



Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/obhdp

Narrow personality traits and organizational attraction: Evidence for the complementary hypothesis[☆]

Edgar E. Kausel^{a,*}, Jerel E. Slaughter^{b,1}

^a Faculty of Economics and Business, University of Chile, Diagonal Paraguay 257, Santiago 6510015, Chile

^b Department of Management & Organizations, University of Arizona, P.O. Box 210108, Tucson, AZ 85721-0108, United States

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 31 March 2009
Accepted 23 August 2010
Available online 20 September 2010
Accepted by Paul Levy

Keywords:

Recruitment
Interactionist perspective
Applicant attraction
Organization personality
Narrow traits
Big Five
Person-organization fit
Trust
Assertiveness
Imagination

ABSTRACT

Although the interactionist perspective has been widely studied in organizational attractiveness, there is no research comparing the explanatory power of the complementary and supplementary hypotheses in predicting attraction. The authors test these perspectives in the context of the instrumental-symbolic framework. The authors also examine whether the use of narrow personality facets, such as Trust (under the Big Five trait Agreeableness), Assertiveness (under Extraversion), and Imagination (under Openness to Experience) enhances the prediction of attraction. Job seekers ($N = 220$) provided self-ratings of personality, ratings of organizational traits, and their level of attraction to a potential future employer. Results supported predictions based on complementarity, suggesting that organizations adopting a recruiting strategy based on similarity in personality may not succeed in attracting their most preferred candidates. The findings also suggested that narrow facets are useful in predicting attraction, providing further evidence for the predictive benefits of narrow personality traits.

© 2010 Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Introduction

As recently as 35 years ago, researchers questioned the assertion that employees are the keys to organizational success (Aldrich & Pfeffer, 1976). These authors suggested that the effectiveness of a firm is determined almost exclusively by its environment, and individuals within firms are thus powerless to affect organizational outcomes. However, there is now widespread agreement on the importance of attracting the right employees to the organization (Combs, Ketchen, Hall, & Liu, 2006; Pfeffer, 1994). Accordingly, the fields of recruitment and organizational attractiveness have experienced a significant ascendancy during the past two decades (Chapman, Uggerslev, Carroll, Piasentin, & Jones, 2005; Rynes & Cable, 2003).

Lievens and Highhouse (2003) proposed that organizational attractiveness depends not only on instrumental aspects of the

job, but also on the symbolic meaning associated with joining a company. For example, these authors reported that symbolic characteristics such as sincerity explained variance in applicants' attraction over and above the variance explained by instrumental factors such as pay. More recently, researchers have applied an interactionist perspective to the instrumental-symbolic framework by examining whether applicants' personalities interact with symbolic characteristics to predict attractiveness to firms (e.g., Schreurs, Druart, Proost, & De Witte, 2009). However, results have been disappointing. Schreurs et al. found that only two of the six hypothesized interactions were supported. For example, whereas they found that Openness to Experience interacted with the organizational trait excitement to predict attraction, they found no support for the hypothesis that the Agreeableness \times Sincerity interaction predicts attraction. Similarly, Slaughter and Greguras (2009) found support for only three of the ten hypothesized interactions involving attraction. Schreurs et al. (2009) concluded that "a possible explanation for the null findings is that the conceptual overlap between the human and organizational personality dimensions is too small to lead to attraction on the basis of similarity" (p. 42).

In the present paper, we propose that improved explanatory power in predicting organizational attractiveness can be achieved in two ways. Previous recruitment scholars have investigated the

[☆] This article is based on Edgar Kausel's master's thesis, which was completed at The University of Arizona under the direction of Jerel Slaughter. An earlier version of this article was presented in a symposium conducted at the annual conference of Society of Industrial and Organizational Psychology, San Francisco, CA, April 2008.

* Corresponding author. Fax: +56 2 222 0639.

E-mail addresses: ekausel@unegocios.cl (E.E. Kausel), jslaught@eller.arizona.edu (J.E. Slaughter).

¹ Fax: +1 520 621 4171.

relation between applicants' broad personality traits, such as those comprising the Big Five, and organizational attraction to different firms (Schreurs et al., 2009). None of the previous research on applicant attraction, however, has utilized the narrower facets subsumed under the broader Big Five traits. This is unfortunate, as work in other areas of organizational research has shown that narrow personality traits provide more explanatory power than do broad personality traits (e.g., Rothstein & Goffin, 2006). In the present investigation, we tested hypotheses about the interactions between narrow facets of applicant personality and organizational traits that influence applicant attraction to organizations.

We also tested alternative hypotheses that predicted different forms of the interactions between trait inferences about organizations and applicants' traits. On the one hand, based on the similarity hypothesis (Byrne, 1997), we predicted that the relationship between an organization characteristic and attraction would be stronger when the applicant is high on a compatible trait (e.g., attraction would be strongest when both the applicant and the organization are high on similar traits). On the other hand, the complementary hypothesis suggests that people are attracted to entities that have characteristics that are complementary to their own (Judge & Kristof-Brown, 2004). Based on this perspective, we expected that the relationship between an organization characteristic and attraction would be stronger when the applicant is low on a compatible trait (e.g., attraction would be strongest when applicants and organizations have different levels of similar traits). Testing this paradigm is important, as some scholars have suggested that the complementary hypothesis "has been subjected to minimal empirical investigation" (Piasentin & Chapman, 2007, p. 341) in organizational settings.

The theoretical contributions of the present article, therefore, are twofold. First, we extend theorizing and findings suggesting that narrow personality facets are superior to broad traits in the prediction of job performance (Rothstein & Goffin, 2006; Tett & Christiansen, 2007). By proposing that narrow facets enhance the prediction of attraction over and above broad factors, we seek to test the predictive benefits of using narrow personality traits. Second, the interactionist perspective has been very influential in the organizational literature. Judge and Kristof-Brown (2004) went so far as to argue that it is impossible to be an organizational researcher "interested in understanding how personality affects behavior without being an interactionist" (p. 87). Despite the influence of the interactionist paradigm, there is no research comparing the explanatory power of interactions based on the complementary and supplementary hypotheses in predicting work-related attitudes or behaviors. We fill this gap in the literature by testing these perspectives using organizational attraction as the criterion.

The theoretical background for the present study is organized as follows. First, we briefly explain the instrumental-symbolic framework, and discuss the interactionist perspective on this paradigm. Then, we present the construct of organization personality perceptions. Next, we explain why considering narrow self-rated personality facets is appropriate for understanding the effects of symbolic attributes on attraction. After this, we present two ways by which interactions between applicant and organizational characteristics lead to attraction: similarity and complementarity. Finally, we present the specific hypotheses concerning these interactions.

An interactionist perspective on the instrumental-symbolic framework

Drawing on the instrumental-symbolic framework (Katz, 1960; Locander & Spivey, 1978), Lievens and Highhouse (2003; Highhouse, Thornbury, & Little, 2007) proposed that individuals are attracted to organizations on the basis of instrumental and symbolic attributes. Lievens and Highhouse found that symbolic attributes such as Innovativeness explained variance in organizational attraction over and

above instrumental factors, such as geographic location (see also Lievens, 2007; Lievens, van Hoye, & Schreurs, 2005).

Whereas previous research has shown that perceived symbolic characteristics are directly related to organizational attraction, there are also reasons to expect that these perceptions interact with applicants' self-rated traits to predict organizational attractiveness. For example, Judge and colleagues (Cable & Judge, 1996; Judge & Bretz, 1992; Judge & Cable, 1997) investigated how applicants' cultural preferences fit with perceived organizational values to explain attractiveness.

These findings are consistent with a long tradition in psychology, the interactionist perspective, which emphasizes the importance of the environment and the person in predicting behaviors (Endler & Magnusson, 1976). The underlying idea is that individuals seek out situations that are congruent with their personality (Ostroff & Schulte, 2007). One strategy for conceptualizing interactionism is moderated regression, in which the effect of one variable on another depends on a third (moderating) variable (Judge & Kristof-Brown, 2004). For example, Lievens, Decaestecker, Coetsier, and Geirnaert (2001) found that conscientiousness moderated the relationship between organizational size and attractiveness, such that the relationship was stronger for those who were more conscientious.

Before presenting the hypothesized interactions, we first discuss the organization personality perceptions framework and its importance in measuring symbolic factors. Following that, we discuss the compatibility of this measure with narrow facets of human personality.

Organization personality perceptions

Lievens and Highhouse (2003) studied symbolic attributes using a scale that was developed for measuring trait inferences about consumer brands (Aaker, 1997). Perhaps for this reason, they found that organizations differed significantly only on one dimension of Aaker's scale. This suggested that brand personality and organization personality were different constructs, and that specific measures of organization personality traits needed to be developed. Borrowing from Aaker's definition of brand personality, Slaughter, Zickar, Highhouse, and Mohr (2004) defined organization personality as the "set of human personality characteristics perceived to be associated with an organization" (p. 86). Defining personality in this way underlines the importance of observers' perceptions in the assessment of personality (Hogan, 2006). Slaughter et al. (2004) thus termed the construct *organization personality perceptions* (OPPS).

Slaughter et al. (2004) used an inductive approach for the development of their scale of OPPS. On the basis of several studies testing a number of trait adjectives, five factors emerged explaining differences among organizations: *Trustworthiness*,² *Innovativeness*, *Dominance*, *Thrift*, and *Style*. We return to the specific factors included in the present study later in the introduction.

