

# A STUDY ON THE LEVEL AND RELATIONSHIP OF JOB EMBEDDEDNESS AND PERSON-ORGANIZATION FIT AMONG SAUDI ARABIAN WORKING-CLASS

**SHAHA FAISAL**

Assistant Professor, Department of Human Resource Management, College of Business Administration, Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University, Saudi Arabia

## Abstract

Job embeddedness reflects employees' affection towards the organization, while Person Organization fit (P-O fit) is the value convergence of an individual. Both attract employees for continuance employment. The present study aimed to identify the relationship between job embeddedness and PO-fit among the Saudi workforce. Data for the study was collected from 194 employees conveniently from different industries in Saudi Arabia. The research results indicated that Job embeddedness (JE) and Person Organization fit (P-O fit) have a significant positive relationship. Age did not have any significant relationship with both the constructs. P-O fit had a significant negative correlation. The result suggests that experience with the current organization is not related to P-O fit. In short, both JE and P-O fit constructs connect employees with the organization and ensure their long association with the organization. Once P-O fit increases, job embeddedness also improves for employees and keeps them on the job, leading to a decline in turnover intent. The results may be used to develop retention strategies among the Saudi workforce.

**Keywords:** Job embeddedness, PO-fit, turnover, turnover intention, workforce

**JEL Classification:** C1, L2

## 1. Introduction

An organization can gain a competitive advantage through the positive attitude of employees. A well-aligned workforce with organizational goals can enhance productivity and high growth potential. Once an organization gets the desired workforce, it wants to remain with them. Employees and employers encounter different problems once they do not match each other expectations (AlKahtani et al., 2021; Sandhya & Sulphey, 2019; 2021; Sulphey, 2019). This situation leads to turnover intention and the resultant turnover. Retention of employees is now a significant concern of all organizations (Faisal et al., 2020; Sulphey & Faisal, 2020). Many constructs are supposed to influence employee retention, on which multiple empirical studies have been undertaken. Job embeddedness and PO-fit are two constructs that have acquired an important place for the last two decades in organizational behavior research. Research in both constructs is vital as both play a vital role in organizational performance.

The present study intends to examine a few constructs on which studies are few. The identified constructs include Job embeddedness (JE) and Person-Organization Fit (P-O Fit). JE is a topic of organizational behavior and organizational sustainability associated with the retention of employees. It represents different on-job and off-job factors that influence the continuance of employment (Reitz & Anderson, 2011). JE can be used to make strategies about employee retention (Sandhya & Sulphey, 2021). PO Fit is the fit that an employee experiences concerning their values with that of their

organization (Kristof 1996; Kristof-Brown 2000). This is related to a wide range of attitudes that are beneficial and affects the organizational outcome. Fit perception shows the similarity of the individual perception about the organization. It fascinates employees about the organization. As a result, it increases job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and retention (Sulphery & Faisal, 2020). P-O fit is crucial to increasing job commitment and keeping employees embedded with the job. Employee performance problems would be solved automatically if the Saudi workforce has a P-O fit and is embedded with the job. Studies that examine these two important constructs have not been found done. The present study intends to examine the two constructs of JE and PO Fit among the Saudi workforce and their relationship.

## Research Problem

Many organizational behavior constructs have been found to influence the attitude of employees positively. Many pieces of research have been conducted about scores of such constructs. However, a fair review of the literature shows that no study has been undertaken to determine the relationship between the two in general and Saudi Arabia. Most research studies in the field of JE have focused on specific issues like turnover. The present study is expected to be undertaken in different dimensions to find out the level of FE and the relationship between the two contracts that are indispensable for any organization's well-being and progress.

## Research Objectives

The objectives identified for the study are:

1. To study the level of job embeddedness of the Saudi workforce.
2. To study the level of P-O Fit of the Saudi workforce.
3. To find out the relationship between job embeddedness and P-O Fit among Saudi Arabian workforce.

