

## ASSESSMENT OF JOB EMBEDDEDNESS STRATEGIES: A THEORETICAL ANALYSIS

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### Abstract

*Organisations drive to eradicate poor employees' performance and make necessary efforts to advance the organizational productivity. These have been the paramount aim of most organisational leaders, in an attempt to satisfy the organisational stakeholders. This critical desire by leaders of corporations has fuelled several investigations by management scholars on the use of job embeddedness strategies as a managerial instrument for improving organisational performance in order to assist organisations to achieve the shareholders' goals. Organisations may employ different managerial strategies, yet all the organisations have a shared common goal of operational effectiveness and maximum organisational performance. This study made use of qualitative research method with substantial dependence on secondary sources of data. This research analysed the institutional theory, social exchange theory and the social identity theory. The textual analysis of all concerned areas of this investigation illuminated the conclusion. On the strength of the conclusion of the investigation, this study recommend that job embeddedness strategies can be used by organisations as one of the managerial instruments to improve organisational performance.*

**Keywords:** assessment, organizations, job embeddedness, strategies, theoretical analysis.

### Introduction

The current human resource management practices are embracing job embeddedness, which is perceived as how well an employee's work matches their beliefs, interests, and talents of the organisation Oforuku, (2023). Furthermore, De Sitter, De Grip, and Den Ouden (2018) avowed that job embeddedness constitutes the complex combination of elements that connect an individual employee to their job, going beyond job satisfaction. Management scholars in this contemporary area of job embeddedness found three essential dimensions: linkages, which include formal and informal contacts with co-workers; fit, which indicates alignment between person and workplace demands; and sacrifice, which indicates the perceived cost of quitting the position (De Sitter, et.al. 2018; Oforuku, 2023).

Additionally, Mitchell, Holtom, Lee, Sablynski, and Carsten (2021) suggested a six-dimensional job embeddedness model. Their model includes organizational and community linkages and fit. They also included organization and community sacrifice components. This broader approach highlighted the complex relationship between work and home life and the importance of community links in employee attachment. Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, and Johnson (2019) used Person-Job Fit Theory to propose that fit between individual traits and job demands leads to job satisfaction and lower turnover. They proposed job embedment, improved by individualized job designing, could improve fit and employee well-being. Working on employee engagement, Harter, Schmidt, Hayes, and Xanthopoulos (2010) stressed meaningful and valued work experiences.

Their idea was to embed work with personal values and interests to create engaging and motivating experiences. Tariq, Elkwas, and Hassan (2020) studied cultural values and job embedment, highlighting the need to understand how people from different cultures perceive and experience job embedment. They found that cultural values affect the relative relevance of work embedment features, emphasizing the necessity for culturally sensitive implementation, especially in international businesses. Van den Heuvel, De Meneghi, and De Sitter (2020) examined how job embedment changes over time and in reaction to organizational events. Their view stressed the significance of continual management to maintain employment embedment in a changing environment.

Job embeddedness is a term used to describe, in the context of human resource management, the complex relationships that people form with their jobs (De Sitter et al., 2013; Harter et al., 2010; Tariq et al., 2020; Oforuku, 2023). Upon acknowledging the three essential components of job embeddedness - links, fit, and sacrifice to the organizations need to convert this understanding into practical approaches for fostering and enhancing job embeddedness. Building strong relationships at work is a fundamental tactic. By organizing frequent forums, team-building exercises, and cross-functional projects to promote connections and interactions among co-workers, organizations can invest in team building and collaboration (Harter et al., 2010). Informal interactions are just as important; creating areas for relaxed chats and get-togethers foster employee community and camaraderie (De Sitter et al., 2013).

Strengthening community ties and addressing sacrifices are essential components of improving job embeddedness. Organizations need to adjust strategies to identify cultural differences and modify interventions to align with different needs and values, given the diverse populations they serve (Tariq et al., 2020). In order to create a culture where employees feel comfortable sharing concerns and offering suggestions, open communication and feedback mechanisms are crucial (Harter et al., 2010). This, in turn, fosters trust and engagement. It is imperative for organizations to engage in ongoing monitoring and adaptation. This involves regularly evaluating the efficacy of implemented strategies and making necessary adjustments in response to evolving needs and feedback (Van den Heuvel et al., 2020).