Narrow facets of human personality

Human personality has been conceptualized as a hierarchical structure (e.g., Digman, 1990). Costa and McCrae (1992) proposed that there are 30 narrow facets underlying the Big Five factors of the FFM. For example, Extraversion is considered a broad domain

² We changed the label of the dimension Slaughter et al. (2004) called Boy Scout to *Trustworthiness*. As one reviewer noted, the previous label could be seen as pejorative in some contexts. Trustworthiness is a more descriptive label. We elected to use this label because trustworthiness is associated with the attributes of benevolence and integrity (Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 1995), which are also present in the features included under this factor (e.g., friendly, personal, attentive to people, helpful, and honest).

of the FFM, whereas Assertiveness is seen as a narrow facet that is part of Extraversion.

Scholars have argued over whether narrow or broad factors are preferable. This has been referred to as the bandwidth-fidelity debate (John, Hampson, & Goldberg, 1991). Research has generally suggested that narrow personality traits are useful in the prediction of job-related criteria (e.g., Ashton, 1998; cf. Judge, Erez, Bono, & Thoresen, 2002). For example, Dudley, Orvis, Lebiecki, and Cortina (2006) found that facets of conscientiousness explained variance in job performance beyond the broad conscientiousness trait.

In the present study, we propose that the compatibility between OPPS and narrow facets of the FFM is greater than the compatibility between OPPS and broad domains of the Big Five. Theory suggests that when factors are more compatible, this leads to a greater degree of fit between the factors. This, in turn, enhances organizational attraction (Ehrhart & Ziegert, 2005; Harrison, 2007). Accordingly, our proposition implies that interactions between OPPS and narrow facets of the FFM will explain variance in attractiveness, over and above the variance explained by interactions between OPPS and broad domains of the FFM.

This proposition is based on the idea that there are different levels of richness in the hierarchical FFM and OPPS structures. There is evidence suggesting that people describe their own personality in a richer fashion than when they describe others' personality (John et al., 1991). Thus, it is likely that the factors of the FFM are broader than those of the OPPS. In contrast, Slaughter et al. (2004) argued that it is unlikely that the five OPPS comprise any facet-level dimensions. As they noted when discussing their measure, "... we should expect it to be somewhat less complex than the structure of human personality, which more often refers to individuals' internal processes and propensities and is more commonly assessed through respondent self-report" (p. 100).

It is likely that factors of unequal breadth are less compatible. For example, because Extraversion includes the Assertiveness facet, Extraversion is compatible with the organizational factor Dominance. However, a trait such as Extraversion is much broader than Dominance. This is because Extraversion also includes facets such as Gregariousness, which is not compatible with Dominance (Costa & McCrae, 1992). Gregariousness is more closely tied to behaviors like *getting along*. Assertiveness, like Dominance, is more closely related to *getting ahead* behaviors (Hogan & Shelton, 1998). Similarly, the narrow facet Trust is more closely related to the OPPS trait Trustworthiness than is the broad domain Agreeableness, because Agreeableness encompasses facets such as Modesty that are not compatible with the idea of Trustworthiness. Likewise, the broad domain Openness to Experience includes narrow facets such as Feelings (Emotionality) or Liberal Values. These facets, unlike the Imagination facet, do not closely correspond with the OPPS factor Innovativeness.

Narrow facets of human personality will have greater compatibility with OPPS, because the constructs possess similar levels of breadth. This implies that narrow facets will provide better explanatory power when attempting to predict organizational attractiveness. For this reason, we hypothesized that narrow facets of the FFM, as opposed to broad domains of the FFM, would moderate the relationship between OPPS and organizational attraction.

Similarity vs. complementary hypotheses

In this section, we present our overall framework defining how we expected the interactions between OPPS and FFM factors would influence attraction. There are two perspectives, each of which suggests a different form of the interaction. The first predicts that attraction would be highest when the applicant and the organization have similar levels of similar traits. The *similarity-attraction*

effect (Byrne, 1971) is based on findings from social psychology, in which people were more attracted to other individuals who had similar personalities than to those who had different personalities. One explanation for this effect is that people expect that those with similar personality traits will hold similar opinions about the importance of social issues (Montoya & Horton, 2004).

In organizational contexts, employee-organization similarity causes employees to be more committed to the organization (Edwards & Shipp, 2007). When organizational characteristics match people's characteristics, people believe that the issues that they value will also be valued by the organization, analogous to what occurs when individuals perceive that other individuals have similar personalities. Therefore, when applicants perceive that they are similar to an organization, they expect that the organization will be more supportive of them (Cable & DeRue, 2002; Cable & Edwards, 2004). In contrast, when applicants perceive that their characteristics are different from organizations' characteristics, they are likely to expect less support.

The second way by which interactions between applicant and organizational traits can influence attraction is by applicant-organization dissimilarity. Such a relation is based on the complementary hypothesis (Winch, Kstanes, & Kstanes, 1954). This hypothesis suggests that people are attracted to those who are likely to provide them with maximum need gratification. The complementary hypothesis is analogous to the complementary perspective on Person-Organization (P-O) fit (Kristof, 1996), which posits that a weakness or need of an employee is compensated by a strength of the firm, or vice versa. Kristof-Brown and Jansen (2007) further argued that in complementary fit "opposites attract to complete and offset each other" (p. 131). In the present study, we propose that when individuals and organizations have complementary characteristics, this may also lead to organizational attractiveness. We therefore expected, from a complementary standpoint, that the relationship between an organizational trait and attraction would be stronger when the applicant is low on a similar self-rated trait.

Interactions between OPPS and FFM Narrow Facets

In this section, we hypothesize specific interactions between the OPPS and narrow personality facets. Following organizational researchers who have compared predictions of different theoretical perspectives (Henderson & Fredrickson, 1996; Staw & Ross, 1978), for each interaction we test competing hypotheses emanating from the similarity and complementary perspectives. In other words, the *form* of each interaction is different when predicted from a similarity standpoint (Hypotheses 1a, 2a, and 3a) than when predicted from a complementary standpoint (Hypotheses 1b, 2b, and 3b). We structure these hypotheses around three OPPS dimensions from Slaughter et al. (2004): Trustworthiness, Dominance, and Innovativeness.

We do not include in our hypotheses two OPPS factors, Thrift and Style, because they are not compatible with any of the FFM dimensions or their narrow facets. Thrift and Style are not facets of the FFM, and we are not aware of any existing scale that measures them among people. Thrift and Style are traits that may be potentially interesting to study in recruitment research, but as Slaughter et al. (2004, p. 99) stated, "Our findings suggested that there are dimensions of organization personality perceptions (e.g., Thrift) that have no counterpart in the Big Five framework."

Trustworthiness

The Trustworthiness dimension refers to the degree that an organization is regarded as friendly, personal, attentive to people, and honest. Companies that have been rated highly on this dimension have included Disney and Bob Evans (Slaughter et al., 2004).

The narrow facet Trust, from the broad domain Agreeableness, is compatible to the Trustworthiness dimension of the OPPS.

Individuals who score high on Trust believe in the sincerity and good intentions of others (Costa & McCrae, 1992). They are likely to expect to find individuals with characteristics similar to their own in organizations high on Trustworthiness. Conversely, individuals who are low on Trust often perceive that they are working hard while others free-ride and get the benefits of their efforts (Vohs, Baumeister, & Chin, 2007). Therefore, from a similarity perspective, it is likely that the positive relation between Trustworthiness and organizational attraction will be stronger for individuals who score high on Trust.

The complementary hypothesis predicts a different form of the Trust x Trustworthiness interaction. Trustful individuals believe that others are trustworthy and that most people will respond in kind when they are trusted by others (Couch & Jones, 1997). They often have positive expectations of others (Rotter, 1967) and tend to react less spitefully when others are unfair to them (Vohs et al., 2007). Furthermore, people high on trust are less likely to calculate the costs and benefits of others' actions (Yamagishi, Kanazawa, Mashima, & Terai, 2005). Accordingly, high trustors should be indifferent to the Trustworthiness dimension of organizations. Conversely, applicants who score low on Trust are suspicious about their environment (Evans & Revelle, 2008), which is likely to be more pronounced when they expect that the members of the organization care little about others. These distrusting individuals would be more sensitive to an organization's trustworthiness; the more an organization is perceived as trustworthy, the more they would be attracted to it. Therefore, we hypothesize:

Hypothesis 1a. Trust will moderate the relation between Trustworthiness perceptions and organizational attraction, such that the relation between Trustworthiness and attraction will be positive for individuals who are relatively *higher* on Trust, and will be weaker for those who are relatively lower on Trust.

Hypothesis 1b. Trust will moderate the relation between Trustworthiness perceptions and organizational attraction, such that the relation between Trustworthiness and attraction will be positive for individuals who are relatively *lower* on Trust, and will be weaker for those who are relatively higher on Trust.

Dominance

Companies perceived as high on the Dominance trait are described as being big, successful, popular, active and busy. Slaughter et al. (2004) found that Nike and Microsoft were both rated highly on this dimension.