## 2. Literature review

### 2.1 Job embeddedness

JE term was coined by Mitchell et al. (2001), it emphasis on all possible factors which keep employees on the job. This model consists of three components: link, fit, and sacrifice that keep employees embedded with the organization. These three components relate to employees with the organization when a person is on the job and employees with the community when off the job (Lee et al. 2004).

a) **Fit:** Mitchel et al. (2001) described that on-the-job factors bind employees with the current job and do not allow employees to leave the organization. On the other hand, off-the-job factors like association with the community also bind employees not to leave the current job. Fit with organization refers to the compatibility of an individual's values, goals, and career aspiration with organizational values and systems (Mitchel et al. 2001; Holtom et al., 2006a). According to Kristof-Brown, et al. (2005), the fit dimension also specifies that the convergence of organizational culture with employee personality and a better fit with the organization is a strong predictor of job embeddedness. On the other side, the fit to community suggests the compatibility of an individual with the cultural, social environment of the community. Finally, Employees who closely fit with the organization and community would stay with the organization

for a longer time than those who are less associated with the organization and the community (Zhang et al., 2012).

b) **Link:** The second dimension of job embeddedness is a link that includes a formal and informal relationship within the organization and with the community (Mitchel et al., 2001; Zhang et al., 2012; Holtom et al., 2006a). Organizational links refer to the social, psychological, and financial bounding with its organization, while Links with the community include family and friends connections within the local community (Mitchel et al., 2001). On the job link, social and personal relationships with co-workers and managers, on the other hand, refer to the social relationship with family, friends, and other associations with the community. Finally, both the links increase the job embeddedness level of an individual.

c) **Sacrifice:** The third dimension is on the job sacrifices is referred to the material cost associated with leaving the job, like benefits forgone by switching. Community-related sacrifices are psychological costs and forces that embedded a person on the job (Lee et al., 2004; Mitchell et al., 2001; Zhang et al., 2012). The job-related sacrifice includes loss of reputed job position, premier office space, access to valuable organizational assets, and recognition of good colleagues. It also includes other job-related benefits. Community-related sacrifices include loss of leaving a secure community, reliable friends, loss of established network, and other financial losses such as loss of sale of house and loss due to disposal of other immovable assets. Finally, JE suggests leaving a job if employees need to be sacrificed more, then staying with the current organization also increases.

## 2.2 P-O Fit

Gone are the days when people look only for employment, and they had to serve the organization for a more extended period without considering their values match with the organization. In the modern arena of 21st-century job applicants, a significant concern is identifying the appropriate organization and appropriate job to fulfill their career aspirations. On the other side, the organization should also focus on selecting appropriate candidates that fit the organization rather than judging them on a conventional set of Knowledge, skills, and attitudes (Morley & Morley, 2007).

P-O Fit has its roots and wide applications in various fields of OB and psychology, and it is a concept that is related with person situation interaction. Schneider(1987) proposed the Attraction-Selection-Attrition (ASA) model, and later Sheineider (2001) further enhanced the model and explained that work values are a fundamental element for an employee as PO-fit is mainly concern with it. Individuals fascinate by those organizations which are similar to their characteristics, and on the other hand, organizations also similarly select best-suited individuals.

P-O Fit is the fit that an employee experiences concerning their values with that of their organization. Fit perceptions are a broad term that refers to an individual's perceptions of how well they fit into their employment and organization (Edwards 1991; Kristof 1996; Kristof-Brown 2000). This is related to a wide range of attitudes that are beneficial and affects the organizational outcome. The many sorts of fit between individuals and their employment have piqued empirical curiosity (Kristof-Brown and Guay 2011; Yang and Yu 2014). Fit perception shows the similarity of the individual perception about the organization. It attracts the employee to the organization. As a

result, it increases job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and retention. Morley (2007) also found a significant relationship between P-O fit and job satisfaction and identified that as job satisfaction increases, the employee turnover intent decreases. On the other side, a decrease in P-O fit leads to a decrease in job satisfaction and turnover intention.

