict that it will escalate if corrective measures are not taken.

“Expectations are becoming more and more skewed, and I think this will, unfortunately, continue because there is a shortage of skills.”

Academic Solutions highlighted another issue in the employment landscape - the high expectations of many top talents who have just graduated. They explained that these fresh graduates often believe that they can land the best position straight out of school, which can lead to frustration and disappointment when they do not. The interviewees emphasized that a long and successful career often requires time and effort to build and that, even if a job experience does not meet a candidate's expectations, it can still provide valuable lessons for future working environments. Additionally, they believe that in order for employers to attract top talents there must be opportunities for employees to develop, which aligns with the previous statement. Highlighting the existence of development possibilities within organizations should be better integrated into efforts to strengthen companies' employer branding. With a clear understanding of these challenges, it was time to hear from the employees and potential candidates who are navigating this complex job market.

4.2 Career Profile

In line with the methodology outlined in section three, the second part of the survey aimed to gain insight into the different career profiles of the participants. Figure 4:1 shows the mean values of the participants' career concepts and motives. An analysis of the mean responses for each career motive shows that the mean values for the Expert, Spiral, and Transitional motives were moderately high, while the mean value for the Linear motive was high. On the other hand, there were differences when looking at their career concepts. The means for the Expert and Transitory concepts were moderate, while the means for the Linear and Spiral concepts were moderately high. In particular, the most significant disparity was in relation to the Transitory concept and motive, where the mean of the motive was significantly higher than that of the concept.

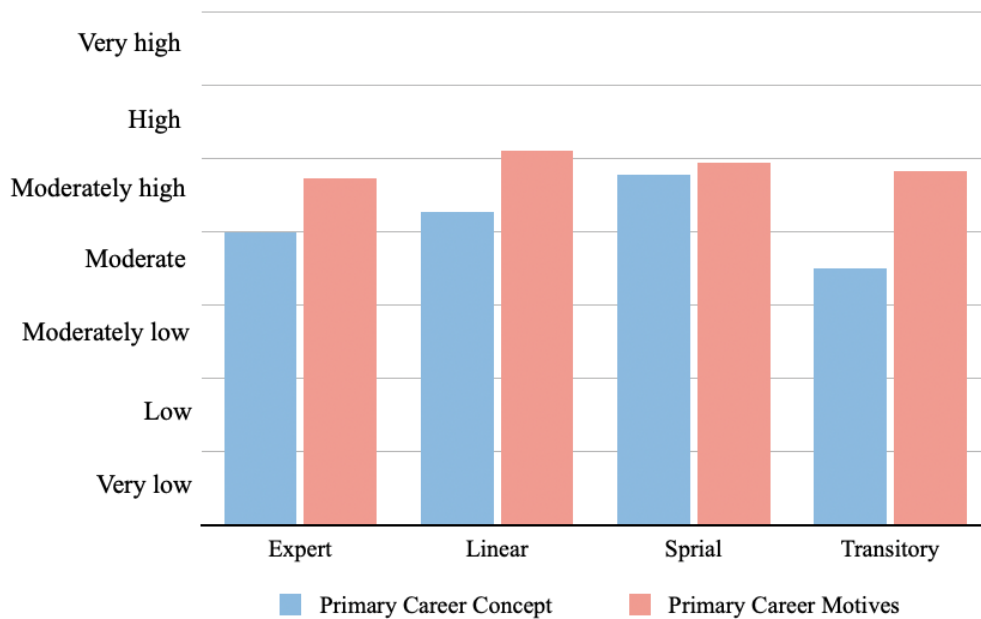


Figure 4:1: The mean of the participants' Career Concept and Career Motives

If we instead look at the single responses of each survey participant in Figure 4:2, we can see that the Expert and the Linear concepts and motives are aligned, while the results from the Spiral and Transitory concepts and motives show different. Looking at this figure, we can see that the Spiral concept is way higher than its motive, while the Transitory motive is way higher than its concept.

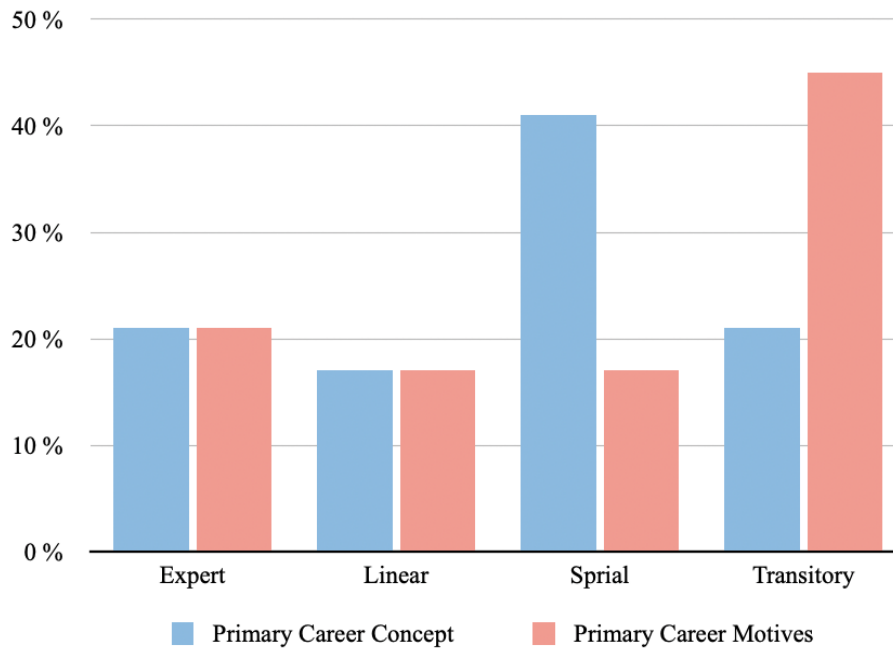


Figure 4:2 - Overview of the participants' career concept and career motives

The results shown in Figure 4:2 can, however, be misleading since it doesn't specify the alignment between each chosen career concept and career motives. Even though 41 percent chose Sprial as their primary career concept, we can't determine, based on the information this table provides, that the 17 percent who have Sprial as their primary career motive are the same ones that chose it for their career concept. In order to dive deeper into the fit between the participants' career concepts and motives, they need to be examined individually through the perspective of each concept.

Figure 4:3 shows that only 34 percent of respondents have career concepts that match their career motives, and the majority (66 percent) show a lack of self-awareness about their concepts and motives. The participants with the lowest self-awareness are those who have Sprial as their primary career concept, while those with the highest self-awareness are those who have Transitory as their primary career concept.

MOTIVES CONCEPT	EXPERT	LINEAR	SPIRAL	TRANSITORY	SUM
EXPERT	9 %	2 %	5 %	5 %	21 %
LINEAR	3 %	7 %	1 %	6 %	17 %
SPIRAL	7 %	6 %	6 %	22 %	41 %
TRANSITORY	2 %	2 %	5 %	12 %	21 %
SUM	21 %	17 %	17 %	45 %	100 %

Figure 4:3 - Primary career concepts in relation to career motives

4.3 Pre-entry Expectations

The candidate interviews reveal that the participants had high expectations of their job before they started them. The high expectations could be influenced by the job advertisement or the recruitment interviews, which often elevated the perception that the job would be what they anticipated.

Person 5: “I thought that the job and tasks sounded very fun, both from the job advertisement and the interview. They gave me the impression that the job would be very varied, which I like.”

Person 4 also expresses similar thoughts regarding their pre-entry expectations: “I had high expectations for the job. When I talked to the company before I started working, I got the impression that I would be working on a wide range of HR issues, which I really wanted to do.”

Both of the participants (*person 4* and *person 5*) wanted to pursue jobs that gave them the freedom to work broadly within their role occupation, which was also implied during the interviews with the companies. They are in the same age group, have been in their jobs for five months and one has plans to leave the company while the other has no plans to do so.

Similarly, the results of the survey show that a third of the respondents claimed to have very high expectations before starting their current job, while a large majority, 75 percent, said they had expectations that were above moderate. Only eight percent of respondents reported expectations that were less than moderate.

The association between the participants' pre-entry expectations and time of employment (Figure 4:4) revealed that the participants with the shortest job periods also had the highest pre-entry expectations. Only 14 percent of people who had been employed for more than a year held such expectations, compared to 41 percent of those who had been employed for one to three months. 36 percent of the participants with employment records of four to seven months reported having high pre-entry expectations. Most people with moderately high expectations were the ones that had been employed for more than a year, whereas a majority of those with moderate expectations had been in their employment for eight to twelve months. With 19 percent of them being below moderate, participants who had been working for more than a year had the lowest pre-entry expectations.

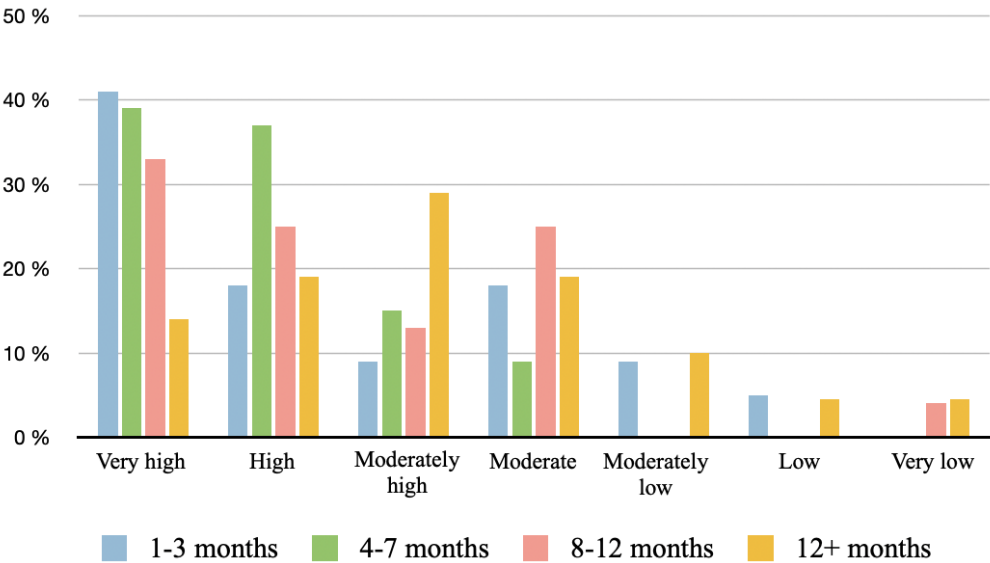


Figure 4:4 - Pre-entry expectations in relation to time of employment

Now we have a clear understanding of both the survey and the interview participants' pre-entry expectations, one might wonder what shapes these expectations. A theme in the interviews regarding pre-entry expectations was that participants expressed how different expectations of their job titles can affect their experiences:

Person 3 states that: “If you google the job of ‘proposition manager’, in every organization it can mean something different, so it really depends on the organization itself. Since our organization is quite specific, I would say it was a bit hard for me to have very clear expectations regarding my responsibility for myself in this role.”

In contrast, *person 5*, describes how they have experienced the opposite. *Person 5* explained that because of their profession being “too” broad, it has created some difficulties since the colleagues lack of knowledge:

Person 5: “I think there may be some ignorance about what the communication profession actually entails in general and that not everyone has a real grasp of what it includes, but it's not always easy given how broad it is.”