Assertive individuals enjoy taking the lead, and are characterized by a desire to influence events (Deluga, 1988). They also defend and firmly pursue their personal interests (Ames, 2008). Assertiveness is also strongly related to the personal value of power (Roccas, Sagiv, Schwartz, & Knafo, 2002). Furthermore, Costa and McCrae (1988) found that Assertiveness, among all the FFM facets, had the highest correlation with Dominance, as measured by Jackson's (1984) Personality Research Form. From a conceptual and empirical standpoint, then, there is clear similarity between Assertiveness and Dominance. From a similarity perspective, the more individuals who are highly assertive perceive an organization to be dominant, the more they would feel that their personality would be valued. In contrast, unassertive individuals are less likely to value an organization's ascendancy, and thus they would be indifferent to how dominant the firm is (i.e., the Dominance-attraction relation would be weaker).

An alternative prediction is based on the complementary hypothesis. Assertive individuals, who like to draw attention to themselves (Pearsall & Ellis, 2006), seek out people and situations where they can shine by comparison. Several studies have supported the idea of *dominance complementarity*; dominant individuals prefer to

interact with, and are more attracted to, submissive individuals (Dryer & Horowitz, 1997; Tiedens & Fragale, 2003). This effect is particularly strong in work settings, because people in these situations have a desire for hierarchically differentiated relationships (Tiedens, Unzueta, & Young, 2007). Accordingly, we propose that assertive job seekers perceive that, within dominant organizations, there will be fewer opportunities to exhibit their talent or take the lead, as these organizations likely already employ many assertive individuals. From this perspective, the more dominant an organization is, the more assertive individuals would be repelled from them. This is because assertive applicants are likely to perceive that in less dominant organizations there are better opportunities for attaining power. Conversely, less assertive individuals are unassuming and are unlikely to be motivated to exhibit their talent (Widiger, Trull, Clarkin, Sanderson, & Costa, 1994), and thus we expect that they would be indifferent to the organizations' Dominance dimension. Thus, our two alternative hypotheses are:

Hypothesis 2a. Assertiveness will moderate the relation between Dominance perceptions and organizational attraction, such that the relation between Dominance and attraction will be *positive* for individuals who are relatively higher on Assertiveness, and will be weaker for those who are relatively lower on Assertiveness.

Hypothesis 2b. Assertiveness will moderate the relation between Dominance perceptions and organizational attraction, such that the relation between Dominance and attraction will be *negative* for individuals who are relatively higher on Assertiveness, and will be weaker for those who are relatively lower on Assertiveness.

Innovativeness

Traits associated with the innovativeness dimension include being creative, exciting, interesting, unique, and original. Organizations perceived as highly innovative include Nike, Universal Studios, and Reebok.

From a similarity perspective, the Imagination facet of Openness to Experience is compatible with the organizational trait Innovativeness. Individuals high on the Imagination facet have high levels of ingenuity and spend time reflecting on things (Costa & McCrae, 1992). Imaginative individuals are also creative (Garcia, Aluja, Garcia, & Cuevas, 2005) and therefore tend to prefer less structured jobs (Larson & Borgen, 2002). From this perspective, imaginative individuals' attraction to an organization would increase as the Innovativeness dimension of an organization also increases. These individuals would be more likely to want to interact with other innovative people who would value their imaginative ideas. Conversely, individuals who are low on imagination, given that they lack creative ideas, would not perceive that their thinking would be valued by imaginative others. Furthermore, it is unlikely that they will wish to interact with other people who are low on imagination as well. Thus, we expect that individuals low on imagination will be indifferent to the level of the organization's innovativeness (i.e., the Innovativeness-attraction relation would be weaker than for those high on imagination).

A different prediction emanates from the complementary hypothesis. Imagination has a dark side, in that it is positively related to antisocial behaviors and depression, and it is negatively related to Conscientiousness (Carrillo, Rojo, Sanchez-Bernardos, & Avia, 2001; Wolfenstein & Trull, 1997). Furthermore, people high on Imagination tend to daydream and get lost in thought (Goldberg, 1999; Schredl & Erlacher, 2004), which can have negative consequences. For example, Watson (2001) found that Imagination was related to procrastination. Griffin and Hesketh (2004) argue that because individuals high on imagination spend too much time in reflection, they are less task-oriented. The authors found that these individuals do not adapt well to new situations, receive poor

supervisory ratings of adaptive performance, and experience more job tension in turbulent environments. This is consistent with the behavioral plasticity hypothesis, which posits that individuals who reflect too much on themselves tend to react strongly to external cues, especially when these cues are challenging (Brockner, 1979; Turban & Keon, 1993). It is likely then that individuals high on imagination will perceive that, the more an innovative an organization is, the more difficult is to keep up with its inventive, highly adaptable workforce. Thus, for these individuals, the relation between perceptions of an organization's Innovativeness and attraction would be negative. On the other hand, because individuals low on Imagination are less anxious in stimulus-rich environments than their more imaginative counterparts (Carrillo et al., 2001), they would be indifferent to the level of an organization's Innovativeness.

Hypothesis 3a. Imagination will moderate the relation between Innovativeness perceptions and organizational attraction, such that the relation will be *positive* for individuals who are relatively higher on Imagination, and will be weaker for those who are relatively lower on Imagination.

Hypothesis 3b. Imagination will moderate the relation between Innovativeness perceptions and organizational attraction, such that the relation will be *negative* for individuals who are relatively higher on Imagination, and will be weaker for those who are relatively lower on Imagination.

Method

Participants

Participants were 260 business undergraduates who were members of a career services listserv at a large university in the southwestern United States. These individuals were upper-division students at varying phases of their career search. Through this listserv, these job seekers received periodic information about job opportunities, and job fairs and related events. Because the study was conducted late in the spring semester, most of these individuals were actively involved in the job search process. Participants were offered entry into a drawing in which they had the opportunity to win one of eight \$40 cash awards.

Of the individuals who completed the study, 55.2% were women. Their ages ranged from 20 to 41 with an average of 22.1 years. Confirming the fact that participants were job seekers, 65% reported that they already had begun applying for jobs, and 48% reported that they had recently been interviewed³.

Procedure

The data were gathered during March and April of 2007. In order to reduce the potential influence of common method bias, data were collected at three time periods. At each time, individuals received e-mails containing hyperlinks to web pages where the questionnaires were hosted. At Time 1, 260 participants completed a measure of the FFM personality characteristics. Ten days later (Time 2), participants were asked to rate a randomly assigned organization on perceived personality factors. Data were collected from 239 individuals at this time (91.9% of those who completed the questionnaire at Time 1). Finally, ten days after Time 2 (Time 3), participants were asked to rate their attraction to the same organization they rated at Time 2. At this time, 223 individuals

completed the questionnaire (93.7% of those who completed the questionnaire at Time 2, 85.8% of the original 260). Individuals who completed all three questionnaires did not differ from those who completed only the first questionnaire on age, gender, year at the university, or whether they were applying for positions or had been interviewed for positions (all $p > .05$).

Stimulus companies

The pool of stimulus companies rated at Times 2 and 3 was generated by asking the Director of Career Services for the three firms that had hired business students most frequently in previous years, per major (see Appendix A). Individuals from each major were randomly assigned to rate one of these three firms (double and triple major students were first randomly assigned to one of their majors, and then randomly assigned to one of the organizations). Thus, job seekers rated firms that were actually their potential future employers.

Time 1 measures

FFM personality domains and facets

Because the goal of this investigation was to understand the role of narrow facets in explaining organizational attractiveness, we controlled for the broad domains of the FFM and the corresponding domains \times OPPS interactions. Controlling for broad domains has been a common practice among researchers exploring the incremental variance explained by narrow facets on different criteria (e.g., Dudley et al., 2006).

FFM personality characteristics were measured with the short version of the International Personality Item Pool Representation of the Revised NEO Personality Inventory (Goldberg, 1999). As Schmitt (2008) noted, this measure is psychometrically comparable to the NEO-PI-R. Because none of our predictions involved Conscientiousness or Neuroticism, these traits were not measured. This resulted in a total of 72 items (four items per facet; 24 items per broad domain). Respondents used 5-point scales (1 = *very accurate*, 5 = *very inaccurate*) to indicate how accurately each statement described them.

Internal consistencies for the three domains and their six facets were as follows: Agreeableness, .87 (.70–.80); Extraversion, .90 (.76–.81); Openness to Experience, .82 (.67–.81). Coefficients of all facets included in the analyses were .80 or higher (see Table 1 for details).

Time 2 measures

Familiarity and recognition

Participants were asked to indicate whether they recognized their assigned company. Only 3 of the 223 participants who completed the study did not recognize their assigned organization. Their data were removed from analyses. Participants were also asked to indicate familiarity with their assigned firm on a 3-item scale (Lievens et al., 2005). An example item was, "I am familiar with this firm." Respondents answered these items using a 5-point scale (1 = *strongly disagree*; 5 = *strongly agree*). Internal consistency was .81. Because more than 88% of the scores on this scale were over the midpoint, and the exclusion of those individuals whose scores were lower than the midpoint did not affect the results, we included all remaining participants in the analyses.

Organization personality perceptions

Organization personality perceptions were assessed with Slaughter et al.'s (2004) 33-item measure. Respondents used 5-point scales (1 = *strongly disagree*, 5 = *strongly agree*) to rate

³ We tested our hypotheses with the entire sample, as well as with a limited sample that included only participants who reported that they had begun applying for jobs. In either case, the results were the same. Thus, we elected to retain the entire sample.

Table 1
Means, standard deviations, correlations, and reliabilities of major study variables.