The problem is that job embeddedness has two sides, making it a double-edged sword. Strong ties to an organization can unintentionally result in restricted mobility, even though they improve stability and commitment. Workers who are very attached to their jobs, accustomed to their routines, and have strong ties to their communities and co-workers may be resistant to change and new opportunities, which can impede their ability to advance both personally and professionally (De Grip et al., 2015). In addition to having an adverse effect on people by limiting their exposure to novel challenges, this lack of mobility creates difficulties for businesses trying to adjust to changing circumstances.

The possibility of strongly embedded groups stifling innovation presents another difficulty. According to Van den Heuvel et al (2020), homogeneous cultures have the potential to unintentionally promote groupthink and obstruct the integration of varied viewpoints thereby impeding the capacity of the organization to innovate and prosper in a dynamic environment. Understanding these possible negative effects emphasizes the necessity of a

balanced approach to job embeddedness. Strong ties, a good fit, and a feeling of community are still important, but it's also critical to support ongoing learning and growth. It is crucial to give staff members the chance to learn new skills and consider a variety of career options both inside and outside the company (Mick et al. (2013).

Furthermore, it becomes essential to foster an environment of candid criticism and communication. A healthier and more flexible work environment is promoted by providing a safe space where staff members can voice concerns, refute ideas, and contribute a variety of viewpoints (Harter et al., 2010). Building a flexible and responsive workforce is something that organizations should invest in to address the issue of limited mobility and encourage adaptability. Agility and adaptability to change can be fostered by putting in place procedures and policies that promote work-life balance, provide remote work opportunities, and place a high value on ongoing education (Tariq et al., 2020). This study aims to address these limitations by assessing the job embeddedness strategic, the influence links, fit and sacrifice exert on organisations.

### **Empirical Review**

Ofobruku (2023) investigated job embeddedness and organizational citizenship behaviour in multinational enterprises in Nigeria. The scholar argued that researchers are still on the cross road on how best to achieve organizational citizenship behaviour. The major element of job embeddedness in organizations, have been speculated in some clime that it may often lead to the culture of organizational citizenship behaviour. It is in this regard, that the research examined job embeddedness and organizational citizenship behaviour in selected multinational enterprises in Nigeria.

The study made use of the survey research design. Data were collected from selecting the staff of selected multinational firms in Nigeria. Findings of the investigation revealed that there is a positive and significant relationship between Job embeddedness and organizational citizenship behaviour in multinational enterprises in Nigeria. The research further revealed that job embeddedness enhances organizational citizenship behaviour, which in turn leads to effective performance of organizations. This study recommended that business institutions should strategically reposition their human resource policy in their organizations to firmly potent instrument of enculturation of the attitudes of job embeddedness.

Thakur and Bhatnagar's (2017) analysis delves into the potentials job embeddedness and the relationship between work-life balance practices, providing a thorough examination of what they refer to as "accessibility work life balance practices (AWLBP), current utilisation work life balance practices (CWLBP) and perceived future use work life balance practices (FWLBP) of these practices, as well as employees' intentions to stay (ITS)" of this concept. The literature study looked at how high levels of work embeddedness could foster turnover intention. The authors stressed the importance of management of organisation to know proactive steps to boost job embeddedness by providing sound work life balance practices and by resolving perceived indication of perceived poor embeddedness to prevent increase in voluntary turnover.

The studies of Allen, Johnson, Kiburz, and Shockley, (2013), Thakur, &Bhatnagar (2017), add to the literature by offering nuanced viewpoints on work embeddedness. Allen, Johnson, Kiburz, and Shockley's emphasis on the potential negative implications broadens our awareness of the dark side of embeddedness, whereas Thakur, &Bhatnagar, exploration of the relationship between embeddedness and employee voice emphasizes the importance of context-specific research. Together, these evaluations advocate for more research into the moderating elements and contextual details that influence the impact of work embeddedness on employee outcomes.

Lee and Allen (2016) examined the idea of job embeddedness in the framework of a changing work environment in their literature study. They looked at how embeddedness shows up in dynamic settings like the gig economy and remote work. The literature assessment shed light on how well embeddedness theory fits in with new work trends and underlined the need for more studies that take into account how work is changing and how these changes affect employees' sense of purpose and connection to their jobs. According to Lee and Allen's study, a research agenda that tackles the ways in which job embeddedness functions in these evolving work environments is necessary. This emphasizes the significance of comprehending the distinct opportunities and problems that come with modern work arrangements.