Pre-entry Expectations in Relation to Career Concepts

Now we have established the different levels of pre-entry expectations of the survey participants, we can also compare the results to their different career concepts. The purpose of this comparison is to examine whether there is any link between these two, i.e. whether high/low expectations depend on the career concept the informants have.

Figure 4:5 demonstrates that, of the four career concepts examined, those with Expert, Linear, and Spiral as their primary career concept had the highest proportion of individuals who reported "very high" pre-entry expectations. In contrast, the Transitory concept had the highest proportion of individuals reporting moderate expectations (29 percent).

For individuals motivated by the Expert concept, the most common pre-entry job expectations were very high (33 percent), moderate (24 percent), and moderately high (19 percent). For those with Linear motives, the most common pre-entry job expectations were very high (35 percent), high (29 percent), and moderately high (18 percent). Among individuals with Spiral motives, the most common pre-entry job expectations were very high (37 percent), high (32 percent), and moderately high (13 percent). For those classified as Transitory, the most common pre-entry job expectations were moderate (29 percent), very high (24 percent), and high (24 percent). The concepts that scored highest in terms of the proportion of participants

with expectations *below* the moderate level were Spiral (10 percent), Expert (10 percent), Linear (six percent), and Transitory (five percent).

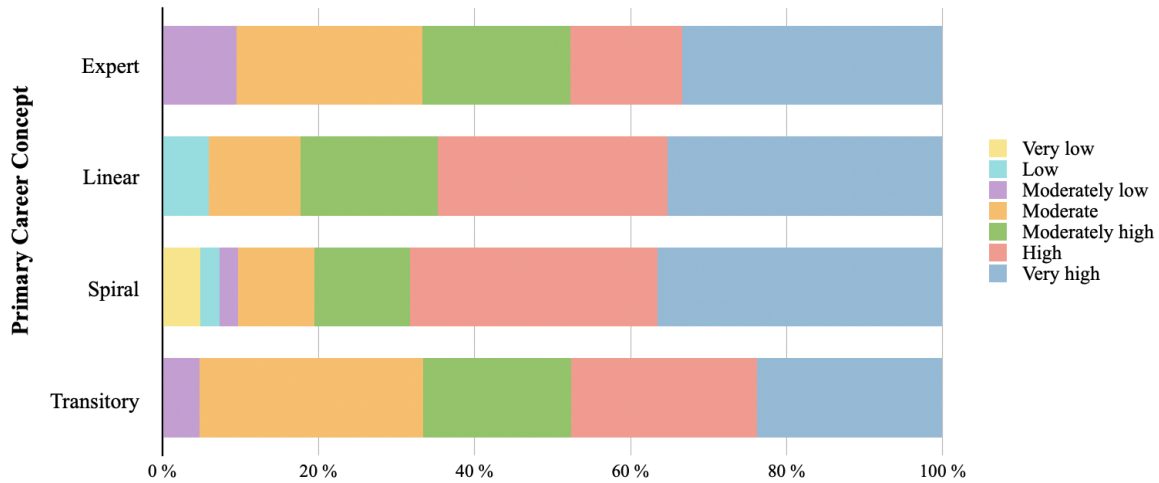


Figure 4:5 - Relationship between pre-entry experiences and primary career concept

Pre-entry Expectations in Relation to Career Motives

In contrast to examining the relationship between pre-entry job experiences and career concepts, Figure 4:6 demonstrates the relations between expectations and career motives. The three career motives with the highest proportion of individuals reporting "very high" pre-entry expectations are Expert, Linear, and Spiral.

For individuals motivated by the Expert concept, the most common pre-entry job expectations were moderately high (33 percent), very high (29 percent), and high (19 percent). For those with Linear motives, the most common pre-entry job expectations were very high (47 percent), high (47 percent), and moderately high (six percent). Among individuals with Spiral motives, the most common pre-entry job expectations were very high (35 percent), moderate (29 percent), and high (18 percent). For those classified as Transitory, the most common pre-entry job expectations were very high (29 percent), high (24 percent), and moderate (22 percent).

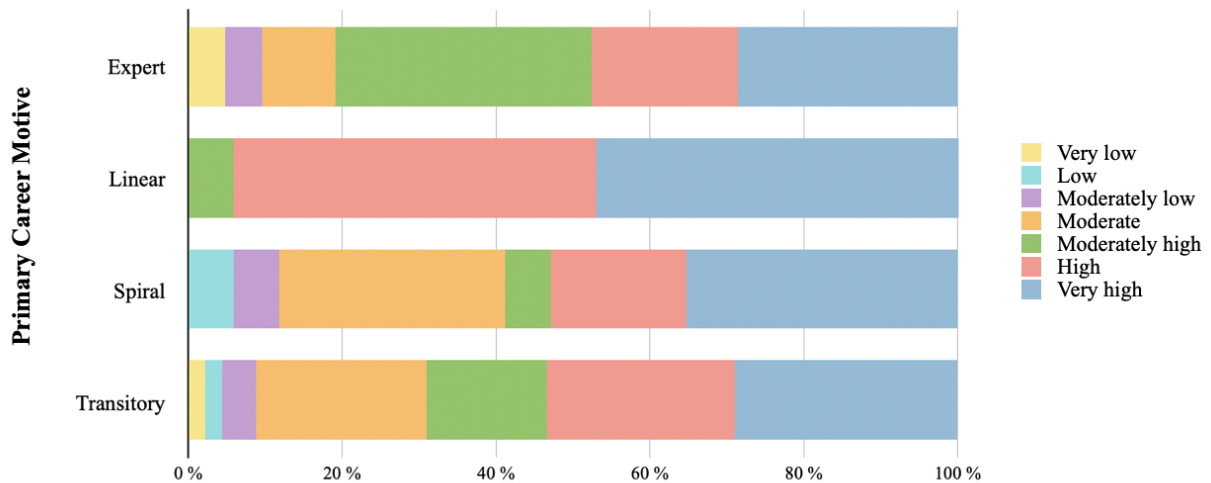


Figure 4:6 - Relationship between pre-entry experiences and primary career motives

The career motives with the highest proportion of participants having expectations above the moderate level were Linear (100 percent) and Expert (81 percent), followed by Transitory (69 percent) and Spiral (59 percent). On the other hand, the concepts with the highest proportion of participants having expectations below the moderate level were Spiral (12 percent), Expert (10 percent), and Transitory (nine percent).

It is worth noting that 41 percent of participants whose career concepts align with their career motives had very high pre-entry expectations. Among those with a high level of self-awareness, 15 percent had high expectations, while 18 percent had moderately high or moderate expectations. Only six percent had low expectations, and a mere three percent had very low pre-entry expectations.

4.4 Post-entry Job Experiences

The results from the interviews show that even though all of the participants had high expectations of their jobs, there is a wide spread of how these perceptions actually matched the experiences in reality or not. Two of the participants describe how their expectations were met pretty well, whilst two other participants express how their expectations were not met at all. One participant described how their expectations were met on some elements and some not.

Answering the question of whether their expectations aligned with their experiences, *Person 3* said: *“To be super honest. Yes and no. Yes, when it comes to what I was expecting of the organization, meaning a bigger organization, then I would say it was succeeding my expectations. (...) No, when it comes to what I could expect from my team, my job and my role since this was a bit unclear to me.”*

The survey results indicate that a mere 11 percent of respondents reported a very high level of job satisfaction. However, half of the participants reported job satisfaction above the moderate level, whereas 26 percent reported job satisfaction below that level. Additionally, 24 percent of respondents reported having a moderate level of job satisfaction, indicating neither high nor low levels of satisfaction with their jobs.

Pre-entry Expectations in Relation to Post-entry Job Experiences

In Figure 4:7, the diagonal line serves as an indicator of whether the pre-entry expectations were fulfilled. The numbers along the diagonal represent expectations that were met, while the numbers below the diagonal represent unmet expectations. On the other hand, the numbers above the diagonal depict instances where expectations were exceeded.

Looking at Figure 4:7, we can see that those participants who reported very low to moderately low pre-entry expectations found that their post-entry experiences exceeded their expectations and reached at least a moderate level. Of those 17 people with moderate pre-entry expectations, 29 percent felt that their expectations were met. Of the 16 participants who had moderately high pre-entry expectations, 50 percent reported that their expectations had been surpassed (with 25 percent reporting very high and another 25 percent reporting high post-entry experiences). In contrast, only 15 percent of the 26 participants with high pre-entry expectations felt that their expectations were fulfilled, and four percent felt that they were exceeded. In addition, 31 percent had post-entry experiences that were below a moderate level despite having high pre-entry expectations. Among those, the largest proportion (27 percent) of participants reported that their post-entry experiences were moderately high. Only nine percent of those 33 people with very high pre-entry expectations felt that their expectations were met, while 33 percent experienced post-entry experiences that were very low, low, or moderately low. Another 21 percent of those with very high pre-entry expectations reported

that their post-entry experiences corresponded to moderately high, and another 21 percent reported that they corresponded to moderate.

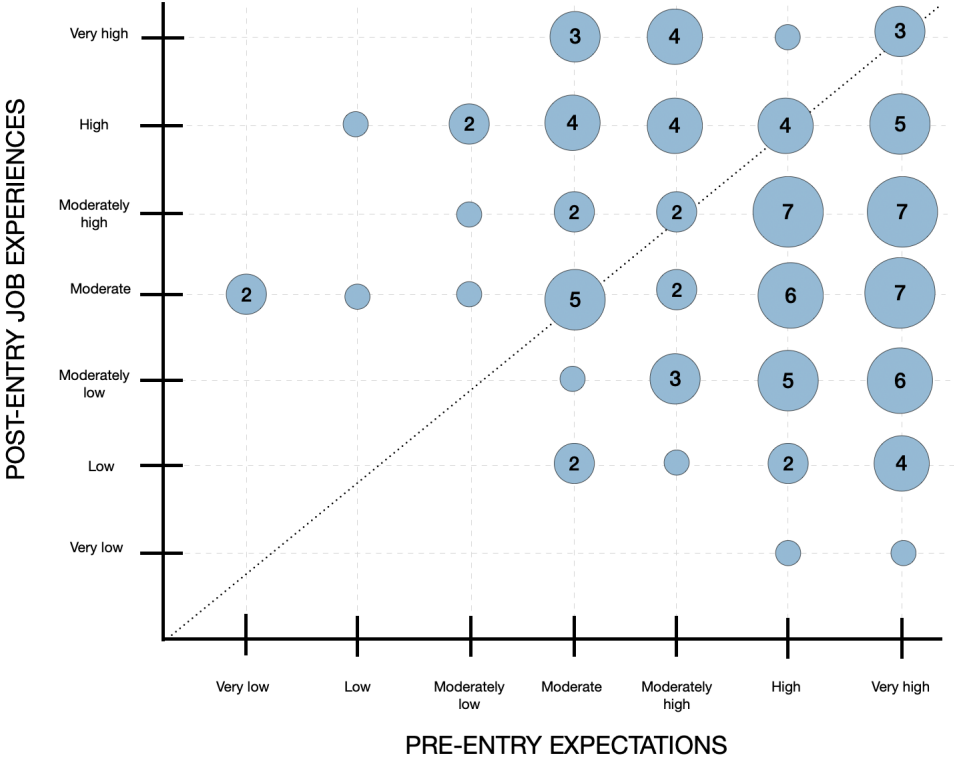


Figure 4:7 - The relationship between pre-entry expectations and post-entry job experiences in counts observed

Table 7 shows a correlation coefficient of -0.167^* , indicating a weak negative correlation between pre-entry expectations and post-entry job experiences, indicating the significance of the relationship between these two variables shown in Figure 4:7. This relation is statistically significant at the 0.05 level, according to the significance level of 0.048 (1-tailed). In other words, the negative association means that when individuals' pre-entry expectations are higher, they are more likely to experience lower levels of job satisfaction.