Concerning P-O fit, Ciptaningtyas (2017) opined that organizations select only those interested in working with it and their values are well aligned with the organizational values. Only those employees leave the organization whose values convergence do not match. Many researchers found P-O fit directly associated with different positive job-related outcomes like job performance, organization citizenship behavior, organizational commitment (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; Cooper-Thomas et al., 2004; Westerman and Cyr, 2004).

Effective communication is necessary between supervisors and employees to get the desired result. All tasks are explained and given by the supervisor to subordinates so that the actual result will depend on the communication between them. If employees have high P-O fit work under that supervisor whose values are highly aligned with the organization. This will support the outcome of the employees. A high P-O fit supervisor can positively evaluate the high P-O fit employees' performance because of the same thought process. Else, the result of the evaluation may be reversed.

### **2.3 Relationship between JE and P-O fit**

PO-Fit significantly impacts employee performance as employees feel comfortable at the job because of value convergence. On the other hand, JE binds employees with the organization because of different link and fit factors. Both JE and PO-Fit construct positively associated with each other as binding towards the organization increases and keeps employees away from negative thoughts.

Ciptaningtyas et al. (2017) found a direct relationship between job embeddedness and person-organization fit. Job embeddedness connects employees to their work as well as with the organization. It also encourages them to stay with it. The person more embedded with the job stays a more extended period and are less likely to develop an intention to leave (Faisal et al., 2020). On the other side, PO-fit comprises the individual compatibility with organizational values and goals. Once compatibility is stronger than binding with the organization is higher.

Kwon and Kang (2019) identified the direct effect of personal-job fit, personal-organizational fit, person-supervisor fit and explained 76.3% of the job embeddedness. They also concluded that as PO-fit increases, the job embeddedness also improves, decreasing the employee turnover intentions PO-fit highly influences the organizational performance like OCB, Turnover intent, and organizational identification (Cable and DeRue 2002; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005).

On the basis of O'Reilly and Chatman's (1986) theoretical framework, Lauver and Kristof-Brown (2001) identified that Employees' person-organization fit is highly related to voluntary role-playing and behaviors and also argued that the person-organization fit is strongly linked to OCBs.

### 3. Research Methodology

The study was conducted among different white-collar employees in the selected organization in different industries in Saudi Arabia. After an intensive literature review, suitable survey instruments were identified for each studied variable. The google survey link was provided to all respondents, and a total of 194 respondents participated in the online survey. The employees were not allowed to leave any questions blank. Therefore, all responses were correctly recorded. Due to limited resources, the convenient sampling technique used by the researcher.

#### Measures

The survey instrument comprises 26 items that examined Job embeddedness and P-O fit.

Job embeddedness (JE): Holtom et al.'s (2006b) scale of Job Embeddedness was used to measure JE. The scale comprises 16 items, Few samples of items are as follows.

- "I believe the prospects for continuing employment with my organization are excellent."
- "I have a lot of freedom on this job to pursue my goals."

P-O fit was measured by the Person organization fit scale adopted by Findik et al. (2013), which includes 10 items on a five-point scale. A few samples of items are as below.

- "I can work in this organization without giving up my principles."
- "I believe that there is a strong congruence between my organization and my personal values."

Table 1 includes the demographic particulars of the data like gender, qualification, marital status, age, and experience. It can be observed that there is wide diversity with respect to the demographics of the sample.

**Table 1** Demographics of the Sample

Particulars		Number	Percentage
Gender	Male	143	73.7
	Female	51	26.3
Qualification	Graduate	127	65.5
	Post- Graduate	49	25.3
	Ph.D.	18	9.3
Marital status	Married	97	50.0
	Unmarried	97	50.0
Age	20-30	100	51.55
	31-40	69	35.57
	41-50	21	10.82
	51 and Above	4	2.06

<b>Total Experience</b>	0-5	85	43.81
	6-10	53	27.32
	11-15	30	15.46
	16 -20	12	6.19
	21 and above	14	7.22
<b>Experience with current organization</b>	Less than 3	91	46.91
	4-7	59	30.41
	8-11	30	15.46
	12 -16	8	4.12
	17 and above	6	3.09