A meta-analysis was carried out in Capaldo, (2014) in order to evaluate quantitatively the links between different aspects of embeddedness and outcomes like performance. A thorough summary of the body of research was given by the meta-analysis, which also shed light on the nature and direction of these connections. The study did, however, also highlight the necessity of more investigation into potential moderators and mediators that could affect the observed relationships. Capaldo, (2014), sought to improve our understanding of the intricacies involved in these processes by urging more detailed investigations into the variables that might influence or explain the links between embeddedness and outcomes. Their research offered a thorough model that took into account environmental and individual factors affecting the two edges of embeddedness. The authors emphasized the significance of comprehending the nuances of embeddedness and its consequences and asked for empirical study to evaluate and validate the suggested model.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The study utilized mainly the qualitative research design. The qualitative data were made used of so as to institute holistically the all elements associated with the study (Osunbor, &Ofobruku, 2023). Qualitative analysis was employed for the study to test the variable of the research. The data for the study were sourced mainly from secondary sources using several academic databases: Researchgate, Scopus, Google Scholar, and Science Direct search engines. The keywords of the study were used to determine which of the data would be dropped or selected. Aboutxxxxxxxxx juried journals were textually analysed to gain in-depth insight concerning the variables that were investigated.

### **Textual analysis**

Job embedment is how much an employee feels psychologically connected to and integrated with their job, according to Noe et al (2019). This context proposes meaningful work,

autonomy, feedback, and social support to promote integration. According to Messer, (2021) organizations should focus on employee skill and knowledge development. By giving employees diverse experiences and growth opportunities, job rotation, cross-training, and stretch assignments help embed them. Schuler and MacMillan (2020) emphasize job embedding through socialization. They suggest mentoring on boarding and team-building to integrate employees into the company culture and build meaningful relationships. But job embedment strategies also involve integrating learning into work. Job-embedded professional development is systematic learning related to teachers' classroom work.

Susan, Drake and William, Hall (2009) recommend job-embedded learning that is directly related to job demands. They focus on using student performance data and teacher appraisal results to identify workplace development areas. They emphasize collaborative learning activities like lesson study, peer observations and professional learning communities. Collaboration improves professional practise through shared learning and reflection (Drake & Hall, 2009). Rebecca Rock et al. (2009) expands job-embedded professional development options. In addition to workshops and conferences, they emphasize mentoring, coaching, action research, journaling, and reflective logs. They tailor the development approach to individual needs and preferences to align with personal goals and professional contexts (Rock et al., 2009).

Job embedment strategies are powerful tools that can help corporations overcome specific challenges and seize opportunities. They have an impact on a number of different areas within an organisation. For example, Job embedment helps bridge cultural gaps in Multinational corporations. Collaborative activities and shared learning help employees appreciate diverse cultural perspectives (Caligiuri & Tung, 2014). This improves international team communication, teamwork, and collaboration (Collings et al., 2017; Ofobruku & Obanor, 2023). Job embedment improves cultural intelligence by exposing employees to different customs, values, and work styles. Their increased cultural awareness helps them handle complex intercultural situations (Earley&Ang, 2022; Ofobruku, & Obanor, 2023). Job embedment helps organisational subsidiaries and global teams share best practices. Successful practices can be shared and adapted to local contexts through collaborative projects and mentoring, improving organisational efficiency (Gupta & Govindarajan, 2019).

Embedding learning in local operations ensures employees learn market and customer-specific skills. This localization of knowledge helps Multinational corporations adapt products, services, and marketing strategies to different cultures (Lashitew, Bals, & van Tulder, 2020). Job embedment is crucial to organisational employees' global competencies. Real-world experiences in diverse settings teach employees intercultural communication, adaptability, and global leadership, preparing them for international assignments and promoting talent mobility (Harzing&Ruyseveldt, 2010). Through embedded learning, empowered local teams can identify and address market-specific challenges and opportunities, fostering local innovation (Lashitew, Bals, & van Tulder, 2020).

