

Poster Title

Organizational perceptions of I-O interventions:
Construction of a diagnostic measure

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Abstract

Despite the fact that Industrial-Organizational (I-O) psychology consultants provide interventions meant to benefit companies, many organizations remain skeptical about the effectiveness of consultants and have concerns about I-O psychologists, their methods, and the results they promise. This skepticism may manifest through resistance towards interventions, resulting in strained client-consultant relationships and a decreased interest in future use of I-O consultant services. Understanding and evading these negative outcomes is highly relevant to the interests of I-O psychology as a whole, but research has yet to quantitatively examine factors contributing to an organization's decision to pursue I-O consultation. The purpose of the current study is to develop a diagnostic tool to understand perceptions that organizations may have about I-O consultants and to link these to a company's likeliness to purchase I-O consulting services. The proposed measure is made up of seven individual facets regarding both organizational and consultant entities: readiness for change, duration of project, cost/benefit, depth of intervention, internal/external implementation, faith in I-O expertise, and attitudes towards consultants. Items will be refined through pilot testing, and the measure structure will be analyzed through the use of factor analytic methods. Unique samples will be used to examine the factor structure of the measurement through both exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis. We hypothesize that the measure will exhibit a seven-factor structure, entailing each dimension as its own factor. We also hypothesize that a two-factor structure will also fit the measure data, including one for organizational factors and one for consultant factors. Additionally, we hypothesize that scores on the measure will positively predict the likelihood to purchase I-O consulting services. Utilization of this measure should enable consultants to quantitatively locate and target specific insecurities and skepticism contributing to organizational resistance toward I-O interventions, potentially increasing the effectiveness of these interventions and boosting consumer confidence in I-O psychologists.

Summary

The primary purpose of the current study is to create a diagnostic tool that consultants can use to evaluate perceptions that organizations have about consultants and the intervention process. A plethora of factors contribute to the decision to purchase I-O consultation services, yet these factors remain sparingly studied in I-O literature and are mostly presented through case studies. As a foundation for both the proposed measure and future research directions, this study posits that the likeliness to purchase is related to an employee's Organizational Perceptions, which consists of seven facets of both the organization and consultants.

The first four facets of Organizational Perceptions regard the organization. The first, *Readiness for Change*, indicates the employee's opinion on how the organization accepts and implements changes. The second, *Project Duration*, indicates the expected duration for interventions. *Cost/Benefit* determines whether the participant believes the benefits of a consultant justify the cost. *Intervention Depth* measures whether the employee perceives the organization as needing work at just a surface-level or with deeper issues, such as perceptions, feelings, and value-laden issues.

The following three facets are specific to consultants. *Internal vs. External Implementation* indicates whether the participant thinks their organization should implement interventions themselves or rely on external consultants. *Faith in I-O Expertise* measures the employee's current perceptions of the work done by I-O consultants. The final facet, *Attitudes Towards Consultants*, measures whether the participant thinks their organization could benefit from an I-O psychologist.

We hypothesize that the measure will exhibit a two-factor structure, including perceptions of organization and consultants. Additionally, a seven-factor structure may also fit the measure data, retaining each of the individual facets as its own unique factor.

Method

To test the hypothesis that each of these facets of organizational perceptions are statistically unique and contribute to a company's likeliness to purchase I-O consulting services, an online survey will be administered through Qualtrics. Participants will be recruited through MTurk, and will consist of US employees possessing some level of purchasing power within their organization. After being presented a brief definition of I-O psychologists and a description of the work they perform, participants will respond to randomized items from the seven aforementioned facets in order to determine Organizational Perceptions of I-O consultations. Likelihood to Purchase will then be measured with three items, and will gauge how likely each participant thinks the organization would be to purchase consulting services from an I-O psychologist. All items are measured on a 5-point Likert scale. Finally, demographic information will be collected. Specifically, this study is interested in the respondent's position within the organization, the industry their organization belongs to, and if they are aware of their organization purchasing consulting services before.

Since item generation has already been completed, a pilot sample will be obtained in order to perform an exploratory factor analysis on the data. The results will inform the dimensionality of the measure and provide evidence for item refinement or deletion. A second sample will be collected to perform a confirmatory factor analysis, testing model fit to ensure the measures factor structure properly explains the data. Finally, initial validation efforts will include regressing the likelihood of purchasing an I-O intervention on the individual facets of the perceptions measure. The hypothesized result is that scores on the measure will positively predict likelihood to purchase.

Key References

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