Source: Researcher's Compilations

#### 4. Results

The collected data for the present study were analyzed using the SPSS package to check the relationship between JE and P-O fit correlation. Cronbach Alpha was assessed to check the reliability of both the construct. Table-2 contains the descriptive statistics about Job Embeddedness (JE) and Person- Organization Fit (P-O Fit). It comprises of mean, standard deviation, and Cronbach's Alpha of the variables under study. Cronbach's Alpha for JE was .898, and P-O fit was .862, respectively. The score is well above the standard set by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994).

JE and PO- Fit variables were converted into categorical variables for the analysis. Values reaching above mean plus standard deviation were termed as high, values reaching below mean minus standard deviation were termed as low, and those in-between were named as the medium. For instance, variable P-O fit values reaching above 54.64 ( $36.22 \text{ (Mean)} + \frac{1}{2} \text{ of } 6.24 \text{ (Standard Deviation)}$ ) were grouped as having high Person-organization fit (P-O fit). Values falling below 29.99 ( $36.22 \text{ (Mean)} - \frac{1}{2} \text{ of } 6.24 \text{ (Standard Deviation)}$ ) were grouped as low P-O fit, and those values falling between 29.99 to 36.22 were considered to have medium P-O fit. Table 3 provides the details of the categorical variable.

**Table 2:** Descriptive Statistics

Particulars	Job Embeddedness	Person Organization Fit
<b>Mean</b>	64.572	33.103
<b>SD</b>	10.2410	6.2346
<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	.898	.862



**Table 3:** Categorisation of the variables based on mean and standard deviation

Variable	Category	Value	Frequency	Percent
Job Embeddedness	Low	Less than 54.33	45	23.20
	Med	54.33 to 69.69	115	59.28
	High	Above 69.69	34	17.52
Person Organization Fit	Low	Less than 29.99	23	11.85
	Med	29.99 to 36.22	65	33.51
	High	Above 36.22	106	54.64

**Table no. 4:** Correlation Results

Particulars	Person Organization Fit	Job Embeddedness	Age	Experience with Current Organization	Total Experience
Person Organization Fit	1	.779**	-.081	-.171*	-.101
Job Embeddedness		1	-.067	-.130	-.073
Age			1	.646**	.837**
Experience with current org.				1	.784**
Total Experience					1

N=194

\*\* .01% significant level

\*.05% significant level

Job embeddedness (JE) and Person Organization fit (P-O fit) have a significant positive relationship as the score of correlation is “.779” at a .01% significant level. Age does not have any significant relationship with both constructs. P-O fit has a significant negative correlation as the score is “-.171” at a .05% significant level. The result suggests that experience with the current organization is not related to P-O fit.

## 5. Discussion and conclusion

Ciptaningtyas et al. (2017) also found that embeddedness and person-organization fit are associated with each other. Both constructs connect employees with the organization and ensure their long binding with the organization as well. The present study also found similar results as findings indicate a strong relationship between JE and P-O fit. The findings of Kwon and Kang (2019), also near the present study, revealed the association between job embeddedness and P-O fit and found that once P-O fit increases, job embeddedness also improves for employees keeps the employee on the job, which leads to a decline in turnover intent.

Backhaus (2003) identified P-O fit as having no importance with year of experience and not related to it. Present study results are also in line with Backhaus (2003). On the other side, Resick et al. (2007) identified employees previous work experience can give a better idea about the kinds of organizations and affect fit perception. Our findings are not in line with it because of the cultural differences in Saudi Arabia.

Today in the modern industrial era, we require a committed workforce for industrial development. If the workforce is P-O fit, they will be highly embedded with job and desire of work that will also increase the positive outcome of the job like organization commitment, job satisfaction, and organizational performance. The study's findings will help policy administrators and academia know the impact of Job embeddedness and P-O fit on the performance of the employees. This can be used in devising appropriate mass contact/training programs to enhance professional awareness. It is earnestly expected that the study's findings would be of high relevance to the general formulation of human capital development policies.