Spearman Correlation Coefficient Matrix

Table 7 presents the Spearman's rho correlation coefficients and their significance levels (one-tailed) between the following variables: Age group, Length of time at current job, Pre-entry expectations, Post-entry organizational experiences, Post-entry job experiences, Planning on resigning, Combined job and organizational culture satisfaction. The table shows that the correlations are significant at the 0.05 level (*) as well as at the 0.001 level (**).

Spearman's rho		Age group	Length of time at current job	Pre-entry expectations	Post-entry job experiences	Post-entry organizational experiences	Planning on resigning	Combined Job & org. satisfaction	
	Age group	Correlation Coefficient	--						
		Sig. (1-tailed)	.						
		N	100						
	Length of time at current job	Correlation Coefficient	.163	--					
		Sig. (1-tailed)	.052	.					
		N	100	100					
	Pre-entry expectations	Correlation Coefficient	-.037	-.088	--				
		Sig. (1-tailed)	.358	.192	.				
		N	100	100	100				
	Post-entry job experiences	Correlation Coefficient	.055	-.072	-.167*	--			
		Sig. (1-tailed)	.294	.239	.048	.			
		N	100	100	100	100			
	Post-entry organizational experiences	Correlation Coefficient	-.190*	.029	-.144	.407**	--		
		Sig. (1-tailed)	.029	.389	.077	<.001	.		
		N	100	100	100	100	100		
	Planning on resigning	Correlation Coefficient	-.192*	.017	.283**	-.006	.108	--	
		Sig. (1-tailed)	.028	.435	.002	.476	.143	.	
		N	100	100	100	100	100	100	
	Combined Job & org. satisfaction	Correlation Coefficient	-.100	.121	-.135	-.122	.019	-.456**	--
		Sig. (1-tailed)	.161	.115	.090	.113	.425	<.001	.
	N	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).

**.. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

Table 7 - Spearman Correlation Coefficient Matrix

Job Satisfaction in Relation to Time of Employment

Figure 4:8 shows that the majority of participants who reported high levels of job satisfaction were those who had been employed the longest (over one year). However, very high levels of job satisfaction were reported by only five percent of this group. A quarter of those who had been employed for eight to twelve months reported both high and very high levels of job satisfaction. 12 percent of participants who had worked for four to seven months reported very high, 15 percent high and 21 percent moderately high levels of job satisfaction. Only five percent of those who had been employed for one to three months reported high levels of job satisfaction, while none of them reported very high levels of job satisfaction. 36 percent of those who had been employed for one to three months reported moderately high levels of job satisfaction, while 32 percent reported moderate levels.

It can therefore be concluded that as the length of employment increases, the percentage of participants reporting more than moderate job satisfaction also increases, rising from 41 percent for those employed for one to three months to 57 percent for those employed for over 12 months.

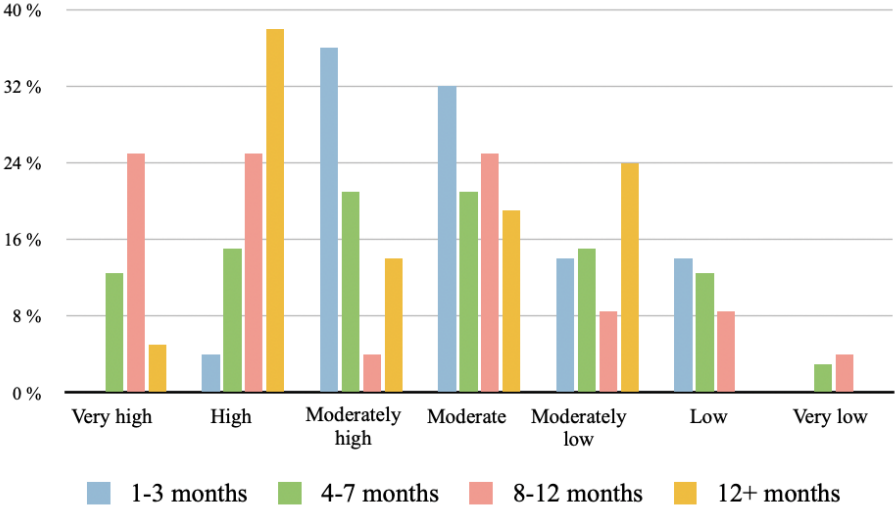


Figure 4:8 - Job satisfaction in relation to time of employment

Reasons for Unfulfilling Job Experiences

While it is promising that half of the participants reported a degree of job satisfaction over the moderate level, it is still vital to identify the variables that may contribute to lower levels of job satisfaction. Figure 4:9 shows the participants' explanations for a probable decline in job satisfaction to help clarify these aspects better.

The data in Figure 4:9 shows that 40 percent of participants reported that their job did not match the initial job description, which raises questions about the potential reasons for this, such as poor communication or issues with employer branding. The top three reasons cited by participants for their job not meeting their expectations were: inaccuracies in the job description (40 percent), a workload that differed from their expectations (38 percent), and not receiving the expected rewards (29 percent).

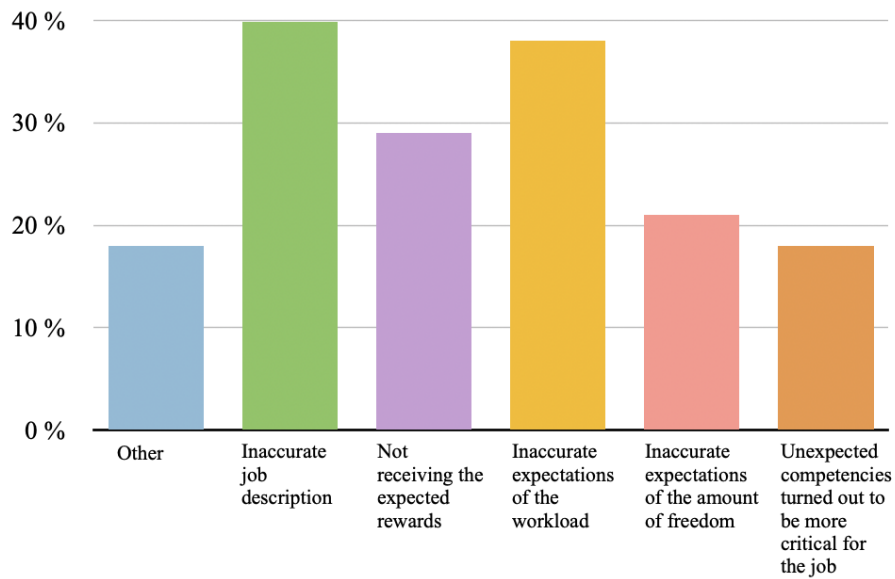


Figure 4:9 - Reasons for unfulfilling job experiences

Although the reported expectations of the interviewee participants had been high, only half experienced that they were met in reality. Looking at what the informants said, there are widespread opinions about where the dissatisfaction emerged. Regarding their job experiences, the participants have different perceptions of what was expected of them. One participant described how they were promised to work in a way that would promote career development, but how this promise did not turn out as expected:

Person 1: “(..) So they weren't lying in the ad, it was clear, but they made it sound much more fun than it actually was.”

Some of the informants felt that they had been promised a certain job definition by the impression of the job ad and the first interview. When they later experienced that the reality did not match their expectations, they felt betrayed. However, it is worth mentioning that none of the participants ever regretted starting their jobs even if their expectations had not been realized. In some cases, it was the betrayal that hurt the most, rather than not receiving what they were promised.

Person 4 expresses: “But what really annoys me is when you are promised things over and over again and then when you go to use these ‘tools’, they don't exist. You get the idea that if

you do this, you will get the tools that enable you to do what you need to, but then when you actually do it, nothing works.”

Person 4 describes a situation where they had gotten a certain project to tackle that the organization did not have the right tools to handle. *Person 4* continues: *“I communicated this issue to the CEO on several occasions. I felt that it was not okay and that I needed more support from the CEO. Instead of actually taking measures to address this problem, they nodded to what I had to say and simply agreed with me just because they were stressed and under high pressure themselves. Nothing was working and I needed help with different things. They asked questions like ‘What do you need from me?’ which I thought was wrong because I was new to the job and did not even know what I needed myself.”*

All interviewees expressed a common motivating factor in the form of freedom and working on a project where they have control and responsibility for the outcome.

Job Satisfaction in Relation to Self-awareness

Out of the 100 survey participants, 34 reported a career concept that aligns with their career motives, while 66 demonstrated poor self-awareness, with their career concept not aligning with their career motives. Table 8 shows that among the 34 participants with aligned career concepts, a majority (56 percent) reported having a level of job satisfaction that was above the moderate level, while only 18 percent reported job satisfaction below moderate. In contrast, of the 66 participants with misaligned career concepts, 31 percent reported having below moderate post-entry job experiences.

	Job Satisfaction							Total	Number of participants
	Very low	Low	Moderately low	Moderate	Moderately high	High	Very high		
Poor self-awareness	2 %	9 %	20 %	23 %	15 %	21 %	10 %	100 %	66
Perfect self-awareness	3 %	9 %	6 %	26 %	26 %	18 %	12 %	100 %	34

Table 8 - Job satisfaction in relation to self-awareness

Primary Job in Relation to Primary Career Concept

Figure 4:10 reveals the relationship between participants' primary career concept and their current job experiences. The results show that 29 percent of the participants experience a “dream fit” between their primary career concepts and jobs, while the additional 71 percent of the participants are pursuing jobs that do not align with their career concepts.

CONCEPT \ JOB	EXPERT	LINEAR	SPIRAL	TRANSITORY	SUM
EXPERT	4 %	3 %	2 %	12 %	21 %
LINEAR	0 %	4 %	4 %	9 %	17 %
SPIRAL	11 %	4 %	11 %	15 %	41 %
TRANSITORY	4 %	2 %	5 %	10 %	21 %
SUM	19 %	13 %	22 %	46 %	100 %

Figure 4:10 - The relationship between primary career concept and job

Primary Job in Relation to Primary Career Motives

Figure 4:11 demonstrates the relationship between participants' primary career motives and their current job experiences. Surprisingly, only 28 percent of participants have a “dream fit” between their career motives and their current job, while 72 percent are in jobs that do not align with their genuine motivations. Those participants with the lowest motives-job fit are those with Expert and Linear as their primary career motives, whereas those with Transitory as their primary career motive exhibit the best motives-job fit.