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16					
<i>Demographics</i>																							
1. Age	22.14	2.32	–																				
2. Gender	1.55	0.50	–03	–																			
3. Year at the univ.	3.44	0.83	29	06	–																		
<i>FFM domains</i>																							
4. Agreeableness	3.81	0.47	–03	27	04	87																	
5. Extraversion	3.80	0.51	–17	23	–06	21	90																
6. Openness	3.34	0.47	05	15	09	22	29	82															
<i>FFM facets</i>																							
7. Trust	3.71	0.62	–02	06	02	57	24	10	80														
8. Assertiveness	4.02	0.68	–05	10	–01	07	61	15	01	84													
9. Imagination	3.47	0.88	–01	–02	–01	–10	18	65	–05	–04	80												
<i>Org. variables</i>																							
10. Trustworthiness	3.51	0.62	–14	05	00	10	11	06	11	03	21	91											
11. Thrift	2.17	0.66	06	–05	00	–09	07	–15	01	–03	–12	–40	87										
12. Innovativeness	3.28	0.63	–05	–01	–06	10	06	11	07	–05	11	41	–33	84									
13. Style	2.77	0.95	02	–04	–07	–01	–15	–07	01	–06	–06	26	–12	51	94								
14. Dominance	3.87	0.66	–07	08	–13	05	04	04	–02	05	05	31	–45	39	12	84							
15. Familiarity	3.88	0.93	11	05	08	03	08	09	–01	11	03	05	–19	–07	03	26	79						
16. Attraction	3.01	0.93	–01	–06	–06	–02	–15	–07	03	–18	04	22	–17	40	37	08	00	92					
Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
<i>Org. variables</i>																							
17. Power	3.49	0.61	–16	08	05	–01	04	00	–06	–03	09	44	–41	39	13	36	11	33	85				
18. Working conditions	3.25	0.59	–18	10	03	04	03	11	05	–05	14	35	–40	51	15	27	06	46	67	85			
19. Flexible work hours	3.04	0.67	–08	08	–07	07	05	03	07	–09	05	29	–02	14	06	05	05	02	24	17	–		
20. Geographic location	3.54	0.95	–07	12	–01	14	08	04	13	00	10	43	–33	27	11	27	10	20	38	26	17	–	
21. Job security	3.30	0.80	–09	07	10	10	07	15	05	01	12	30	–29	05	–01	02	09	11	33	51	13	25	–

Note. $N = 220$. For gender, 1 = male, 2 = female. Correlations $> |.14|$ are significant at $p < .05$; correlations $> |.17|$ are significant at $p < .01$. Where appropriate, reliability coefficients presented on the diagonal. Decimals omitted from correlations for clarity.

their agreement with the degree to which each of the items described the organization to which they were randomly assigned.

Perceptions of instrumental factors

It was expected that individuals were attracted not only to organizations with desirable symbolic attributes, but also those that offered jobs with desirable instrumental attributes. Thus, we controlled for perceptions of instrumental factors, using items adapted from the measure developed by Slaughter, Richard, and Martin (2006). Participants indicated their agreement (1 = *strongly disagree*; 5 = *strongly agree*) with statements about whether jobs in the target organization possessed an attribute (e.g., “This organization offers competitive salaries and benefits”). In total, 13 instrumental factors were included in this measure (salary and benefits, leadership, authority, opportunities for promotion, autonomy, challenging work, interesting work, flexible work hours, geographic location, job security, recognition, competent co-workers, and competent supervisors).

Time 3 measures

Organizational attraction

Organizational attraction was measured with Highhouse, Lievens, and Sinar's (2003) 5-item measure. An example item was “This company is attractive to me as a place for employment.” Responses were scored on a 5-point scale with response options ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). Internal consistency was .92.

Results

Initial analyses and descriptive statistics

Organization personality perceptions

We first conducted a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) to examine the fit of Slaughter et al.'s (2004) five factor model of

organization personality perceptions. We report here, following Mathieu, Gilson, and Ruddy (2006), Bentler's (1990) comparative fit index (CFI) and the standardized root mean square residual (SRMSR; Hu & Bentler, 1999). We also report the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA; Steiger, 1990). For CFI, values $\geq .90$ are considered as the criterion to infer good fit (Bentler, 1990; Medsker, Williams, & Holahan, 1994). For SRMR, values $\leq .10$ are considered “fair” and values $\leq .08$ are suggested as necessary to consider a model a “relatively good fit” (Browne & Cudeck, 1993). For RMSEA, there is close fit for values $\leq .05$, adequate fit for values $\leq .08$, and unacceptable fit for values $> .10$ (Browne & Cudeck, 1993; Schumacker & Lomax, 2004).

Results of the CFA indicated that the indices did not meet the above criteria, $\chi^2(485, N = 220) = 1293.60, p < .001$; CFI = .84; SRMSR = .09, RMSEA = .09, suggesting a suboptimal fit of the model. Thus, Modification Indexes (MIs; also known as Lagrange Multiplier Test) were used to reformulate the model. An MI indicates how much chi-square is expected to decrease if the analyzed parameter is set free and the model re-estimated (Sorbom, 1989). In particular, we focused on MIs for estimated regression weights, which deal with the change in chi-square if the path between the two variables is restored. Seven items were found to be problematic, given their high MIs (i.e., MIs > 8.0 ; for a similar criterion, see Leiter & Durup, 1994), if regressed on a latent variable that the item was not supposed to load on. Based on their MIs, we dropped these items, as recommended by Loehlin (2004; see also Ping, 2004). The resulting 26-item measure provided improved fit indices: $\chi^2(289, n = 220) = 628.66, p < .001$; CFI = .91; SRMSR = .06; RMSEA = .068. Internal consistencies of the five factors using the remaining items were between .84 and .94.

Instrumental factors

Next, we examined the instrumental factors. Correlations among instrumental factors, with the exception of flexible work hours, geographic location, and job security, were very high. Thus, the highly correlated instrumental factors were subjected to an

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA; for a similar procedure, see [Cable & Judge, 1996](#)). Using principal components as the extraction method, a scree test suggested that two factors should be retained for further investigation.

To aid in the interpretation of these two components, Varimax rotation was performed. The rotated solution revealed the presence of a simple structure, with nearly all variables loading substantially on only one component. The component solution explained a total of 63.95% of the variance. Component 1, which included autonomy, challenging work, interesting work, recognition, competent co-workers, and competent supervisor, was labeled Working Conditions. Component 2, which included leadership, authority, opportunities for promotion, and income was labeled Power. The internal consistency of each component was $\alpha = .85$.

Based on the above analysis, we decided to control for five instrumental factors in this study: flexible work hours, geographic location, job security, power, and working conditions.

Descriptive statistics

Means, standard deviations, reliabilities, and correlations of the major study variables are included in [Table 1](#). Inspection of [Table 1](#) reveals that, with the exception of Dominance, bivariate correlations between all OPPS and organizational attraction variables were statistically significant.

Tests of hypotheses

In the past, researchers have often tested the similarity and complementary hypotheses using polynomial regression analysis. This is common when researchers are using a person-organization fit framework (e.g., [Edwards, 1991](#)). However, [Slaughter et al.'s \(2004\)](#) findings demonstrated that the OPPS are different from the FFM traits; these measures are noncommensurate. This precludes us from performing polynomial regression analysis. [Edwards \(1991\)](#) has argued against the use of noncommensurate measures in P-O fit, as well as the use of moderation analysis. Not all researchers share this point of view, however. [Ostroff \(2007\)](#), for example, argues that the use of noncommensurate dimensions is often theoretically necessary in complementary fit. The argument from this perspective is that people seek out environments with certain characteristics, but most of these characteristics are not measurable with scales designed to assess human features. [Kristof-Brown and Jansen \(2007\)](#) further argue that, although some scholars have operationalized complementary fit with direct or indirect measures of need fulfillment ([Cable & Edwards, 2004](#)), “[d]emonstrating that individual differences moderate the effects of organizational characteristics or vice versa is a common method used to demonstrate complementary fit” (p. 131). [Judge and Bretz \(1992\)](#) also used moderated regression analysis to test whether similarity between people’s value orientation and the jobs’ value content influenced their hypothetical job decisions.

We therefore tested our hypotheses using hierarchical multiple regression analysis. Our strategy, following [Timmerman \(2006\)](#), was to first control for the broad dimensions and their interactions with OPPS. At a later step, the narrow facets and their interactions with OPPS were included in the regression model. When the interaction terms were significant, we also tested whether the simple slopes of the regression lines at low ($-1 SD$) and high ($+1 SD$) levels of the moderator (i.e., self-rated personality traits) were significant, using [Bauer and Curran’s \(2005\)](#) procedure and formulas. This allows us to determine whether the forms of the interactions were better predicted by the similarity perspective or the complementary perspective. In addition, we graphed the interactions by following [Aiken and West’s \(1991\)](#) procedure. We plotted the

regression lines at $-1 SD$ and $+1 SD$ for each OPPS for the low and high self-rated personality groups (also at $-1 SD$ and $+1 SD$).⁴

The results of the regression analysis are presented in [Table 2](#). We entered the instrumental characteristics in the first step. In the second step, we entered the OPPS and the self-rated broad traits. We should note that, at this step, we also entered OPPS that we did not study (Thrift and Style) as control variables. In the third step, the interactions between these broad traits and the organizational characteristics were entered. Inspection of [Table 2](#) reveals that the R^2 change at this step failed to reach significance, $F(3, 203) = 1.87, ns$. Thus, these interactions did not significantly predict organizational attraction. In the fourth step, we entered the three self-rated narrow facets of personality.