Job embedment allows Multinational corporations to quickly adapt to regional market conditions and customer preferences. This improves organisational agility and competitiveness, sustaining success (Collings et al., 2017).

## **Links**

A crucial bond between people and their workplace is woven by the sub dimension of "links" in the complex fabric of job embeddedness. This idea, which has been studied by well-known writers, captures the complex web of relationships that ties people to their employers, co-workers, and jobs. Links are defined as formal and informal ties by De Sitter, De Grip, and Den Ouden (2018), Oforuku, (2023) positioned the structural underpinnings of links. Establishments like committees, project teams and reporting lines are examples of formal ties. On the other hand, unofficial connections develop naturally as a result of social exchanges, mutual experiences, and professional friendships. Harter, Schmidt, Hayes, and Xanthopoulos (2010) emphasize the crucial role that positive social interactions play within these links. According to their viewpoint, a strong sense of community and belonging is fostered by regular communication, teamwork, and mutual support.

Employee engagement and commitment are subsequently raised as a result of these beneficial relationships. The dynamic nature of links is clarified by Van den Heuvel, De Meneghi, and De Sitter (2020). They contend that as time goes on, a person's goals, organizational shifts, and changes in their own life shape these relationships. This dynamic evolution requires adaptable strategies for preserving solid connections throughout a person's career within the company. Mitchell, Holtom, Lee, Sablynski, and Carsten (2021) expand on the concept of links to include community ties. According to their theory, job embeddedness is greatly influenced by having close relationships with friends, family, and the community. In this case, quitting a company could mean giving up both personal and professional relationships as well as close ties to the community. But it's important to continue to be aware of any potential negative effects. As De Grip et al. (2015) and Tariq et al. (2020) have discussed, excessively close ties can impede mobility and innovation. Groupthink can be caused by homogenous groups with strong ties, which reduces the range of viewpoints.

In the complex context of job embeddedness, it is important to take into account any challenges related to the idea of "links," as several writers have covered. Den Ouden (2015) warns against putting too much trust in close relationships at work, highlighting the possibility of groupthink and its potential to stifle creativity. They contend that close-knit groups may impede organizational adaptability by resisting change and limiting the exploration of different viewpoints. According to Tariq, Elkwas, and Hassan (2020), there may be disadvantages to having excessively strong ties in terms of career advancement and personal mobility. Workers who are very ingrained in their professional networks and social circles may develop a resistance to change, which will impede their ability to investigate opportunities and new challenges outside of their immediate circle and eventually result in a stagnation of their careers. Harter, Schmidt, Hayes, and Xanthopoulos (2010) draw attention to the possible drawbacks of close emotional bonds between individuals. Positive social interactions encourage involvement and a feeling of belonging but over-reliance on co-workers or the company can put workers at risk for unfavourable consequences like burnout or emotional exhaustion.

In conclusion, even though the idea of links within job embeddedness has many benefits, it's important to be aware of and take appropriate action against any potential drawbacks. Maintaining a healthy and flexible organizational environment requires striking a balance

between encouraging strong relationships and minimizing their negative aspects. These viewpoints draw attention to the complex difficulties involved in developing strong relationships at work.

### **Sacrifice**

Within the context of job embeddedness, sacrifice has been defined and characterized in a variety of ways by various authors. The perceived costs an individual would incur if they were to leave their current organization is how Arici, Arasli, Köseoglu, Sokmen, and Arici, (2023) perceived sacrifice. This includes giving up relationships, benefits, future career opportunities, and the security of the current position, among other things. Harter, Schmidt, Hayes, and Xanthopoulos (2010) expanded on this by identifying a number of crucial aspects of sacrifice within the context of job embeddedness. They placed emphasis on the evaluation of perceived costs, in which people assess possible losses in terms of opportunities for professional growth, job security, social connections, and benefits. The emotional commitment people have to their current jobs also defines sacrifice, which makes the idea of quitting more difficult to bear.

The evaluation of trade-offs, such as comparing prospects for career growth, personal fulfilment, and financial stability adds to the complexity of sacrifice in the context of job embeddedness. The viewpoint on sacrifice is expanded by Mitchell, Holtom, Lee, Sablinski, and Carsten (2021) by going beyond organizational lines. According to Mitchell et al., (2021) sacrifice includes the possible loss of advantages related to the community. This takes into account social networks, neighbourhood amenities and general quality of life elements. Moreover, when assessing their commitment to a job, people may take into account non-work sacrifices like effects on lifestyle choices, family ties, and personal relationships.