JOB MOTIVES	EXPERT	LINEAR	SPIRAL	TRANSITORY	SUM
EXPERT	3 %	3 %	5 %	10 %	21 %
LINEAR	3 %	3 %	1 %	10 %	17 %
SPIRAL	3 %	2 %	4 %	8 %	17 %
TRANSITORY	10 %	5 %	12 %	18 %	45 %
SUM	19 %	13 %	22 %	46 %	100 %

Figure 4:11 - The relationship between primary career motives and job

4.5 Post-entry Organizational Experiences

An ongoing theme from the interviews is that the informants value working in organizations where they are involved in activities with their colleagues. They all express how they want to work in an organization where the culture is engaging, which some were expecting when they started their job. *Person 2* already knew that the organization they would work in was a smaller one, with many colleagues older than themselves, however, they express: “*I would like to have more associate lawyers or people of the same age as myself, with a similar life situation.*”

Some of the participants value the organizational culture within a company as one of the most important aspects. *Person 1* indicates that they might value the culture and colleagues more than the work itself: “*I truly believe that if you have colleagues you like, you can stay in a job much longer.*”

Person 4 also expresses that non-monetary rewards can be more important than monetary rewards: “*I’ll be happier if a colleague comes and puts a hand on my shoulder and says ‘thank you very much for your help’.*”

Among the total number of survey participants, only 11 percent reported a very high level of satisfaction regarding their post-entry organizational experiences. The results from the majority (54 percent) of the participants did, however, indicate that their level of

organizational culture satisfaction² was *above* the moderate level. On the other hand, a total of 40 percent reported organizational culture satisfaction *below* the moderate level. Additionally, 16 percent of respondents reported having a moderate level of organizational culture satisfaction, indicating neither high nor low levels of satisfaction with their jobs.

Pre-entry Expectations in Relation to Post-entry Organizational Experiences

In Figure 4:12, the diagonal line serves as an indicator of whether the pre-entry expectations were fulfilled. The numbers along the diagonal represent expectations that were met, while the numbers below the diagonal represent unmet expectations. On the other hand, the numbers above the diagonal depict instances where expectations were exceeded.

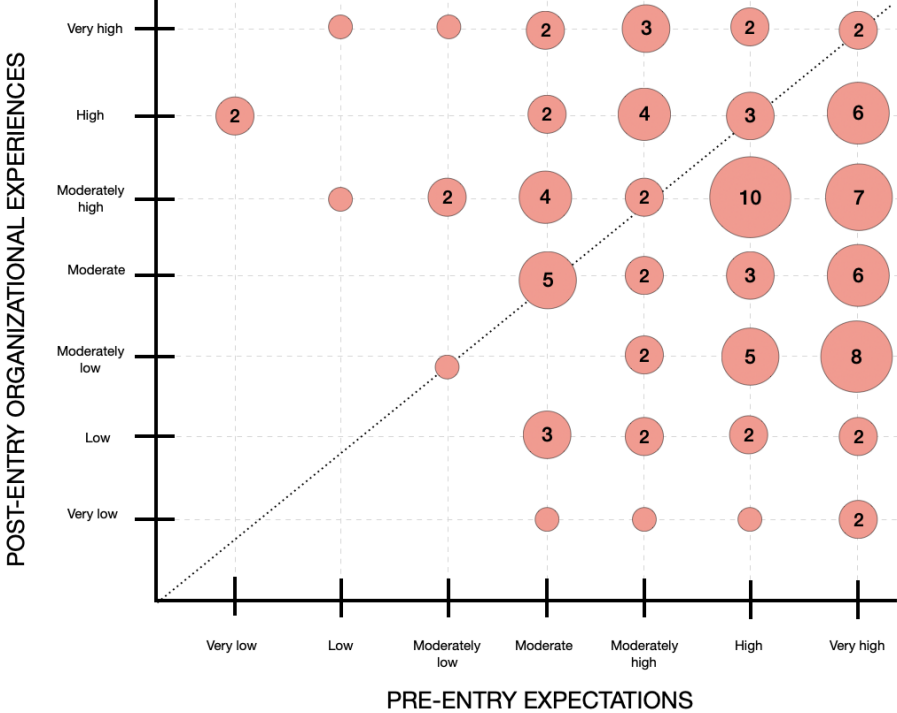


Figure 4:12 - Pre-entry expectations in relation to post-entry organizational experiences in observed counts

The data presented in Figure 4:12 above illustrates that all participants who reported low or very low pre-entry expectations had their expectations exceeded, with all stating that they had at least moderately high post-entry experiences. Of those four participants that had

² Organizational culture satisfaction refers to the degree to which employees feel comfortable and aligned with the values, beliefs, and behaviors that are promoted within their workplace.

moderately low pre-entry expectations, 25 percent reported that their expectations were met, indicating that their experiences aligned with their initial expectations. For those 17 people with moderate pre-entry expectations, 29 percent felt that their expectations were met, indicating a similar alignment with their preconceived notions. Of those 16 participants with moderately high pre-entry expectations, 44 percent felt that their expectations were exceeded, indicating a positive outcome. However, only six percent of those 33 people with very high pre-entry expectations reported that their expectations were met, indicating a relatively high level of disappointment. Surprisingly, the largest proportion of participants (36 percent) who reported experiences below the moderately low level were those who had very high pre-entry expectations. These results suggest that having excessively high expectations can lead to a greater likelihood of disappointment, while lower expectations can be more easily exceeded.

The findings does, however, imply a somewhat negative association between pre-entry expectations and organizational satisfaction according to Table 7. This indicates that there is a minor tendency for organizational satisfaction to decline when pre-entry expectations rise. It's crucial to keep in mind that the correlation coefficient is close to zero and negative, signifying an insignificant relationship.

Organizational Culture Satisfaction in Relation to Time of Employment

Looking at the participants' level of organizational culture satisfaction in relation to their time of employment, Figure 4:13 reveals that those employed for eight to twelve months had the highest proportion of participants reporting the highest level of satisfaction with organizational culture. Additionally, 21 percent of participants in this category reported high satisfaction.

Participants with very high satisfaction levels in the organizational culture were primarily those employed for over 12 months (10 percent), while those employed for one to three months had the lowest proportion (five percent). Among those employed for the longest period (over a year), one third reported moderately high expectations. On the other hand, participants employed for the shortest period (one to three months) had the largest proportion reporting moderate expectations. In terms of satisfaction above the moderate level, 55 percent of those employed for one to three months, 52 percent of those employed for four to seven months, 58 percent of those employed for eight to twelve months, and 52 percent of those

employed for over 12 months reported high satisfaction with organizational culture. Conversely, 27 percent of employees employed for one to three months, 24 percent of employees employed for four to seven months, 38 percent of employees employed for eight to twelve months, and one third of employees employed for over 12 months reported satisfaction below the moderate level.

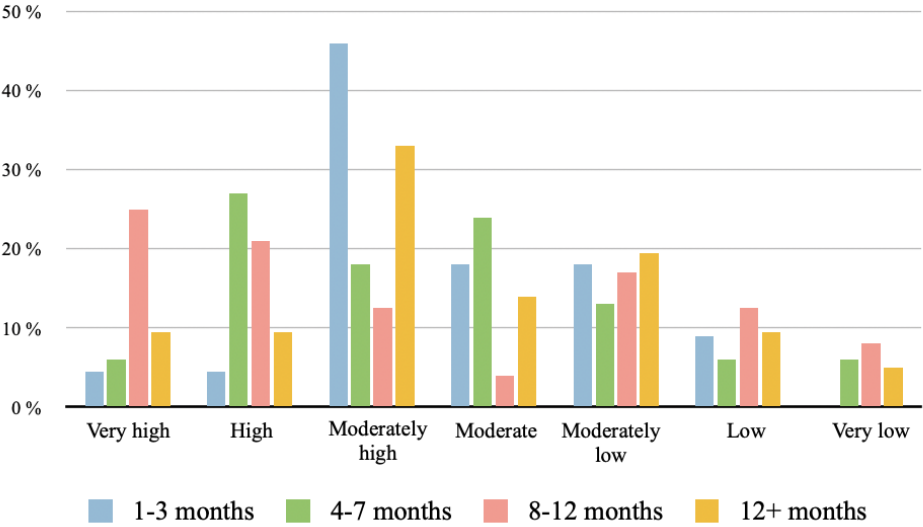


Figure 4:13 - Organizational culture satisfaction in relation to time of employment

Overall, job satisfaction was above the moderate level at all stages of employment. However, a large proportion of employees reported job satisfaction levels below the moderate level, particularly among those who had been working for eight to twelve months.

Reasons for Unfulfilled Organizational Experiences

The reasons for low levels of satisfaction regarding post-entry organizational experiences can, as demonstrated by Figure 4:14, differ. Of all the informants, 44 percent believe that the organization did not meet their expectations due to the organizational culture being less engaging than they had anticipated. Among those who had the worst post-entry organizational experiences (below Moderate), the majority felt that not only did they have to deal with a disengaged organizational culture, but also poor leadership from their managers.

The three most frequently cited reasons for the organization not living up to expectations were: (a) the organizational culture being less engaging than expected (44 percent); (b) poor leadership by their boss (33 percent); and (c) inaccurate expectations regarding the possibility for career development (23 percent).

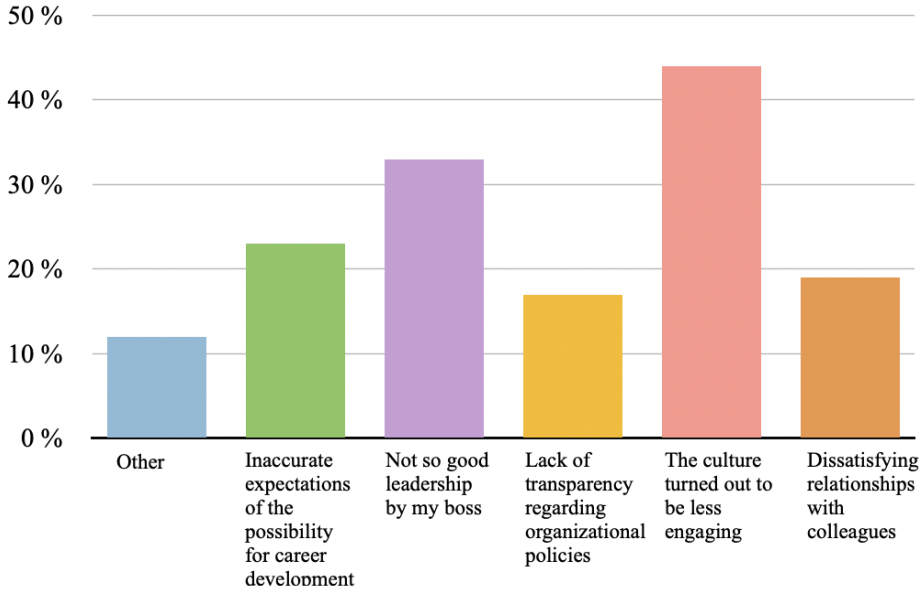


Figure 4:14 - Reasons for unfulfilling organizational experiences

Although all of the interviewee participants admitted to having high pre-entry expectations, only half of them experienced that they were met in reality. Looking at what the informants said, there are widespread opinions on where the dissatisfaction is emerging. Regarding the expectations the participants had about the organizational culture, some seem to have found it satisfying.

Person 3 describes the organizational culture as satisfying: “I like all the benefits and that there are a lot of young people in the organization. They offer yoga, we have a running coach, we have quizzes, we have all sorts of workshops and I’m one of those who really enjoys those things. And we also have the opportunity to grow as we have very extensive learning opportunities here, which I appreciate very much.”