Finally, in step 5, we entered the interactions between self-rated narrow Big Five facets and OPPS. As expected, these interactions accounted for significant incremental variance in attractiveness, $F(3, 197) = 3.97, p < .01, \Delta R^2 = .035$. Note that this was done after controlling for broad domains (step 2) and their interactions with OPPS (step 3), which supports the idea that narrow facets improves the prediction of attractiveness over and above broad domains.

[Table 2](#) shows that the Trust \times Trustworthiness interaction significantly predicted attraction; the interaction is also depicted in [Fig. 1](#). Tests of simple slopes and inspection of [Fig. 1](#) reveal that for those who were highly trusting there was no significant relation between Trustworthiness and organizational attractiveness, $b = -.01, SE = .08, t = -.14, ns$. Conversely, the slope of the relation between Trustworthiness and organizational attractiveness for those who were less trusting was positive and significant, $b = .34, SE = .09, t = 2.81, p < .01$. Thus, [Hypothesis 1b](#) was supported, and [Hypothesis 1a](#) was not supported.

We then focused on the Assertiveness \times Dominance interaction ([Hypotheses 2a and 2b](#)). [Table 2](#) shows that this interaction was a significant predictor of attraction. Simple slope tests revealed that for more assertive individuals, although the slope did not reach the conventional .05 level, there was a trend towards a significant negative relation between Dominance and attractiveness, $b = -.24, SE = .07, t = -1.94, p = .054$. For less assertive individuals, the relation between Dominance and attractiveness was not significant, $b = .06, SE = .08, t = .76, ns$. [Fig. 2](#) depicts these effects. This provides support for [Hypothesis 2b](#), and not for [Hypothesis 2a](#).

Following this, we turned our attention to the Imagination \times Innovativeness interaction. [Table 2](#) shows that this interaction is significant. The relation between Innovativeness and organizational attractiveness was positive for individuals who were low on Imagination, $b = .29; SE = .09, t = 2.35, p < .05$, and negative and non-significant for those who were high on Imagination, $b = -.02; SE = .07, t = -.20, ns$. [Fig. 3](#) shows a graphical depiction of these effects. Interestingly, but contrary to our expectations, the interaction was driven by people who were lower on imagination, whose attraction was more affected by the level of their assigned organization’s innovativeness than more imaginative people’s attraction was. Thus, neither [Hypothesis 3a](#) nor [Hypothesis 3b](#) was supported. However, the form of this interaction supports the complementary hypothesis. This is because the relationship

⁴ In testing our hypotheses, we kept the OPPS at the individual level of analysis, rather than aggregating these perceptions to the organizational level of analysis. One of the most important features of collective constructs is that their emergence depends on the interactions of organizational members. As [Morgeson and Hofmann \(1999\)](#) argued, “...interactions allow collective constructs to emerge and be maintained” (p. 257). Personal experiences with organizations and their recruitment activities tend to be the strongest influences in the formation of job seekers’ images of recruiting organizations ([Turban & Dougherty, 1992](#)). As the participants in this study formed their impressions on the basis of individual experiences, rather than by interacting with one another, it made more sense from a conceptual standpoint to retain individual scores of organizational personality perceptions.

Table 2
Test of the interaction effects between OPPS and self-rated personality factors.

Step	Variable entered	β	p	ΔR^2 step	p step	R^2 model	p model
1	Flexible work hours	-.095	.108	.251	.000		
	Geographic location	.098	.136				
	Job security	-.116	.109				
	Working conditions	.407	.000				
	Power	.080	.338				
2	Trustworthiness (T)	.009	.909	.119	.000		
	Innovativeness (I)	.105	.220				
	Dominance (D)	-.127	.091				
	Style	.278	.000				
	Thrift	.012	.860				
	Agreeableness (A)	.001	.987				
	Extraversion (E)	-.666	.102				
Openness (O)	-.082	.325					
3	A \times T	.077	.315	.017	.136		
	E \times D	.112	.131				
	O \times I	-.037	.636				
4	Trust (Tr)	.016	.825	.006	.571		
	Assertiveness (As)	-.089	.237				
	Imagination (Im)	.069	.408				
5	Tr \times T	-.210	.007	.035	.009	.428	.000
	As \times D	-.173	.015				
	Im \times I	-.181	.028				

Note. Parameter estimates are for the final step, not entry.

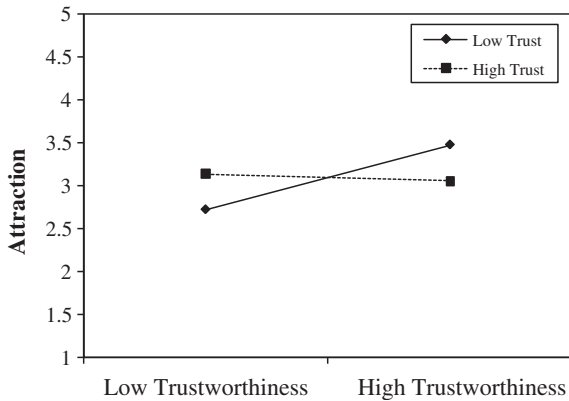


Fig. 1. Trustworthiness \times Trust interaction predicting attraction.

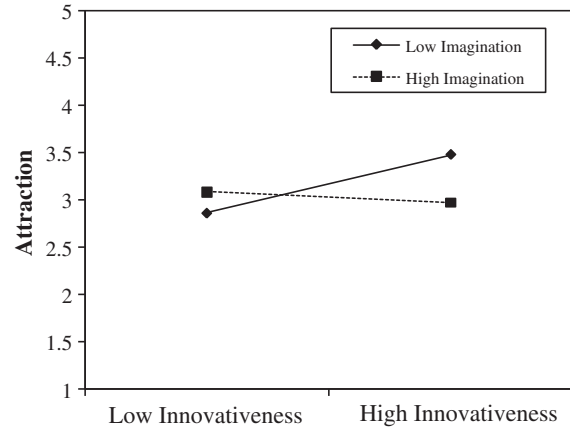


Fig. 3. Innovativeness \times Imagination interaction predicting attraction.

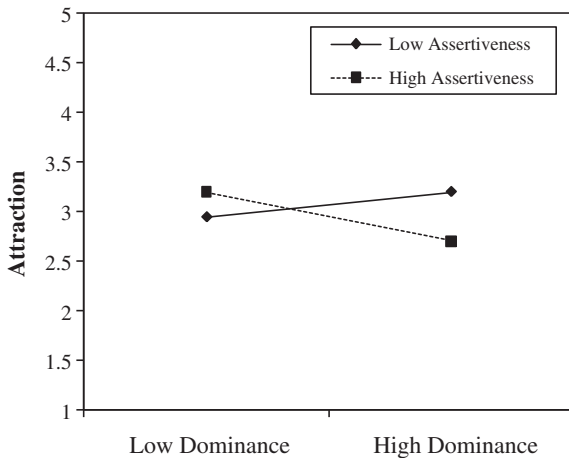


Fig. 2. Dominance \times Assertiveness interaction predicting attraction.

between Innovativeness and attraction is more positive for individuals low on Imagination (a personality trait similar to the organiza-

tional trait Innovativeness) than for those high on Imagination. We return to this issue in the Discussion section.

In summary, these results provide some support to the complementary perspective. Hypotheses 1b and 2b, based on complementarity, were supported. In addition, although the specific simple slopes did not support our theorizing in Hypothesis 3b, the form of the Imagination \times Innovativeness interaction also supported the complementary perspective. Conversely, none of the three predictions based on the similarity hypothesis (Hypotheses 1a, 2a, and 3a) was supported.

Discussion

The purpose of the present study was twofold. First, we sought to advance understanding of organizational attractiveness by modeling interactions between organizational characteristics and narrow personality facets. Second, we sought to gain insight into the relative importance of the similarity and complementary hypotheses in a recruitment context. Results highlight the importance of using narrow facets of the Big Five when considering interactions

between applicants' characteristics and those of their potential employers. Interestingly, as the results of the hierarchical regression analysis suggest (see Table 2), had we used only broad domains of the Big Five, the self-rated personality traits \times OPPS interactions would not have significantly predicted attraction. Conversely, narrow personality factors were useful as moderators of OPPS in predicting attraction, even after controlling for broad traits.

In our discussion below, we first present the theoretical implications in terms of the bandwidth-fidelity debate and the explanatory power of the similarity and complementary perspectives. Next, we discuss practical implications for recruiters. We then present the paper's limitations and strengths. We conclude by presenting some avenues for future research.

Theoretical contributions and implications

There are two theoretical contributions of the present investigation. The first is the importance of narrow personality traits over and above the broad domains in the prediction of attraction. In the organizational sciences, the debate about narrow vs. broad personality traits (labeled the bandwidth-fidelity debate) had centered thus far exclusively on the prediction of job performance. Proponents of using broad personality traits (Hogan & Roberts, 1996; Ones & Viswesvaran, 1996) have argued that these are preferred over narrow traits, because job performance is a multidimensional construct (necessitating a multidimensional predictor). Proponents of using narrow personality measures to predict job performance (Slaughter & Kausel, 2009; Tett & Christiansen, 2007) have argued that these are preferred for two reasons. First, broad scores obscure important information at the facet level (e.g., an Extraversion score at the 70th percentile may be achieved by markedly different patterns of scores on narrow facets of Extraversion). Second, predictive validity increases when the predictor and the criterion are thematically linked, and specificity bolsters this advantage by refining conceptual linkages. Empirical research has supported the use of narrow personality traits when predicting job performance. In their review, Rothstein and Goffin (2006) examined all 11 studies that had been conducted during the previous decade comparing narrow and broad personality factors in the prediction of job performance. In each of the 11 studies, narrow facets outperformed or added incremental validity over broad dimensions.