### Acknowledgements:

This publication was supported by the Deanship of Scientific Research at Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University, Alkharj, Saudi Arabia under the Specialized Research Grant program with Grant No- 2020/02/17318

### References

1. AlKahtani, N. S., Sulphery, M. M., Delany, K., & Adoow, A. H. E. (2021). A Conceptual Examination about the Correlates of Psychological Capital (PsyCap) among Saudi Arabian Workforce. *Social Sciences*, 10 (4), 122. <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci10040122>
2. Backhaus, K. (2003). Importance of person-organization fit to job seekers. *Career Development International*, 8(1), 21-26. <https://doi.org/10.1108/13620430310459487>
3. Cable, D.M. and DeRue, D.S. (2002) The congruent and discriminant validity of subjective fit perceptions, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 87(5), pp. 875–884
4. Ciptaningtyas, A. H., Suyasa, P. T. Y., & Wati, L. (2017). The Relationships Between Job Embeddedness, Person-Organization Fit, and Turnover Intention. *ANIMA Indonesian Psychological Journal*, 33(1), 32-40.
5. Cooper-Thomas, H. D., Van Vianen, A., & Anderson, N. (2004). Changes in person–organization fit: The impact of socialization tactics on perceived and actual P–O fit. *European Journal of work and organizational psychology*, 13(1), 52-78.
6. Edwards, J. R. (1991). Person–Job Fit: A Conceptual Integration, Literature Review and Methodological Critique. *International Review of Industrial/Organizational Psychology* (6), C. L. Cooper and I. T. Robertson (eds.), New York: Wiley Publications, 283-357.



7. Faisal, S., Naushad, M., & Faridi, M. (2020). A study on the level and relationship of job embeddedness and turnover intentions among Saudi Arabian working-class. *Management Science Letters*, 10(13), 3167-3172.
8. Findık, M., Öğüt, A., & Çağlıyan, V. (2013). An evaluation about person-organization fit, job satisfaction, and turnover intention: a case of health institution. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 4(11), 434-434.
9. Holtom, B.C., Mitchell, T.R., Lee, T.W., (2006a). Increasing human and social capital by applying job embeddedness theory. *Organizational Dynamics*, 35 (4), 316–331.
10. Holtom, B.C., Mitchell, T.R., Lee, T.W., Tidd, S., (2006b). Less is more: validation of a short form of the job embeddedness measure and theoretical extensions. In: Paper Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Academy of Management
11. Kristof, A. L. (1996). Person–Organization Fit: An Integrative Review of the Conceptualizations, Measurement, and Implications, *Personnel Psychology* 49(1), 1-49.
12. Kristof-Brown, A. L. (2000). Perceived Applicant Fit: Distinguishing between Recruiters' Perceptions of Person–Job and Person–Organization Fit, *Personnel Psychology* 53(3), 643-671.
13. Kristof-Brown, A. L., and Billsberry, J. (2013). *Organizational Fit: Key Issues and New Directions*, Chichester, UK: John Wiley & Sons.
14. Kristof-Brown, A. L., and Guay, R. P. (2011). Person–Environment Fit, *Handbook of Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, S. Zedeck (ed.), Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 3-50.
15. Kristof-Brown, A. L., Jansen, K. J., & Colbert, A. E. (2002). A policy-capturing study of the simultaneous effects of fit with jobs, groups, and organizations. *Journal of Applied psychology*, 87(5), 985-993.
16. Kristof-Brown, A. L., Zimmerman, R. D., & Johnson, E. C. (2005). Consequences OF INDIVIDUALS'FIT at work: A meta-analysis OF person–job, person–organization, person–group, and person–supervisor fit. *Personnel psychology*, 58(2), 281-342.
17. Kwon, J. O., & Kang, J. M. (2019). The Effect of Person-Environment Fit (Person-Job Fit, Person-Organization Fit, Person-Supervisor Fit) and Job Embeddedness on Turnover Intention in Clinical Nurses. *Journal of the Korea Convergence Society*, 10(3), 307-317.
18. Lauver, K. J., & Kristof-Brown, A. (2001). Distinguishing between employees' perceptions of person–job and person–organization fit. *Journal of vocational behavior*, 59(3), 454-470.
19. Lee, T. W.; Mitchell, T. R.; Sablinski, C. J.; Burton, J. P.; Holtom, B. C. (2004). Job Embeddedness in a Culturally Diverse Environment. *Academy of Management Journal*. 47 (5), 711–722.
20. Mitchell, T. R., Holtom, B. C., Lee, T. W., Sablinski, C. J., & Erez, M. (2001). Why people stay: Using job embeddedness to predict voluntary turnover. *Academy of management journal*, 44(6), 1102-1121.
21. Morley, M. J. (2007). Person-organization fit. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*.22(2), 109-117.
22. Morley, M., & Morley, M. J. (2007). Person-organization fit. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*.22(2), 109-117.
23. Nunnally J, Bernstein I (1994). *Psychometric theory*. McGraw Hill, New York
24. O'Reilly, C.A., Chatman, J. (1986), Organizational commitment and psychological attachment: The effects of compliance, identification, and internalization on prosocial behavior. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 71, 492-499.
25. Resick, C. J., Balthes, B. B., & Shantz, C. W. (2007). Person-organization fit and work-related attitudes and decisions: Examining interactive effects with job fit and conscientiousness. *Journal of applied psychology*, 92(5), 1446.
26. Reitz, O. E., & Anderson, M. A. (2011). An overview of job embeddedness. *Journal of Professional Nursing*, 27(5), 320-327.
27. Sandhya, S. & Sulphrey, M. M. (2019). An assessment of contribution of employee engagement, psychological contract and psychological empowerment towards turnover intentions of IT employees. *International Journal of Environment, Workplace and Employment*, 5 (1), 22 – 31. <http://doi:10.1504/IJEWE.2019.097186>