In contrast, *Person 1*, describes how they would have preferred to work at a company where there are possibilities for career development: “It is important for me to always look for new challenges and to never feel really secure in my role. It’s like my driving force to dare to do

the things that scare me, like working in a global company with international contacts. But I can not see that happening in my current position and employer, which they gave me the impression of in the beginning.”

Person 1 expresses a gap between their initial expectations and the actual realization of their current position and employer. The participant emphasizes a gap between the expectations formed through the job advertisement and initial interview, which represented the presence of potential for growth and development, and the later reality, in which such opportunities did not materialize.

Organizational Culture Satisfaction in Relation to Self-awareness

According to the survey results, participants who had a career concept that matched their career motivations were more likely to report favorable post-entry organizational experiences. Specifically, Table 9 shows that 52 percent of the participants with perfect self-awareness rated above-moderate organizational experiences, with one-fourth of them expressing high satisfaction with the work culture. However, 33 percent of those participants reported less than moderate post-entry organizational experiences. The majority (54 percent) of participants with poor self-awareness reported above-moderate post-entry organizational experiences, although 29 percent reported below-moderate levels of organizational culture satisfaction.

Organizational Culture Satisfaction									
	Very low	Low	Moderately low	Moderate	Moderately high	High	Very high	Total	Number of participants
Poor self-awareness	6 %	9 %	14 %	17 %	30 %	12 %	12 %	100 %	66
Perfect self-awareness	3 %	9 %	21 %	15 %	18 %	25 %	9 %	100 %	34

Table 9 - Organizational Culture Satisfaction in relation to self-awareness

Primary Culture in Relation to Primary Career Concept

Figure 4:15 shows the relationship between participants' primary career concept and their experiences of the organizational culture within their companies. Surprisingly, only 19 percent of participants have a career concept that aligns with the culture they are working in.

The fit between the various career concepts and their primary culture is relatively poor, with an average of 81 percent of participants engaged in cultures that do not align with their primary career concept.

CULTURE CONCEPT	EXPERT	LINEAR	SPIRAL	TRANSITORY	SUM
EXPERT	4 %	7 %	5 %	5 %	21 %
LINEAR	5 %	2 %	1 %	9 %	17 %
SPIRAL	12 %	11 %	7 %	11 %	41 %
TRANSITORY	9 %	4 %	2 %	6 %	21 %
SUM	30 %	24 %	15 %	31 %	100 %

Figure 4:15 - Primary career concept in relation to primary culture

Primary Culture in Relation to Primary Career Motives

Figure 4:16 shows the relation between participants' primary career motives and their current job experiences. The findings reveal that only 28 percent of participants have a “dream fit” between their career motivations and their work culture, while 72 percent are in cultures that don't align with their genuine motivations.

CULTURE MOTIVES	EXPERT	LINEAR	SPIRAL	TRANSITORY	SUM
EXPERT	4 %	8 %	2 %	7 %	21 %
LINEAR	4 %	7 %	1 %	5 %	17 %
SPIRAL	6 %	3 %	3 %	5 %	17 %
TRANSITORY	16 %	6 %	9 %	14 %	45 %
SUM	30 %	24 %	15 %	31 %	100 %

Figure 4:16 - Primary career motives in relation to primary culture

5. ANALYSIS & DISCUSSION

In this section, an analysis of the empirical data is drawn to discover parallels with the theory. We draw connections between different pieces of information and identify patterns. Additionally, we provide insights into what the data means, giving an interpretation of the findings.

5.1 HYPE

One aspect of employer branding is the spread of exaggerated or false information about an organization's capabilities, operations, or potentials, also known as *hype*. In this context, hype indicates the misleading aspect of employer branding. The findings collected from survey responses provide an interesting perspective, suggesting that most individuals had high expectations of their job positions and work cultures prior to starting their current employment. Individuals' expectations may be inflated or misaligned with the reality of their employment experiences, implying the presence of hype in the context of employer branding.

In contrast, "good" employer branding can be viewed as the polar opposite of hype, in which firms honestly and properly provide information about their organizational features without resorting to exaggerated claims. Companies can develop a positive employer brand without depending on deceptive strategies or inflated narratives by taking a transparent and truthful approach.

Academic Solutions expressed that many companies struggle with their employer branding. Whether they over- or underestimate themselves, the results ultimately affect candidates either for better or for worse. Companies that have stronger employer branding have the ability to shape how potential candidates view them. The *employer brand equity* theory, which holds that candidates establish certain expectations and views of the company even before entering it (King & Grace, 2009), influences this pre-existing perception and expectations of a job. During the interviews carried out in this study, it became clear that some of the participants had prior knowledge of their employers, which may have influenced their assessment of the company, profession, and work culture. In the following chapter, we will look at how this may have influenced the participants' expectations prior to entry.

5.2 HOPE

5.2.1 Pre-entry Expectations

The *expectancy theory*, proposes that individuals anticipate specific results based on their views about the effort they will put into their job and the rewards they expect to obtain (Gyepi-Garbrah et al. 2023; Osafo, Paros & Yawson, 2021), influences these expectations and perceptions. Furthermore, the *social exchange theory* (Alfandari et al. 2022; Bordogna, 2023; Schermuly & Graßmann, 2019) emphasizes how interactions between employees and employers can create expectations and influence their knowledge of what they might anticipate from employment. From the interviews, it was noticeable that *Person 4* and *Person 5* had high expectations of their jobs before they started. These expectations have been impacted by job advertisements and recruitment interviews, which generated the impression that the position would match their expected preferences. They both had similar expectations anticipating that the role would involve varied tasks and projects, however, experiences appear to differ, with one intending to resign and the other not.

Defining titles and other definitions of professional identity is highly important since individuals can have significantly different perceptions of these. *Person 3* who is a “proposition manager” explained that they, before joining their organization, had searched for a definition of what the role involved, but every finding suggested different specifications. This made it hard for them to understand what was expected regarding responsibilities since this had not been communicated by their manager beforehand. Similarly, *Person 5* whose title is “communicator” expressed the implications that followed by having such a broad role. *Person 5* described how there seems to be a certain ignorance to understanding what the job actually entails, which leads to their colleagues sometimes involving them in tasks that are not part of their role. The challenges associated with defining titles and professional identities can be linked to the theories about biases. *Confirmation bias*, which is defined as the tendency to seek and interpret information that confirms one's previous ideas or attitudes, can affect how an applicant interprets a job offer and whether it meets their expectations (Hammond, Keeney & Raiffa, 2006). This bias is enhanced if the job title or professional identity is ambiguous or poorly defined, causing the candidate to seek information that confirms their previous perceptions of the role. This can also be related to the theory of *experienced utility* and

decision utility, where there has been a significant mismatch between their desired outcome and the actual outcome.

According to the survey results in Figure 4:4, the participants who had the highest expectations prior to starting their current job were those who had been there the shortest time. As the duration of employment increased, however, the percentage of participants with very high expectations prior to entry decreased. This suggests that individuals may have adjusted their expectations over time or become more realistic about their jobs. In relation to this, Figure 4:7 demonstrates that having high pre-entry expectations does not always translate into similarly high post-entry experiences. In comparison to participants who reported high pre-entry expectations, those participants who had more realistic or dampened expectations prior to starting their occupations were more likely to have favorable post-entry experiences. The findings show that those who had high pre-entry expectations, potentially fuelled by optimistic anticipations or good perceptions of the job, encountered a gap between their expectations and the actual reality of their employment. As a result, their post-entry experiences may not have met their initial expectations.

This mismatch between their expectations and the reality of work can be related to the *cognitive dissonance theory*. Participants may feel uncomfortable when they discover that their initial view of their job was wrong or did not match their actual experience, and change this perception in order to reduce discomfort (Festinger, 1962). Furthermore, Table 7 shows that there is a significant correlation between the participants pre-entry expectations and their intentions to resign. According to the positive association, individuals are more likely to consider resigning if their pre-entry expectations are higher. These findings offer solid proof that participants' pre-entry expectations and their intention to quit are related. It emphasizes how crucial it is for prospective employees to control and coordinate their expectations before joining the company in order to decrease the probability of resigning.

Furthermore, Table 7 also shows how pre-entry expectations is significantly correlated to job satisfaction, where a weak negative correlation coefficient of -0.167^* is demonstrated. This negative association implies that when people have higher pre-entry expectations, they tend to experience lower levels of job satisfaction. These findings emphasize the importance of regulating and aligning expectations during the pre-entry phase to provide a more positive and satisfying transition into the workplace. It means that those with more realistic or moderated

expectations may be more suited to adjust and find fulfillment in their roles than those with extremely high and difficult-to-fulfill expectations. These findings illustrate the intricate interplay between pre-entry expectations and post-entry experiences, implying that congruence between these two aspects is critical for creating favorable job outcomes. To help prospective employees create realistic expectations, employers and organizations should try to provide accurate and clear information during the recruitment and onboarding processes. By doing so, they have the opportunity to increase the likelihood of positive post-entry experiences and promote increased job satisfaction among their staff.

5.2.2 Expectations in Relation to Career Profile

Diverse career concepts exhibit distinct patterns in pre-entry job expectations. Among the four career concepts examined, Expert, Linear, and Spiral concepts demonstrate the highest proportions of individuals reporting very high pre-entry job expectations (Figure 4:5). Conversely, the Transitory concept displays the highest proportion of individuals with moderate expectations. Regardless of the career concept, a substantial number of individuals report very high pre-entry job expectations. This observation indicates that holding high expectations upon commencing a new job or position is a prevalent phenomenon irrespective of one's career concept. In terms of the proportion of participants with expectations above the moderate level, Figure 4:5 demonstrates that the majority of career concepts score highly. In particular, the Linear (82 percent) and Spiral (82 percent) concepts show the highest percentages of participants with expectations above the moderate level, followed by the Transitional (67 percent) and Expert (66 percent) concepts.

Additionally, a notable finding emerged whereby 41 percent of participants who demonstrated alignment between their career concepts and career motives reported possessing very high pre-entry expectations. This observation prompts an inquiry into whether their heightened self-awareness engenders a greater sense of confidence regarding the job they are about to embark upon. The relationship observed between matching career concepts and motives and the presence of very high expectations before entering the workforce justifies taking into account the role of an individual's self-awareness. It is likely that people who have a deep understanding of their career ambitions and motivations are more likely to approach new job opportunities with a higher level of self-confidence and optimistic expectations. By having a

clear link between their chosen career path and their intrinsic motivations, these individuals can demonstrate a greater degree of confidence and belief in their ability to succeed in their new professional pursuits.

5.3 REALITY

5.3.1 Post-entry Job Experiences

During the interviews, an obvious tendency arose in which participants first reported an expectation of happiness with their particular employment. However, as the interviews progressed, participants started to voice concerns and difficulties about both their job responsibilities and the corporate culture. This trend is also consistent with Festinger's (1962) cognitive dissonance theory. According to this theory, individuals' perceptions of their jobs may vary as a result of having competing perceptions at the same time. Moreover, the survey results in Figure 4:8 support the view that people with longer tenure experience a higher level of job satisfaction, while people with shorter tenure experience a lower level of job satisfaction. A possible explanation for this phenomena is that individuals may come to view their work as more satisfactory than they did in the start of their employment. The development of a stronger sense of belonging, solidarity, and purpose in the workplace is another argument that may explain why job satisfaction is higher among people with longer tenure. These findings highlight the importance of giving employees time to adapt and settle into their workplaces. Companies can also prioritize creating a supportive work environment, responding to employees' needs and concerns, and providing opportunities for growth and development to increase job satisfaction for all employees, regardless of tenure.