In the present investigation, we extended the bandwidth-fidelity discussion to the prediction of organizational attraction. In addition, we developed theoretical arguments whereby interactions between applicants' traits and organizations' traits should predict a larger proportion of variance in attraction to the degree that these traits are thematically linked. We argued that because self-rated broad traits are multidimensional and OPPS are unidimensional (Slaughter et al., 2004), greater compatibility should be achieved when using narrow self-rated personality traits. These results suggest that the predictive benefits of using narrow personality traits are not limited to the prediction of job performance; they can also be extended to the prediction of other criteria such as organizational attraction.

From a theoretical standpoint, this finding is also of interest because some authors have proposed that we should use *broader* traits than those included in the FFM. For example, Judge and colleagues (Erez & Judge, 2001; Judge et al., 2002; see also Judge, 2009) have argued for the use of core self evaluations (CSE), which underlies four interrelated traits: self-esteem, internal locus of control, generalized self-efficacy, and emotional stability. It is interesting that research focusing on this compound trait—which has centered around the prediction of job performance and career success—has been prospering in parallel with research focusing on

narrow facets. Despite the accumulation of studies supporting the usefulness of CSE in predicting behaviors, our results reinforce the idea that researchers should not abandon the study of the Big Five traits or their narrower facets (Slaughter & Kausel, 2009).

The second theoretical contribution of the study is the comparison of the explanatory power of the similarity and complementarity hypotheses in accounting for these interactions. Our findings clearly supported the predictions made on the basis of complementarity.

Supporting Hypothesis 1b, the relation between Trustworthiness and attraction was positive for individuals low on Trust, and was weaker (i.e., non-significant) for those high on Trust. These findings are consistent with previous research suggesting that individuals low on Trust are especially sensitive to untrustworthy people and untrustworthy environments (Evans et al., 2008). Supporting Hypothesis 2b, the relation between Dominance and attraction was negative for individuals high on Assertiveness, and was weaker (i.e., non-significant) for those who are relatively lower on Assertiveness. This is consistent with the idea of dominance complementarity (Tiedens & Fragale, 2003), which suggests that individuals high on assertiveness seek environments where they receive attention and can gain power more easily, and are repelled from environments that make encountering these situations less likely.

The simple slopes analyses did not support Hypothesis 3b: The relation between Innovativeness and attraction was positive for people low on Imagination, and non-significant for those who were high on Imagination. Despite the fact that these simple slopes did not confirm Hypothesis 3b, however, the form of the Imagination \times Innovativeness interaction is also consistent with the complementary perspective. This is because it suggests that a weakness or need of a job seeker would be compensated for by a strength of the potential employer (Kristof, 1996). One potential explanation for this finding is that perhaps people who are low on imagination anticipate getting bored in environments low on innovativeness. Therefore, they need an environment high on innovativeness to overcome that boredom. It is possible that people who are high on imagination believe that they can satisfy their interests even in a company that is low on innovativeness, and are thus indifferent to how innovative an organization is.

These results are theoretically interesting because there is scant research studying complementarity (Piasentin & Chapman, 2007; cf. Cable & Edwards, 2004). In organizational research, especially in the organizational attractiveness literature, the traditional view is that similarity leads to attraction through value congruence (e.g., Chatman, 1989). Our results suggest that complementarity is also important. They also suggest that the anticipation of need fulfillment, which is the principal mechanism used to explain complementarity (Edwards, 1991), deserves further attention from recruitment researchers.

It is noteworthy that although previous studies supported the supplementary perspective (e.g., Cable & Judge, 1996; Judge & Bretz, 1992), they examined personal values or culture preferences. These variables are more closely related to attitudes (Rokeach, 1968) than they are to personality. Consistent with our findings, Byrne (1971) reported that the similarity-attraction effect receives much stronger support for attitude similarity than for personality similarity. Thus, it is possible that similarity provides better explanatory power when the variables included in the model are cultural dimensions (on the organization side) and culture preference (on the person side), whereas complementarity provides better explanatory power when the focus is individual and organizational personality. Of course, this conclusion must be taken as a tentative one, given that the support comes from different studies. In future research on organizational attraction, it would be interesting to test the hypotheses of similarity on values and complementarity on personality within a single study.

Practical implications

Although the dependent variable in the present study was attraction from the applicant perspective, we believe that the findings reported herein have important implications for recruiters. Previous researchers have found strong main effects of OPPS on organizational attractiveness (e.g., Slaughter et al., 2004). Our results reveal that interactions between applicant personality traits and OPPS are also important and that they explain incremental variance beyond these main effects. Therefore, recruiters may realize a competitive advantage if they are able to tailor the organization's image to the specific individuals who are more likely to fit the organization's structure and culture. If recruiters are interested in hiring assertive individuals, our results suggest that, contrary to what the similarity hypothesis proposes, it is *not* fruitful to promote a recruitment image enhancing the organization's dominance. Rather, as suggested by our findings, which support the complementary hypothesis, recruiters should put their efforts in advertising the company as a place where employees are empowered and can make important decisions, and where they have the opportunity to demonstrate their competence and lead others.

These findings also have potential implications for employees. For example, our findings imply that assertive individuals may enjoy working at less dominant firms and dislike working at dominant firms. There is some evidence that this may be the case. For example, Tiedens et al. (2007) found that people tend to be more optimistic about work relationships when their partners possess characteristics complementary to their own. Future research should examine whether personality complementarity is associated with work outcomes beyond organizational attractiveness, such as job satisfaction.

Limitations and future research

Although this study sheds light on several important issues related to how job applicants are attracted to organizations, it has some important limitations that are worth noting. One limitation is the potential for common method variance, as all of the measures were obtained from the same source (i.e., job applicants). To offset this problem, however, we separated the measurement of the predictors and criterion variables by introducing a time lag (e.g., Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). It is also important to note that percept-percept inflation is an additive bias that is likely to create spurious main effects (Crompton & Wagner, 1994; Podsakoff & Organ, 1986). In contrast, we were primarily concerned with interactions.

A second limitation is that the correlations between self-rated personality broad traits and their correspondent narrow facets were strong (between .57 and .65). This may be a potential concern in our regression analysis, because including these highly correlated predictors in the same model can lead to multicollinearity (Cohen & Cohen, 1983). To address this concern, we also performed a regression analysis without including the broad factors and their interactions with OPPS. Results led to the same conclusions. Interactions between narrow facets and OPPS in the final step of our new model were significant, $F(3, 203) = 4.76, p < .01$, explaining 4.1% of the variance in organizational attractiveness. In addition, all of the interaction terms were significant (all $p < .05$). Thus, we conclude that the results in the original analysis are not an artifact of multicollinearity.

Third, although most of the participants indicated familiarity with their assigned organization, most of the companies were small and not well known. Therefore, our findings might not be generalizable to larger firms. Barber, Wesson, Roberson, and Taylor (1999) found that job search strategies varied depending on the size of the recruiting firm. More research is needed to investigate this issue.

Fourth, the criterion in our study was based on an attitudinal measure rather than applicants' acceptance of job offers. It will be important for future researchers to understand how the interaction of applicant and organizational traits influences actual applicant behaviors, such as job choice and the acceptance of offers for personal interviews and site visits. Finally, our theorizing included only three organizational traits. As we stated in the introduction, the two remaining traits, Thrift and Style, are not included as facets of the FFM. We are unaware of any measure assessing these (or equivalent) traits among people. For this reason, compatibility between human and organization traits could not have been achieved for these factors. Because our general theoretical argument was that prediction is enhanced to the extent that individual and organizational traits are more compatible, we chose not to include Thrift and Style in the present investigation.

Future research should further examine between-sample differences in factor structure for the measure created by Slaughter et al. (2004). In the present study, acceptable fit indices were obtained only after slightly modifying the initial model. One potential explanation of the differences between the findings of the studies conducted by Slaughter et al. and the present study is that Slaughter et al. used undergraduate students who were not necessarily job seekers. Thus, it is possible that these inexperienced students were inferring traits about organizations based on less information, or different information, compared to the present investigation's job seekers. Similarly, as one reviewer noted, there might be OPPS facets when the measure is completed by job applicants who have even more experience. This is consistent with the idea that people who are more familiar with individuals can describe them in more fine-grained terms (John et al., 1991). As this scale is a potentially useful measure for assessing perceptions of organizations' symbolic characteristics, we encourage researchers to further investigate these issues.

A second issue meriting research attention is to examine how organization personality perceptions and organizational attraction evolve over time. Job search is a longitudinal process, and these perceptions are likely to change as job seekers have more information (Rynes, Bretz, & Gerhart, 1991). For example, it would be interesting to study how personality inferences change in response to learning new information about a firm, and whether this is different when the new information confirms or disconfirms previous beliefs.

Conclusions

These results contribute to existing research on organizational attractiveness, in that they provide evidence of the importance of considering narrow facets of job applicants' personality when considering their fit with the organization. In addition, they suggest that organizations adopting a recruitment strategy based on similarity may not succeed in attracting job seekers. In contrast, these results underscore the importance of complementarity. This implies that organizations should carefully develop recruitment practices that emphasize the organization's features that will meet their preferred candidates' needs. By doing so, organizations and recruiters should be able to target job seekers who will be more likely to accept employment offers, making for a more efficient and effective recruitment process.