Several writers have examined the benefits of sacrifice in the context of employment embeddedness in contemporary literature. Employee sacrifices have been associated with higher levels of organizational commitment as Meyer and Allen (2020) have shown. The idea is that putting in extra effort or going above and beyond the call of duty at work strengthens a person's sense of loyalty to the company. Based on Blau's (2017) introduction of social exchange theory, sacrifices are considered essential to the establishment of strong social exchange connections between workers and their employers. Workers who believe they have given up something for their company often have a stronger sense of commitment and reciprocity from the company.

Furthermore, sacrifices that lead to a more embedded job have been linked to higher job satisfaction levels (Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 2017). This shows that the establishment of strong relationships with co-workers and the investment in skill enhancement have a beneficial impact on overall job satisfaction. According to Grant and Ashford (2018), employees' psychological well-being can be improved by making compromises in the quest of job embeddedness. The theory is that when workers see the sacrifices they make as investments in their career prospects within the company, their sense of fulfilment and general wellbeing are enhanced.

## **Fit**

The degree to which a person and their job, organization, or work environment are compatible is referred to as "fit" in the context of employment embeddedness. Fit, according to Ofobruku, (2023), is the harmony that results from a person's attributes matching those of their work environment. This highlights how crucial it is to match personal qualities, including abilities and values, with the demands of the position or company. The concepts of person-job fit (PJ fit) and "person-organization fit" (PO fit) are first introduced by Chatman (2016). While PJ fit is more concerned with the alignment of a person's abilities with the demands of their position, PO fit deals with the congruence of an individual's values with the corporate culture. The dynamic aspect of fit is highlighted by Edwards (2017), who claims that it entails a continuous process of mutual adaptation between people and their work environments. Fit is a dynamic state that requires constant modification and engagement. The notion is broadened by Cable and DeRue (2020) to encompass "person-team fit" (PT fit), which takes into account how well a person's traits mesh with the dynamics and makeup of their work team.

A multidimensional view of fit is put forth by Kristof-Brown et al (2022), which includes demands-abilities fit, needs-supplies fit, and values congruence fit. This approach recognizes that fit is not limited to abilities and values and may be defined along multiple dimensions. According to these criteria and traits, a strong fit improves a person's sense of engagement, commitment, and sense of belonging to the work and organization in the context of employment embeddedness. Fit is a major factor in determining how deeply a person connects to their workplace.

According to Kristof-Brown. (2015), the idea of person-job fit emphasizes the significance of a match between a person's personality, skills, and talents and the particular requirements and tasks of their employment. In addition, Mitchell (2018) defined organization job fit as the congruence of an individual's values, beliefs, and work ethic with the organization's overarching mission, culture, and objectives. Furthermore, according to De Sitter (2018), career job fit takes into account how well an individual's long-term goals and career aspirations align with the chances for growth and development provided by the work and organization.

Fit has a significant impact on important organizational outcomes, which highlights its importance. Positive person-job, organization-job, and career-job fits are associated with higher levels of engagement and satisfaction as well as enhanced organizational commitment and lower turnover rates (Brown 2019). Moreover, fit has a favourable impact on performance, as people who are motivated and well-equipped to fulfil job requirements perform better (De Sitter 2018).

## **Theoretical Analysis**

In this investigation, Job embedment was investigated using three essential theories; institutional theory, social exchange theory and the Social Identity Theory (SIT): The Study was underpinned to the institutional theory because of its positive reviews



### **Institutional Theory**

The use of institutional theory, which has its roots in sociology and organizational studies, is particularly pertinent to the investigation of employment embedment in international organizations. This idea, which was created by Scott (1987), is concerned with how organizations obtain legitimacy and acceptance by giving in to institutional, social, and cultural pressures from outside sources. The idea of institutional isomorphism, which entails normative, coercive, and mimetic forces influencing organizational structures and behaviours, is fundamental to institutional theory. Institutional Theory has its detractors despite its significant contributions. Mimetic isomorphism, according to DiMaggio and Powell (1983) is the behaviour of companies copying successful methods without fully understanding or internalizing them. According to Scott (2008), institutional pressures may result in symbolic compliance as opposed to real, transformative change. Institutional theory framework can be applied by management experts to alter organizational practices and affect the relationships that employees build with their roles within the complex world of business organisation.