As seen from the survey, most respondents felt that their expectations were not met because of the *inaccurate job description*. Again, the importance of defining titles or professional identity is highly important for meeting candidates' expectations when they start a new job. For example, *person 1*, describes how they were dissatisfied with how their job actually turned out. The company they worked for did not lie in the job advertisement, but they made it sound more fun than it was in reality. Surprisingly, none of the interviewees expressed perfect satisfaction with both their job and the company culture. Nonetheless, three out of five participants expressed general satisfaction with their jobs. *Person 3*, for example, stated that their satisfaction level was quite high despite being somewhat displeased with some parts of

the organizational culture, such as team arrangements and poor leadership. This implies that people evaluate their job happiness depending on a variety of factors which will be discussed further below in this chapter.

The survey's findings provide crucial information regarding the respondents' job satisfaction, and the findings demonstrate that people's degrees of job satisfaction varied greatly. Notably, only 11 percent reported having very positive post-entry experiences, indicating that few participants were content with their current jobs. Positive experiences and happiness with their current jobs were reported by a significant proportion of the respondents, as evidenced by the fact that more than half of participants expressed work satisfaction above the moderate level. The results did, however, show that 26 percent of participants assessed job satisfaction below the moderate level, indicating that a sizable portion of the participants were not totally satisfied with their job experiences.

Examining the potential reasons for unfulfilling job experiences, we can see that approximately one fourth of the survey participants experienced that they had inaccurate expectations about the amount of freedom in their jobs (Figure 4:9). This finding is consistent with the concept of *adhocracy values*, where individuals prioritize innovation, creativity, and flexibility in the workplace (Quinn & Cameron, 1983). These people may value a culture that supports experimentation, risk-taking, and quick decision-making. This can be related to how all of the interview participants expressed that they felt motivated when they were responsible for a certain project or task since they were the ones in control of it. These projects or tasks often open up for creative and innovative thinking which the participants value. This can be related to the *self-determination theory*, which describes how individuals are motivated in their work when they have autonomy, competence, and belonging (Ryan & Deci, 2017). The freedom that brings when individuals have the responsibility over a job is furthermore related to the autonomy part of the theory. When the interview participants felt that they could make decisions out of their own judgment, this probably led to a sense of ownership that unfolded in greater motivation. Furthermore, when individuals feel like their work is connected to a bigger purpose or goal they are more likely to put in the effort required to succeed.

On the other hand, individuals that prioritize *market values* place a high priority on competitiveness, performance, and obtaining measurable results in their workplace (Quinn & Cameron, 1983). They are more inclined to value a culture that values performance metrics,

individual successes, and specific goals and objectives. *Person I's* statement, for example, emphasizes the importance of constantly pursuing new challenges and avoiding complacency in their work. Their readiness to switch jobs or explore new opportunities displays their desire to push themselves beyond their comfort zone. Working at a worldwide company with international links elicits both fear and enthusiasm, suggesting their willingness to embrace chances that challenge and drive personal growth. Individuals' self-confidence serves as a motivating force, moving them further in their careers. This aligns with the survey findings, which revealed that 23 percent of participants expressed dissatisfaction with the potential for career development in their organizations (Figure 4:14).

5.3.2 Job-Person Fit

The results from the survey imply that aligning one's career concept with one's career motives is important for a positive post-entry job experience. Table 8 shows that participants who reported having aligned career concepts and motives were more likely to have a level of job satisfaction that exceeded moderate. In contrast, participants with poor self-awareness regarding their career concepts and motives were more likely to experience job satisfaction below the moderate level. These findings highlight the importance of self-awareness in career development and the potential benefits of aligning one's career concept with one's career motives.

In accordance with the *P-J fit* theory, which describes the fit between a person's individual qualities and the job's responsibilities, tasks, and demands (Edwards, 2008), the data presented in Figure 4:10, illustrates that there is a large disparity between the participants' primary career concept and their actual job experiences. This demonstrates that there may be a misalignment between individuals' professional goals and the job opportunities that are available to them, which emphasizes the significance of taking the idea of job fit into account when assessing job satisfaction and career advancement. These findings support Edwards' (2008) argument that finding a good fit between oneself and the work environment is crucial for personal development and success.

It should also be noted that there is a gap between the participants' primary career motives and their current job experiences. Specifically, Figure 4:11 shows that only 28 percent of

participants have a “dream fit” between their career motives and their current job, while 72 percent are in jobs that do not align with their genuine motivations. The largest group of participants (18 percent) who are pursuing jobs that align with their primary career motive are those who are motivated by the Transitory concept. Apart from this, only a small percentage of participants are working in occupations that match their primary career motives, with many people choosing jobs that are more in line with the Transitory concept. This implies that individuals may not always have the option to pursue jobs that match their motivations, and may instead have to prioritize other variables such as employment availability and financial security. Furthermore, the finding that those participants with the lowest motives-job fit are those with Expert and Linear as their primary career motives implies that career goals are not always a clear-cut distinction and that individuals may have various objectives that affect their career choices.

5.3.3 Post-entry Organizational Experiences

As mentioned before, individuals prioritize different values when looking for work, according to the conflicting values paradigm (Quinn & Cameron, 1983). Those that prioritize *clan values* want to feel a sense of belonging, collaboration, and teamwork at work. They like a positive workplace culture that promotes social interactions and stresses shared values and goals. *Person 2*, for example, felt less engaged in the company culture because they were substantially younger than their coworkers. *Person 3*, on the other hand, described an engaging working environment with many colleagues of the same age. Employee engagement and retention can be improved by creating a sense of belonging and cultivating interpersonal connections among coworkers. This is especially important for people who may feel disconnected from their culture owing to issues such as age gaps. Furthermore, these findings are consistent with the survey findings (Figure 4:14), which found that the majority of respondents who voiced unhappiness with organizational culture blamed it on a lack of engagement. This unhappiness is particularly related to people who place a high emphasis on clan values.

In contrast, individuals who prioritize *hierarchy values* are inclined toward seeking a work environment characterized by stability, predictability, and a well-defined structure (Quinn & Cameron, 1983). They place importance on a culture that emphasizes clear delineation of

roles and responsibilities, rigid protocols and regulations, and a hierarchical chain of command. *Person 4's* statement indicates that they enjoy a stable and clear direction from their CEO. Since they did not receive that it created tension which made them feel dissatisfied with their role. They also express how the organization did not present the tools they needed to do a good job which exemplifies how a poor structure can make employees insecure. The inclusion of routines and established processes provides a sense of stability and safety, enabling individuals to rely on familiar structures when confronted with professional tasks and responsibilities (Quinn & Cameron, 1983). This is consistent with the findings in 4:14, that many of the respondents felt dissatisfied with their organizational culture because their manager did not provide good leadership.

According to the survey results, the overall level of satisfaction among employees with their organizational experience is very low, with only a tiny proportion (11 percent) expressing a very high level of satisfaction. Nevertheless, suggesting a generally positive cultural environment, the majority of respondents reported moderate to high levels of satisfaction. A significant proportion (40%) did, however, report being dissatisfied with the organizational culture, highlighting areas of concern and the need to change the organizational culture. According to the Employee-Based Brand Equity theory, if an organization fails to address employees' concerns regarding their work environment, it has the potential to negatively impact the organization's image and overall reputation (King & Grace, 2009).

The analysis of Figure 4:13 reveals that employees with longer tenures, specifically those employed for eight to twelve months, reported the highest proportion of participants with the highest level of satisfaction in their organizational cultures. There was also a notable percentage of participants employed for over 12 months who expressed very high satisfaction. Conversely, those employed for one to three months had the lowest proportion of individuals reporting high satisfaction. In line with this, Table 7 indicates a weak positive association between the participants' time of employment and organizational culture satisfaction. According to these findings, there may be a minor trend that as the length of the employment increases, satisfaction with the work environment too tends to increase slightly, but there is not enough data to indicate a definite and meaningful association between the two. It suggests that factors other than the duration of employment are probably going to have a more significant impact on peoples' organizational culture satisfaction. These findings emphasize the importance of creating a positive work environment and actively addressing employee

needs, organizations can foster higher levels of satisfaction throughout all stages of employment.

5.3.4 Culture-person Fit

Table 9 demonstrates that participants with aligned career concepts and motives were more likely to report a high level of organizational culture satisfaction, where 52 percent of the participants with perfect self-awareness reported above moderate levels of organizational culture satisfaction. However, even with perfect self-awareness, 33 percent of these participants reported levels of organizational culture satisfaction below moderate, indicating disappointment when expectations were not realized. Furthermore, whereas the majority of participants with misaligned career concepts and motives (54 percent) reported above moderate post-entry organizational experiences, 29 percent reported below moderate levels of organizational culture satisfaction. These findings show that self-awareness of career concepts and motives have the potential to have a favorable impact on organizational experiences, but other factors may influence peoples' experiences of their organizational culture, which in turn can affect their level of satisfaction in the workplace.

The analysis of the relationship between participants' primary career concept and their experiences of organizational culture, as well as the relation between their primary career motives and current organizational experiences, reveals a significant misalignment between these factors. Both aspects highlight a lack of harmony and compatibility between individuals' career preferences and their actual work environments. Figure 4:15 demonstrates that a great majority of participants (81 percent) are engaged in cultures that do not align with their primary career concept. This suggests that there is a major mismatch between people's primary career concepts and the organizational cultures they encounter. Unexpectedly, individuals who identify with the Expert notion frequently work for companies with a Linear culture characterized by hierarchical advancements rather than deep expertise. Similarly, those with the Linear concept mostly find themselves in organizations with a Transitory culture, indicating a mismatch between their desire for structure and the flexible nature of their workplace. Even participants with the Spiral concept, who seek continuous growth and change, often face a misalignment with their preferred work style, as most of them can be found in cultures associated with different concepts.

Furthermore, as shown in Figure 4:16, there is a significant misalignment between the participants' fundamental career motivations and their present organizational experiences. Only 28 percent of participants have a “dream fit” between their primary career motivations and their work culture, indicating that a significant proportion of individuals are operating within organizations that do not fully support or resonate with their primary career motives. Participants who are driven by the Expert motive encounter a significant mismatch in their organizational experiences since they frequently work in cultures that are more in line with the Linear concept or even in companies characterized by the Transitory concept. Similarly, those motivated by the Linear concept may encounter a misalignment even though some of them still work in organizations that align with their motives. People with both Linear and Spiral intentions can, for instance, be found in cultures that support the transitory concept, which emphasizes the complex nature of the connection between professional ambitions and employment experiences. A discrepancy with their primary career motives may also be indicated by individuals with the Transitory motive finding themselves in positions typical of the Expert concept.

In light of these findings, it is crucial for organizations to address the misalignment between individual career preferences and organizational cultures. Referring back to the *P-E fit theory*, if an individual's characteristics are aligned with the organizational culture, they are more likely to experience happy emotions and be satisfied with their work (Rauthmann, 2020). By aligning career concepts and motivations with the organizational culture, organizations can strengthen their motivational capital (Larsson et al. 2007; Larsson et al. 2003) and create a more fulfilling work environment for their employees, ultimately benefiting both the individuals and the organization as a whole.