28. Sandhya, S. & Sulphey, M. M. (2021). Influence of Empowerment, Psychological Contract and Employee engagement on Voluntary Turnover Intentions, *International Journal of Productivity and Performance Management*, 70 (2), 325-349. [https://doi.org/ 10.1108/IJPPM-04-2019-0189](https://doi.org/10.1108/IJPPM-04-2019-0189)
29. Schneider B. (1987). The people make the place, *PERSONNEL PSYCHOLOGY*, 40,437-454
30. Schneider, B. (2001). Fits about fit. *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, 50 (1), 141-52.
31. Sulphey, M. M. & Faisal, S. (2020). Does work-life-balance of resident and expatriate women employees differ? *Pertanika Journal of Social Studies and Huminities*, 28(3), 1807 - 1818.
32. Sulphey, M. M. (2019). The Concept of Workplace Identity, its evolution, antecedents and development, *International Journal of Environment, Workplace and Employment*, 5 (2), 151 – 168. [http://doi: 10.1504/IJEWE.2019.10019877](http://doi:10.1504/IJEWE.2019.10019877)
33. Westerman, J. W., & Cyr, L. A. (2004). An integrative analysis of person–organization fit theories. *International Journal of selection and assessment*, 12(3), 252-261.
34. Westerman, J. W., & Vanka, S. (2005). A cross-cultural empirical analysis of person-organization fit measures as predictors of student performance in business education: Comparing students in the United States and India. *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, 4(4), 409-420.
35. Yang, K. Y. T. (2014) Person–Organization Fit Effects on Organizational Attraction: A Test of an Expectations-Based Model, *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 124(1), 75-94.
36. Zhang, X., Ryan, S.D., Prybutok, V.R. and Kappelman, L. (2012), “Perceived obsolescence, organisational embeddedness, and turnover of it workers: an empirical study”, *The DATA BASE for Advances in Information Systems*,. 43 (4), 12-32