Acknowledgments

We thank Stephen Gilliland and Barry Goldman for their helpful comments on previous drafts. We are also grateful to Mike Christian and Joel Levin for providing valuable suggestions on analyses.

Appendix A

Stimulus companies by major.

<i>Accounting</i>	<i>Entrepreneurship</i>
Heinfeld, Meech & Co., P.C.	Hillstone Restaurant Group
Arizona Auditor General	Vanguard
KPMG	General Mills
<i>Business Economics</i>	<i>Finance</i>
E&J Gallo Winery	Edwards, Largay, Mihaylo & Co., PLC
Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. (FDIC)	Balboa Capital Corporation
Hillstone Restaurant Group	Beneficial Financial Group
<i>Business Management</i>	<i>Management Information Systems</i>
E&J Gallo Winery	Raytheon Company
GEICO	FactSet Research Systems
General Mills	Intel Corporation
<i>Economics</i>	<i>Marketing</i>
First Investors Corporation	Cintas Corporation
JPMorgan Chase	General Mills
Raytheon Company	Wells Fargo Bank
	<i>Operation Management</i>
	FACS Group
	Enterprise Rent-a-Car
	KB Home Tucson

References

- Aaker, J. L. (1997). Dimensions of brand personality. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 34, 347–356.
- Aiken, L. S., & West, S. G. (1991). *Multiple regression: Testing and interpreting interactions*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Aldrich, H. E., & Pfeffer, J. (1976). *Environments of organizations*. *Annual Review of Sociology* (Vol. 2). Palo Alto, CA: Annual Reviews, Inc..
- Ames, D. R. (2008). In search of the right touch: Interpersonal assertiveness in organizational life. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 17, 381–385.
- Ashton, M. C. (1998). Personality and job performance. The importance of narrow traits. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 19, 289–303.
- Barber, A. E., Wesson, M. J., Roberson, Q. M., & Taylor, M. S. (1999). A tale of two job markets: Organizational size and its effects on hiring practices and job search behavior. *Personnel Psychology*, 52, 841–867.
- Bauer, D. J., & Curran, P. J. (2005). Probing interactions in fixed and multilevel regression: Inferential and graphical techniques. *Multivariate Behavioral Research*, 40, 373–400.
- Bentler, P. M. (1990). Comparative fit indexes in structural models. *Psychological Bulletin*, 107, 238–246.
- Brockner, J. (1979). Self-esteem, self-consciousness, and task performance. Replications, extensions, and possible explanations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 37, 447–461.
- Browne, M. W., & Cudeck, R. (1993). Alternative ways of assessing model fit. In K. A. Bollen & J. S. Long (Eds.), *Testing structural equation models* (pp. 136–162). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Byrne, D. (1971). *The attraction paradigm*. New York: Academic Press.
- Byrne, D. (1997). An overview (and under-view) of research and theory within the attraction paradigm. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 14, 417–431.
- Cable, D. M., & DeRue, S. (2002). The convergent and discriminant validity of subjective fit perceptions. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 87, 875–884.
- Cable, D. M., & Edwards, J. R. (2004). Complementary and supplementary fit: A theoretical and empirical integration. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 89, 822–834.
- Cable, D. M., & Judge, T. A. (1996). Person-organization fit, job choice decisions, and organizational entry. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 67, 294–311.
- Carrillo, J. M., Rojo, N., Sanchez-Bernardos, M. L., & Avia, M. D. (2001). Openness to experience and depression. *European Journal of Psychological Assessment*, 17, 130–136.
- Chapman, D. S., Uggerslev, K. L., Carroll, S. A., Piasentin, K. A., & Jones, D. A. (2005). Applicant attraction to organizations and job choice. A meta-analytic review of the correlates of recruiting outcomes. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 90, 928–944.
- Chatman, J. (1989). Improving interactional organizational research: A model of person-organization fit. *Academy of Management Review*, 14, 333–349.
- Cohen, J., & Cohen, P. (1983). *Applied multiple regression/correlation analysis for the behavioral sciences* (2nd ed.). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Combs, J. G., Ketchen, D. J., Jr., Hall, A. T., & Liu, Y. (2006). Do high performance work practices matter? A meta-analysis of their effects on organizational performance. *Personnel Psychology*, 59, 501–528.
- Costa, P. T., & McCrae, R. R. (1988). From catalog to classification: Murray's needs and the five-factor model. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 55, 258–265.
- Costa, P. T., & McCrae, R. R. (1992). *NEO PI-R Professional Manual*. Odessa, FL: Psychological Assessment Resources.
- Couch, L. L., & Jones, W. H. (1997). Measuring levels of trust. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 31, 319–336.
- Crampton, S., & Wagner, J. (1994). Percept–percept inflation in microorganizational research: An investigation of prevalence and effect. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 79, 67–76.
- Deluga, R. J. (1988). The politics of leadership: The relationship between task–people leadership and subordinate influence. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 9, 359–366.
- Digman, J. M. (1990). Personality structure: Emergence of the five-factor model. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 41, 417–444.
- Dryer, D. C., & Horowitz, L. M. (1997). When do opposites attract? Interpersonal complementarity versus similarity. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 72, 592–603.
- Dudley, N. M., Orvis, K. A., Lebiecki, J. E., & Cortina, J. M. (2006). A meta-analytic investigation of conscientiousness in the prediction of job performance. Examining the intercorrelations and the incremental validity of narrow traits. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 91, 40–57.
- Edwards, J. R. (1991). Person-job fit: A conceptual integration, literature review, and methodological critique. In C. L. Cooper & I. T. Robertson (Eds.), *International review of industrial and organizational psychology* (vol. 6, pp. 283–357). New York: Wiley.
- Edwards, J. R., & Shipp, A. J. (2007). The relationship between person-environment fit and outcomes: An integrative theoretical framework. In C. Ostroff & T. A. Judge (Eds.), *Perspectives on organizational fit* (pp. 209–258). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Ehrhart, K. H., & Ziegert, J. C. (2005). Why are individuals attracted to organizations? *Journal of Management*, 31, 901–919.
- Endler, N., & Magnusson, D. (1976). Toward an interactional psychology of personality. *Psychological Bulletin*, 83, 956–974.
- Erez, A., & Judge, T. A. (2001). Relationship of core self-evaluations to goal setting, motivation, and performance. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 86, 1270–1279.
- Evans, A. M., & Revelle, W. (2008). Survey and behavioral measurements of interpersonal trust. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 42, 1585–1593.
- Garcia, L. F., Aluja, A., Garcia, O., & Cuevas, L. (2005). Is openness to experience an independent personality dimension? Convergent and discriminant validity of the openness domain and its NEO-PI-R facets. *Journal of Individual Differences*, 26, 132–138.
- Goldberg, L. R. (1999). A broad-bandwidth, public domain, personality inventory measuring the lower-level facets of several five-factor models. In I. Mervielde, I. Deary, F. De Fruyt, & F. Ostendorf (Eds.), *Personality psychology in Europe* (Vol. 7, pp. 7–28). Tilburg, The Netherlands: Tilburg University Press.
- Griffin, B., & Hesketh, B. (2004). Why openness to experience is not a good predictor of job performance. *International Journal of Selection and Assessment*, 12, 243–251.
- Harrison, D. A. (2007). Pitching fits in applied psychological research: Making fit methods fit theory. In C. Ostroff & T. Judge (Eds.), *Perspectives on fit in organizations* (pp. 389–416). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Henderson, A., & Fredrickson, J. (1996). Information processing demands as a determinant of CEO compensation. *Academy of Management Journal*, 39, 575–606.
- Highhouse, S., Lievens, F., & Sinar, E. F. (2003). Measuring attraction to organizations. *Educational & Psychological Measurement*, 63, 986–1001.
- Highhouse, S., Thornbury, E. E., & Little, I. S. (2007). Social-identity functions of attraction to organizations. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 103, 134–146.
- Hogan, R. (2006). *Personality and the fate of organizations*. New York: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Hogan, R., & Roberts, B. W. (1996). Issues and non-issues in the fidelity-bandwidth trade-off. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 17, 627–637.
- Hogan, J., & Shelton, D. (1998). A socioanalytic perspective on job performance. *Human Performance*, 11(2–3), 129–144.
- Hu, L., & Bentler, P. M. (1999). Cutoff criteria for fit indexes in covariance structure analysis: Conventional criteria versus new alternatives. *Structural Equation Modeling*, 6, 1–55.
- Jackson, D. N. (1984). *Personality research form manual* (3rd ed.). Port Huron, MI: Research Psychologists Press.
- John, O. P., Hampson, S. E., & Goldberg, L. R. (1991). Is there a basic level of personality description? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 60, 348–361.
- Judge, T. A. (2009). Core self-evaluations and work success. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 18, 58–62.
- Judge, T. A., & Bretz, R. D. (1992). Effects of work values on job choice decisions. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 77, 261–271.
- Judge, T. A., & Cable, D. M. (1997). Applicant personality, organizational culture, and organization attraction. *Personnel Psychology*, 50, 359–395.