5.3.5 Combined Post-entry Job & Organizational Experiences

Looking at the Spearman Correlation Coefficient (Table 7), we can see that both organizational culture satisfaction and job satisfaction are not only strongly correlated with each other, but also have a significant impact on retention when both are perceived positively simultaneously. In contrast, when examined individually, their relationship with resignation is found to be insignificant. According to the results, there is a strong correlation between participants' desire to resign and the combined satisfaction with job and organizational

factors. The negative association shows that participants' likelihood of resigning their posts significantly lowers as their satisfaction with their employment and organizational culture rises. The observed correlation's statistical significance is further supported by its significance level of 0.001. It provides high confidence in the association between job and organizational satisfaction and the desire to resign by showing that the likelihood of this correlation emerging by accident is extremely unlikely.

Overall, the findings imply that participants who are happier with their jobs and organizational cultures are less likely to be considering quitting their jobs. According to Table 7, neither job satisfaction nor organizational culture satisfaction alone demonstrate a significant correlation with planning on resigning. It is only by analyzing them together that we can truly see their combined influence on individuals' intentions to leave. Hence, the data suggests that in order to keep valuable employees and reduce the likelihood of turnover, firms should prioritize efforts to improve both job and organizational satisfaction. Furthermore, these findings strongly support the notion that it is the combined effect of both organizational culture satisfaction and job satisfaction that truly matters, rather than solely relying on one or the other. Therefore, it is crucial for organizations to prioritize and ensure both aspects—organizational culture satisfaction and job satisfaction—are addressed and improved to effectively retain employees.

Despite the discrepancy between expectations and reality, all participants in the interview indicated no regret about starting their respective occupations. Although expectations were not met, respondents expressed a sense of satisfaction as a result of the knowledge and development they received through their job experiences. This shows that, despite the differences, the participants gained intrinsic benefits from their jobs, such as skill improvement, personal growth, or greater knowledge in their industries. As a result, the benefits of these learning opportunities outweighed the drawbacks in many cases. *Person 4* expressed how it was more painful to experience empty promises over and over again, rather than the job not being fully met according to their expectations.

According to a 2022 survey conducted by Academic Work in collaboration with SIFO, young professionals value good colleagues and organizational culture the most in their organizations. After that, they value the opportunity for development and growth. The third factor that young professionals value is salary and benefits (Academic Work, 2022). This aligns with the

results from our findings. From the interviews, we could draw the conclusion that many candidates felt that non-monetary reward systems dominated the monetary reward systems. This can be connected to Maslow's *hierarchy of needs*, a theory that describes how human needs are arranged in a hierarchical order (Maslow & Lewis, 1987). The non-monetary rewards are more likely to fulfill the higher-level needs that include feeling a sense of belonging, recognition, and achievement whilst the monetary rewards are more likely to fulfill the lower-level needs regarding security and safety (Maslow & Lewis, 1987). The reason why the interview informants value an organization where there are opportunities for growth can be explained by the fact that they are still in the early stages of their careers.

Additionally, it can be explained by Herzberg's *two-factor theory* where employee motivation and satisfaction are influenced by two types of elements: hygiene factors and motivators (Guillen, 2020; Legault, 2016). Hygiene variables are those aspects that, if absent, can lead to employee unhappiness, but their presence does not always result in greater motivation. Examples of hygiene factors can be salary, job stability, and working conditions. Motivators, on the other hand, are those aspects that lead to increased motivation and satisfaction such as opportunities for growth, acknowledgment, and meaningful work (Guillen, 2020).

Porter and Lawler's model regarding job satisfaction is also relevant in this context. Their model emphasizes the influence of internal and external rewards on job satisfaction (Lawler & Porter, 1967; Miner, 2015). Internal rewards include factors like recognition, responsibility, and advancement opportunities, while external rewards encompass factors such as salary, benefits, and working conditions. The preference for non-monetary rewards expressed by the interview participants reflects the significance of internal rewards in driving job satisfaction, as they contribute to higher-level needs. For example, *person 4*, argues that if a colleague praises them for a job they have completed it can mean as much as a monetary reward does. *Person 1* also emphasizes the importance of having friendly and caring colleagues and how much that can mean. For them, it can make them stay at a job even if the work itself is not like they had anticipated and hoped for.

6. CONCLUSION

We answer the research questions related to the purpose of this thesis in this chapter. We also provide an overview of the important findings and explain the research's practical contributions. We also make a suggestion for future research that will help further develop this field of study.

6.1 Addressing the Research Questions

Research Question 1

What are the most important factors that job seekers consider when evaluating job options?

The subjective and individualistic nature of candidates' and employees' preferences makes it challenging to identify universally important factors. However, a pattern emerged from the interviews, suggesting that participants highly value the opportunities for growth and development in the organizations they work for. All participants expressed a strong desire to learn and acquire knowledge, especially since they are at the beginning of their careers. This pattern aligns with the observations expressed by Academic Solutions during the interview. While salary and bonuses can serve as motivators, the lack of growth potential and career advancement opportunities often leads employees to seek opportunities elsewhere. The participants' emphasis on learning and personal development highlights the significance of providing avenues for continuous learning and career progression within organizations. Depending on what type of career profile you have, different factors can be important for every individual. For example, a person with a Linear career profile might value promotions and hierarchical advancements, while a person with a Spiral career profile might value engaging in opportunities that promote growth and development.

Research Question 2

How does the relation between pre-entry expectations and post-entry job experiences affect employees' job satisfaction?

The relationship between pre-entry expectations and post-entry experiences has a statistically significant impact on employees' job satisfaction. The result implies that individuals who have higher expectations before starting a new job are more likely to experience lower levels of job satisfaction. However, it is important to remember that although the correlation is statistically significant, the strength of the relationship is considered weak. Accordingly, even though there is a link between pre-entry expectations and post-entry job experiences, other elements and variables may also have a sizable impact on a person's level of job satisfaction.

Additionally, the results show that aligning career concepts with career motives is important to shape positive post-entry work experiences. The findings indicate that participants were more likely to have a more positive post-entry work experience if their career concept matched their career motives. This implies that when individuals have a clear understanding of their career goals and motivations, and these are consistent with their chosen career path, they are more likely to experience higher levels of job satisfaction.

Research Question 3

How does the relation between pre-entry expectations and post-entry organizational experiences affect employees' job satisfaction?

The relationship between pre-entry expectations and post-entry organizational experiences can significantly affect employees' job satisfaction. The results show that individuals who had matching career concepts and motives were more likely to report positive post-entry organizational experiences. These participants expressed higher levels of satisfaction with the organizational culture, with a notable proportion reporting above moderate levels. This suggests that when employees' expectations align with their actual experiences within the organization, they are more likely to feel satisfied and engaged in their jobs.

However, it is important to notice that even among individuals with perfect self-awareness and aligned career concepts and motives, a significant proportion of them reported experiencing dissatisfaction with their organizational cultures after entry. This suggests that there may be cases of disappointment when expectations are not met, despite individuals having a clear understanding of their career objectives. On the other hand, the participants

with a misaligned career concept still reported above moderate levels of satisfaction regarding their organizational cultures. These findings highlight the complex nature of job satisfaction and show that while self-awareness of career concepts and motives can positively influence organizational experiences, there are likely other factors that contribute to employees' overall satisfaction with their jobs.

6.2 Contributions

Using a multimethod approach allowed us to identify distinct patterns drawn from survey data that converged with prevalent themes collected from the interview phase. The convergence of survey data patterns and interview themes serves as an excellent example of the advantages of using a multimethod approach, revealing hidden information that would have remained undiscovered through a singular methodological approach. An insightful illustration of the clear advantages of a multi-method approach is provided in Figure 6:1 below.

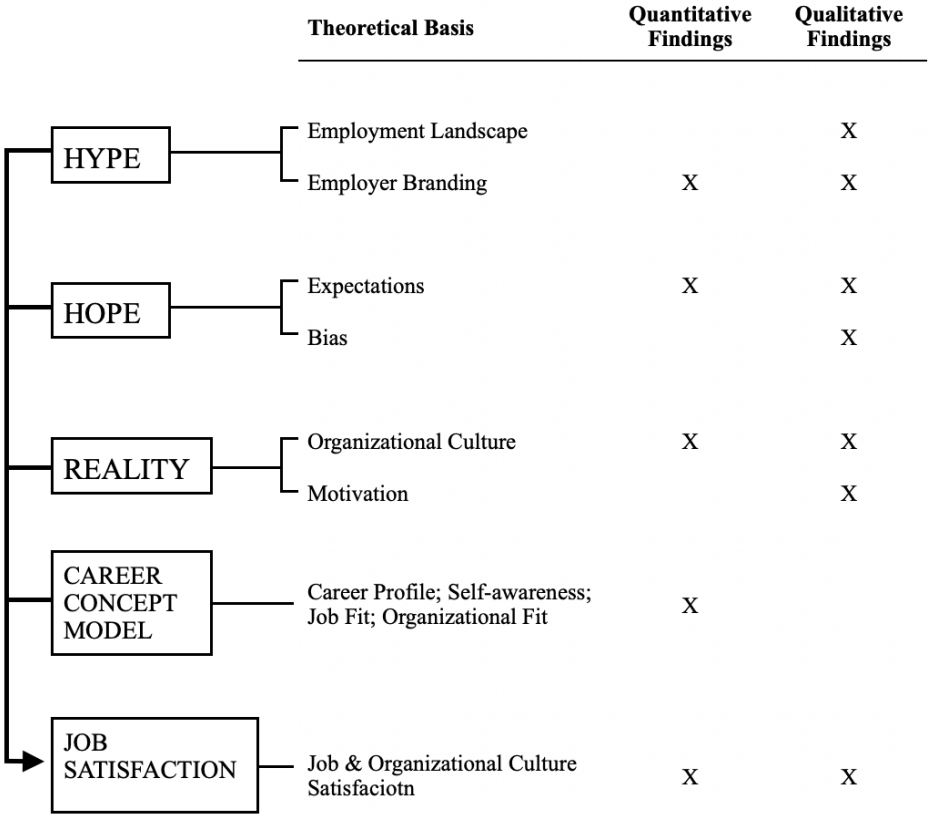


Figure 6:1 - Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

The findings of this study highlights the importance of employer branding, as it plays a crucial role in attracting suitable employees to organizations. In order to attract the right individuals, companies must enhance their employer branding efforts. A key aspect in this regard is the significance of honesty, which is vital not only from the perspective of organizations but also from that of candidates. During the interview with Academic Solutions, it was noted that candidates typically are adaptable, but only to a certain extent. According to them, it is relatively uncommon for candidates to accept or commence a job that feels entirely incompatible with their expectations due to misrepresented information. In order for this statement to hold true, it is imperative for companies to uphold transparency and honesty in their employer branding practices.

To address this issue, we propose the utilization of a model that can extract information equivalent to the Career Concept Model by both recruiting companies and organizations engaged in recruitment processes. By leveraging this extracted information, companies can effectively identify the ideal fit between candidates and the positions they are offering. Rather than merely seeking a “good fit”, companies should strive to find the “dream fit”. This entails not only considering candidates' required skills and expertise but also evaluating their alignment with the company's culture and values. By aiming for the “dream fit”, companies can enhance employee satisfaction, retention, and engagement. With a model like this, potential candidates can increase their self-awareness and be confident when applying to jobs that align with their concepts and motives.