### **Social Exchange Theory**

George Homans (1958) and Peter Blau (1964) developed the Social Exchange Theory, which provides a prism through which we can examine the complexities of social interactions. The fundamental tenet of this theory is that people form partnerships in the hope of reaping benefits and avoiding expenses. It has not, however, been exempt from criticism. Social exchange theory has its detractors who claim that by limiting human connections to economic transactions, it oversimplifies relationships (Emerson, 1976). The theory's implementation in organizations reveals a mutually beneficial interaction between workers and the organisation (Ofobruku&Obanor, 2023). Workers may view their dedication, hard work and flexibility in this global environment as investments in a social trade. In exchange, they anticipate chances for professional advancement, exposure to diverse cultures, and assistance with their own and their careers' advancement. As employees feel a feeling of duty and commitment to a business that actively invests in their well-being and professional progress, this reciprocal relationship becomes crucial in fostering job embeddedness.

The theoretical framework is supported by the fundamental writings of Homans (1958) and Blau (1964), but Emerson's (1976) evaluation, serves as a reminder of the theory's shortcomings. Social Exchange Theory adds to our understanding of the complex relationships between workers and organizations by highlighting the role that reciprocal interactions play in promoting commitment and connection across a range of organizational and cultural contexts, including job embeddedness in corporations.

### **Social Identity Theory**

According to the Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), people divide others into social groups according to traits they have in common, which breeds prejudice against people in other groups and in-group favouritism. This theory holds that people's social identities – which have a tremendous impact on their attitudes and behaviours are mostly derived from the groups they belong to. Nevertheless, Social Identity Theory has come under fire despite its popularity. Some contend that it ignores individual distinctions within groups and oversimplifies the complexity of intergroup connections (Hogg, 2001). Additionally, concerns

have been expressed regarding its possible use to justify discriminatory actions by disguising them as social categorizations (Kunda&Oleson, 1995).

Social Identity Theory is extremely relevant when discussing job embedding in global businesses. It is essential to comprehend the dynamics of group membership and social relationships in a variety of work situations. According to research by Ellemers et al (2013), people prefer to identify with organizations that provide them a positive social identity and make them feel like they belong. This is crucial for job embeddedness since an employee's commitment to the company can be greatly impacted by the quality of their social ties.

Employees at global corporations come from a variety of cultural backgrounds, which leads to the creation of multiple social identities. When attempting to understand how these social identities play a role in the development of attachments associated to one's job, SIT becomes very pertinent. Workers may perceive other organizations as out-groups and develop a strong sense of belonging to the organization as an in-group, which promotes work embeddedness. To sum up, the application of Social Identity Theory provides a useful framework for analysing the functions of social classification, group dynamics, and intergroup interactions in international enterprises.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, job embeddedness in organisations shows a complex interaction of factors that affect employees' work and organization relationships. Job embeddedness encompasses linkages, fit and sacrifice, as discussed in the literature. Job embeddedness in organisation has been studied in the light of cultural influences, organizational dynamics and various work environments. The study has improved our understanding of why employees stay and stressed the importance of contextual and individual factors.

### **Recommendations**

- i. Organizations should consider implementing context-specific programs to enhance employee links, fit, and sacrifice, recognizing that a one-size-fits-all approach may not be effective across different subsidiaries or regions. Tracking employees' experiences, changes in organizational culture, and shifts in work environments will provide insights into the temporal dynamics of embeddedness, contributing to more informed retention strategies.
- ii. Organisations should invest in employee development programs and career planning initiatives. Providing clear paths for career progression and opportunities for skill development that will enhance employees' perceived fit within the organization, contributing to increased levels of job embeddedness.
- iii. Recognizing the impact of changing work dynamics, especially in the wake of technological advancements, Organisation should consider implementing flexible work policies. Enabling remote work and accommodating diverse work arrangements may positively influence employees' perceptions of job fit and satisfaction.

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