- Judge, T. A., Erez, A., Bono, J. E., & Thoresen, C. J. (2002). Are measures of self-esteem, neuroticism, locus of control, and generalized self-efficacy indicators of a common core construct? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 83, 693–710.
- Judge, T. A., & Kristof-Brown, A. (2004). Personality, interactional psychology, and person-organization fit. In B. Schneider & D. B. Smith (Eds.), *Personality and organizations* (pp. 97–109). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Katz, D. (1960). The functional approach to the study of attitudes. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 24, 163–204.
- Kristof, A. L. (1996). Person-organization fit: An integrative review of its conceptualizations, measurement, and implications. *Personnel Psychology*, 49, 1–49.
- Kristof-Brown, A. L., & Jansen, K. J. (2007). Issues of person-organization fit. In C. Ostroff & T. Judge (Eds.), *Perspectives on organizational fit* (pp. 123–153). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Larson, L. M., & Borgen, F. H. (2002). Convergence of vocational interests and personality: Examples in an adolescent gifted sample. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 60, 91–112.
- Leiter, M. P., & Durup, J. (1994). The discriminant validity of burnout and depression: A confirmatory factor analytic study. *Anxiety, Stress & Coping*, 7, 357–373.
- Lievens, F. (2007). Employer branding in the Belgian Army: The importance of instrumental and symbolic beliefs for potential applicants, actual applicants, and military employees. *Human Resource Management*, 46, 51–69.
- Lievens, F., Decaestecker, C., Coetsier, P., & Geirnaert, J. (2001). Organizational attractiveness for prospective applicants: A person-organization fit perspective. *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, 50, 30–51.
- Lievens, F., & Highhouse, S. (2003). The relation of instrumental and symbolic attributes to a company's attractiveness as an employer. *Personnel Psychology*, 56, 75–102.
- Lievens, F., van Hove, G., & Schreurs, B. (2005). Examining the relationship between employer knowledge dimensions and organizational attractiveness: An application in a military context. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 78, 533–572.
- Locander, W. B., & Spivey, W. A. (1978). A functional approach to attitude measurement. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 15, 576–587.
- Loehlin, J. C. (2004). *Latent variable models: An introduction to factors, path, and structural equation analysis* (4th ed.). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Mathieu, J. E., Gilson, L. L., & Ruddy, T. R. (2006). Empowerment and team effectiveness: An empirical test of an integrated model. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 91, 97–108.
- Mayer, R. C., Davis, J. H., & Schoorman, F. D. (1995). An integrative model of organizational trust. *Academy of Management Review*, 20, 709–734.
- Medsker, G. J., Williams, L. J., & Holahan, P. J. (1994). A review of current practices for evaluating causal models in organizational behavior and human resources management research. *Journal of Management*, 20, 439–464.
- Montoya, R. M., & Horton, R. S. (2004). On the importance of cognitive evaluation as a determinant of interpersonal attraction. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 86, 696–712.
- Morgeson, F. P., & Hofmann, D. A. (1999). The structure and function of collective constructs: Implications for multilevel research and theory development. *Academy of Management Review*, 24, 249–265.
- Ones, D. S., & Viswesvaran, C. (1996). Bandwidth-fidelity dilemma in personality measurement for personnel selection. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 17, 609–626.
- Ostroff, C. (2007). General methodological and design issues. In C. Ostroff & T. A. Judge (Eds.), *Perspectives on organizational fit* (pp. 377–387). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Ostroff, C., & Schulte, M. (2007). Multiple perspectives of fit across levels of analysis. In C. Ostroff & T. Judge (Eds.), *Perspectives on organizational fit* (pp. 3–69). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Pearsall, M. J., & Ellis, A. P. J. (2006). The effects of critical team member assertiveness on team performance and satisfaction. *Journal of Management*, 32, 575–594.
- Pfeffer, J. (1994). *Competitive advantage through people: Unleashing the power of the work force*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.
- Piasentin, K. A., & Chapman, D. S. (2007). Perceived similarity and complementarity as predictors of subjective person-organization fit. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 80, 341–354.
- Ping, R. A. (2004). Testing latent variable models with survey data (2nd ed.) <<http://home.att.net/~rpingjr/lv1/toc1.htm>>.
- Podsakoff, P. M., MacKenzie, S. M., Lee, J., & Podsakoff, N. P. (2003). Common method variance in behavioral research: A critical review of the literature and recommended remedies. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 88, 879–903.
- Podsakoff, P. M., & Organ, D. W. (1986). Self-reports in organizational research: Problems and prospects. *Journal of Management*, 12, 69–82.
- Roccas, S., Sagiv, L., Schwartz, S. H., & Knafo, A. (2002). The big five personality factors and personal values. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 28, 789–801.
- Rokeach, M. (1968). *Beliefs, Attitudes, and Values*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Rothstein, M. G., & Goffin, R. D. (2006). The use of personality measures in personnel selection: What does current research support? *Human Resource Management Review*, 16, 155–180.
- Rotter, J. B. (1967). A new scale for the measurement of interpersonal trust. *Journal of Personality*, 35, 651–665.
- Rynes, S. L., Bretz, R. D., & Gerhart, B. (1991). The importance of recruitment in job choice: A different way of looking. *Personnel Psychology*, 44, 487–521.
- Rynes, S. L., & Cable, D. M. (2003). Recruitment research in the twenty-first century. In W. C. Borman, D. R. Ilgen, & R. J. Klimoski (Eds.), *Handbook of psychology. Industrial and organizational psychology* (Vol. 12, pp. 55–66). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.
- Schmitt, N. (2008). The interaction of neuroticism and gender and its impact on self-efficacy and performance. *Human Performance*, 21, 49–61.
- Schredl, M., & Erlacher, D. (2004). Lucid dreaming frequency and personality. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 37, 1463–1473.
- Schreurs, B., Druart, C., Proost, K., & De Witte, K. (2009). Symbolic attributes and organizational attractiveness: The moderating effects of applicant personality. *International Journal of Selection and Assessment*, 17, 35–46.
- Schumacker, R. E., & Lomax, R. G. (2004). *A beginner's guide to structural equation modeling* (2nd ed.). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Slaughter, J. E., & Greguras, G. J. (2009). Initial attraction to organizations: The influence of trait inferences. *International Journal of Selection and Assessment*, 17, 1–18.
- Slaughter, J. E., & Kausel, E. E. (2009). The neurotic employee: Theoretical analysis of the influence of narrow facets of neuroticism on cognitive, social, and behavioral processes relevant to job performance. In J. Martocchio & H. Liao (Eds.), *Research in personnel and human resources management* (Vol. 28, pp. 265–341). Bingley, UK: Emerald Insight.
- Slaughter, J. E., Richard, E. M., & Martin, J. H. (2006). Comparing the efficacy of direct estimates and policy capturing weights for predicting job choice. *Organizational Research Methods*, 9, 285–314.
- Slaughter, J. E., Zickar, M. J., Highhouse, S., & Mohr, D. C. (2004). Personality trait inferences about organizations: Development of a measure and assessment of construct validity. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 89, 85–103.
- Sorbom, D. (1989). Model modification. *Psychometrika*, 54, 371–384.
- Staw, B. M., & Ross, J. (1978). Commitment to a policy decision: A multitheoretical perspective. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 23, 40–64.
- Steiger, J. H. (1990). Structural model evaluation and modification: An interval estimation approach. *Multivariate Behavioral Research*, 25, 173–180.
- Tett, R. P., & Christiansen, N. D. (2007). Personality tests at the crossroads: A response to Morgeson, Campion, Dipboye, Hollenbeck, Murphy, & Schmitt. *Personnel Psychology*, 60, 967–993.
- Tiedens, L. Z., & Fragale, A. R. (2003). Power moves: Complementarity in dominant and submissive nonverbal behavior. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 84, 558–568.
- Tiedens, L. Z., Unzueta, M. M., & Young, M. J. (2007). An unconscious desire for hierarchy? The motivated perception of dominance complementarity in task partners. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 93, 402–414.
- Timmerman, T. A. (2006). Predicting turnover with broad and narrow personality traits. *International Journal of Selection and Assessment*, 14, 392–399.
- Turban, D. B., & Dougherty, T. W. (1992). Influences of campus recruiting on applicant attraction to firms. *Academy of Management Journal*, 35, 739–765.
- Turban, D. B., & Keon, T. L. (1993). Organizational attractiveness: An interactionist perspective. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 78, 184–193.
- Vohs, K. D., Baumeister, R. F., & Chin, J. (2007). Feeling duped: Emotional, motivational, and cognitive aspects of being exploited by others. *Review of General Psychology*, 11, 127–141.
- Watson, D. C. (2001). Procrastination and the five-factor model: A facet level analysis. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 30, 149–158.
- Widiger, T. A., Trull, T. J., Clarkin, J. E., Sanderson, C., & Costa, P. T. Jr., (1994). A description of the DSM-III-R and DSM-IV personality disorders with the five-factor model of personality. In T. Costa, Jr. & T. A. Widiger (Eds.), *Personality disorders and the five-factor model of personality* (pp. 41–56). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Winch, R. F., Kstanes, T., & Kstanes, V. (1954). The theory of complementary needs in mate selection: An analytic and descriptive study. *American Sociological Review*, 19, 241–249.
- Wolfenstein, M., & Trull, T. J. (1997). Depression and openness to experience. *Journal of Personality Assessment*, 69, 614–632.
- Yamagishi, T., Kanazawa, S., Mashima, R., & Terai, S. (2005). Separating trust from cooperation in a dynamic relationship. *Rationality and Society*, 17, 275–308.