In conclusion, to attract suitable employees, companies must prioritize transparency in their employer branding endeavors. By implementing a systematic approach that assesses the compatibility between the organization and job seekers at the early stages of the recruitment process, organizations, and recruitment agencies can better identify candidates who align with the company's culture and values, leading to improved overall success.

6.3 Practical Implications

According to this study, a sizable number of employees' expectations are not being realized at work. Organizations can modify their recruitment and retention tactics by gaining an awareness of the elements that influence employee expectations. For instance, if workers

anticipate a collaborative work environment but discover that the business is built on hierarchical development, the company can take measures to bridge those gaps and enhance employee engagement and job satisfaction. Through the recruitment process, this information can also assist businesses in better matching the expectations of potential employees with their job descriptions and application selection criteria. By being transparent about their values, culture, and work environment, organizations may entice people who are better suited for the job. This could ultimately result in higher levels of job satisfaction and retention. Understanding employee expectations and making an effort to meet them will furthermore help businesses reduce turnover, which can not only preserve the organization's resources but also improve productivity.

The results of this research can also be helpful to job seekers, allowing them to assess their compatibility with potential employers more accurately and make more informed decisions about their job search. If job seekers are aware of the variables that influence their own preferences, they will be able to formulate more focused and insightful questions during job interviews. Consequently, this may help them evaluate potential job offers based on how well the position and company fit with their values and career goals. Employees may ultimately have a happier and more fulfilling employment as a result.

6.4 Future Research

The increased complexity of integrating qualitative and quantitative methods required careful planning and coordination throughout the research process. In addition, we faced time and resource constraints, as data collection and analysis for both components were demanding. Furthermore, the subjective interpretations may have affected the integration of qualitative and quantitative data, since the findings of one component could influence further investigations. We hope to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings by acknowledging and addressing these limitations. Although multi-method studies are less typical, they provide the benefit of cross-validation by merging multiple research methods. They provide convergent results, which strengthen the overall conclusions, as well as two unique sets of results that would have been omitted in a single-method design. Therefore, mixed methods studies can significantly improve the resilience and depth of research findings. However, for future research it would be of interest to investigate this topic with other methodological

approaches to detect deviations or similarities in patterns. For example, as mentioned in 3.5 Alternative research methods, an ethnological study could be one approach.

We are aware that we have not covered all the topics and fields that could be discussed in this area of research. We saw a gap in the literature field and could see a purpose for our thesis. However, this study has only been applied to the Swedish employment landscape, i.e., it was made from a Western perspective and way of thinking. Furthermore, we chose not to examine the variations and distinctions between different age groups. However, this would also be an interesting perspective for future research, as we believe they play a large role in the perception of expectations vs experiences.

In further research, it would be of interest to study how the Career Concept Model would be applicable to specific industries, another country or age group, to see how our findings correlate or differentiate. Additionally, it is crucial to recognize that there are additional approaches and formulas for evaluating the dimensions related to the Career Concept Model that could lead to other findings than the ones that we have provided (see Appendix 8.1). Using other equations would be a suggestion for further research in this area.

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8. APPENDIX

Recruitment Interview - Guide

Introduction

1. Presentation of interviewers & thank them for participating in the study
2. Consent to record and say that the recording will only be used to take notes and then analyzed - audio recording only.
3. Present the structure and agenda of the interview.
4. Presentation of the research and research topic: *In recent years, there has been a significant trend where newly recruited candidates resign within the first year of their employment. The purpose of this study is therefore to examine job seekers' expectations of the work and organizational culture they are seeking and compare them with reality. By understanding job seekers' expectations, employers can create a stronger and more accurate employer brand that reflects the organization's values and culture. We hope that this study will not only be useful for employers but that it will also help candidates realize their own value and the factors that motivate them when applying for a job.*
5. Introduce what participation means and what the interview will be used for, and that the data will be deleted after the paper is completed.

Interview Questions

1. Can you start by telling us a bit about the process itself to begin with - what happens when companies contact you?
2. What factors do candidates seem to value most when considering a new job opportunity?
3. How important does company culture seem to candidates?
 - a. What aspects of company culture do candidates seem to value most?
4. How often do you think companies "glorify" a new job in the labor market?
 - a. How do you notice this?
 - b. What type of company does it tend to be?
5. How often do you encounter situations where job expectations or company culture are not met? How did you deal with that situation?
6. How often have you encountered a candidate applying for a job that is on the table, when in fact they have a completely different idea of the job?
 - a. How do you notice this?
 - b. What kind of candidates are they usually?
7. How do you think employers can improve their employer branding and attract top talent? What strategies or tactics do you think are most effective?
8. What advice would you give to employers who want to build a stronger employer brand and attract top talent?

9. How do you think the recruitment process can be improved to better match job seekers with companies that fit their expectations and values?
10. How do you think this trend will develop? What do you think it will look like in the next 5 years for example?

Closure

1. Say that all interview questions have been answered.
 2. Ask if they want to add anything - either now, or via email later.
 3. Thank you again for your participation.
-

Candidate Interview - Guide

Introduction

1. Presentation of interviewers & thank them for participating in the study
2. Consent to record and say that the recording will only be used to take notes and then analyzed - audio recording only.
3. Present the structure and agenda of the interview.
4. Presentation of the research and research topic: *In recent years, there has been a significant trend where newly recruited candidates resign within the first year of their employment. The purpose of this study is therefore to examine job seekers' expectations of the work and organizational culture they are seeking and compare them with reality. By understanding job seekers' expectations, employers can create a stronger and more accurate employer brand that reflects the organization's values and culture. We hope that this study will not only be useful for employers but that it will also help candidates realize their own value and the factors that motivate them when applying for a job.*
5. Introduce what participation means and what the interview will be used for, and that the data will be deleted after the paper is completed.
6. Ask if the participant has any questions, informing them that they can interject with questions or thoughts at any time during the interview.

Part 1: Current role and views on working life

1. Please tell us a little bit about your current position and job.
2. How long have you been at your current job?
3. What were your expectations of your job before you were hired?
4. What was the main reason you applied for the job?
5. Did your expectations of the job match the reality when you started?
6. Can you give some examples of situations where your expectations did not match reality?
7. What do you think are the main factors that make you happy at work?
8. Is there anything you would like to change or improve at your job?

9. Have you received enough support and resources from the company to do your job satisfactorily?
10. How satisfied are you with your job?
11. How long (approximately) do you plan to stay in this job?
12. Have you ever rejected a job offer because it does not fit with your career goals or values?

Part 2: Motivation

1. What kind of tasks or projects in your previous jobs have you found most motivating and rewarding, and *why do you think this was the case?*
2. What personal short-term and long-term goals have you set for your career development?
 - a. How do you think your current role and work environment can help you achieve these goals?
3. What drives and motivates you most at work?
 - a. How do you think your current role and work environment support these factors?
4. Can you describe a situation where you experienced a challenge or obstacle at work?
 - a. How did you deal with it to stay motivated and focused on your goals?
5. What kind of support or training do you think would be most beneficial for your career development?
6. What types of rewards motivate you most at work - *monetary rewards, i.e. salary and any bonus, or non-monetary rewards, i.e. anything you receive from your work that is not money, such as the content of the work, the work environment, working relationships, development, and experiences?*

Closure

4. Say that all interview questions have been answered.
5. Ask if the interviewee wants to add anything - either now, or via email later.
6. Ask how the interviewee felt during the interview - was it as expected? Ask for any feedback.
7. Thank you again for your participation.

Table 4: Survey

Question	Response options
PART 1	PART 1
Q1. Do you have an academic background from a recognized Swedish university?	Yes; No
Q2. What is your age group?	18-28; 29-39; 40-50; 51-60; 60+
Q3. For how long have you been at your current job?	1-3 months; 4-7 months; 8-12 months; 12+ months
Q4. What expectations did you have when you first applied to your current job?	Likert Scale: 1 (Very low) - 7 (Very high)
Q5. To what extent has your current job fulfilled the job expectations that you had when applying to it?	Likert Scale: 1 (Very little) - 7 (Very much)
Q6. Unless all your job expectations have been met or exceeded, which of these alternatives have contributed to the lack of fulfilled job expectations (you can answer as many alternatives as you like):	Inaccurate job description; Not receiving the expected rewards; Inaccurate expectations of the workload; Inaccurate expectations of the amount of freedom; Unexpected competencies turned out be more critical for doing the job; Other
Q7. To what extent has your current employer fulfilled the organizational expectations that you had when applying to it?	Likert Scale: 1 (Very little) - 7 (Very much)
Q8. Unless all your organizational expectations have been met or exceeded, which of these alternatives have contributed to the lack of fulfilled organizational expectations (you can answer as many alternatives as you like):	Dissatisfying relationships with colleagues; Lack of transparency regarding organizational policies; The organizational culture turned out to be less engaging; Not so good leadership by my boss; Inaccurate expectations of the possibility for career development; Other
Q9. Are you planning on resigning in the next 12 months?	Yes; No; I don't know
PART 2	PART 2
Q10. In your opinion, how attractive is a working life in which you specialize in one area for a long time in order to be the best you can be?	Likert Scale: 1 (Very little) - 7 (Very much)
Q11. In your opinion, how attractive is a working life where you progress to increasingly senior positions and manage more and more people?	Likert Scale: 1 (Very little) - 7 (Very much)
Q12. In your opinion, how attractive is a working life in which you have the opportunity to broaden into related fields of work (approximately every 5-10 years)?	Likert Scale: 1 (Very little) - 7 (Very much)
Q13. In your opinion, how attractive is a working life where you often move to completely new areas of work?	Likert Scale: 1 (Very little) - 7 (Very much)
Q14. How motivated are you by creativity?	Likert Scale: 1 (Very little) - 7 (Very much)
Q15. How motivated are you by deepening your expertise?	Likert Scale: 1 (Very little) - 7 (Very much)
Q16. How motivated are you by variety in your work?	Likert Scale: 1 (Very little) - 7 (Very much)
Q17. How motivated are you by working towards better results?	Likert Scale: 1 (Very little) - 7 (Very much)
Q18. To what extent is your organization characterized by long-term specialization?	Likert Scale: 1 (Very little) - 7 (Very much)

Q19. To what extent is your organization characterized by a managerial hierarchy?	Likert Scale: 1 (Very little) - 7 (Very much)
Q20. To what extent is your organization characterized by innovative projects?	Likert Scale: 1 (Very little) - 7 (Very much)
Q21. To what extent is your organization characterized by rapid change?	Likert Scale: 1 (Very little) - 7 (Very much)
Q22. How important is it to be able to learn quickly to perform well in your job?	Likert Scale: 1 (Very unimportant) - 7 (Very important)
Q23. How important is deep expertise to perform well in your job?	Likert Scale: 1 (Very unimportant) - 7 (Very important)
Q24. How important is it to focus on measurable results to perform well in your job?	Likert Scale: 1 (Very unimportant) - 7 (Very important)
Q25. How important is it to have a wide range of skills to perform well in your job?	Likert Scale: 1 (Very unimportant) - 7 (Very important)
Q26. If you are interested in sharing more of your experiences regarding this topic, please enter your email and we will contact you as soon as possible for further interviews.	

Figure 8:1 - Data Transformation method

