**Personnel Review**

**Staying and Performing: How Human Resource Management Practices Increase Job Embeddedness and Performance**

**ABSTRACT** We investigated the processes by which human resource management (HRM) practices embed employees in organizations, and whether this in turn enhances employee job performance. Following the ability-motivation-opportunity (AMO) model of HRM, we predicted that ability-enhancing, motivation-enhancing, and opportunity-enhancing HRM practices would relate to fit, links and sacrifice components of job embeddedness, with these components mediating the relationship between AMO elements of HRM and employee job performance. As predicted, the results suggest that ability-, motivation- and opportunity-enhancing HRM practices contribute to the creation and development of embeddedness, and the improvement of job performance. The job embeddedness components of fit, links and sacrifice were found to mediate the HRM-job performance relationship. The results suggest that organizations can proactively enhance both embeddedness and employee performance through implementing appropriate HRM practices.

**KEYWORDS:** Job embeddedness, ability-motivation-opportunity model of HRM, job performance

**INTRODUCTION**

Over the past decade, job embeddedness theory ([JET, Mitchell et al., 2001](#_ENREF_34)) has been the focus of considerable empirical research ([Jiang et al., 2012b](#_ENREF_23); [Lee et al., 2014](#_ENREF_29)). JET describes a set of social psychological and economic forces operating in and around the job that act “like a net or a web in which an individual can become stuck” ([Mitchell et al., 2001: 1104](#_ENREF_34)). The stronger these embedding forces, it is argued, the less likely one is to quit ([Mitchell et al., 2001](#_ENREF_34)). Job embeddedness has also been found to influence other important work-related behaviors such as job performance ([Lee et al., 2004](#_ENREF_30); [Sekiguchi et al., 2008](#_ENREF_41)), absence ([Lee et al., 2004](#_ENREF_30)), and innovative work behavior ([Ng and Feldman, 2010](#_ENREF_37)).

Despite evidence that job embeddedness has a beneficial impact upon employees’ work behavior generally, surprisingly little attention has been paid to the question of how organizations can promote greater embeddedness amongst employees ([Lee et al., 2014](#_ENREF_29)). Although Mitchell et al. (2001) suggested that organizations should seek to use their HR practices to foster the development of job embeddedness, only a handful of studies have sought to examine this relationship to date ([Allen, 2006](#_ENREF_1); [Allen and Shanock, 2013](#_ENREF_2); [Bambacas and Kulik, 2013](#_ENREF_3); [Bergiel et al., 2009](#_ENREF_4); [Hom et al., 2009](#_ENREF_20)).

In this paper, we address three significant gaps in the literature linking HRM and job embeddedness. First, we observe that those studies that have been conducted into how HRM potentially shapes job embeddedness omit a crucial dimension of HR practice specifically that concerned with increasing the opportunities employees have to perform. Recent theorising on the links between HRM and performance suggests that “high performance” HR systems comprise three subsystems or bundles of HRM activity, commonly referred to as “skill-enhancing”, “motivation-enhancing”, and “opportunity-enhancing” practices ([Gardner et al., 2011](#_ENREF_13); [Jiang et al., 2012a](#_ENREF_22); [Kehoe and Wright, 2013](#_ENREF_24); [Subramony, 2009](#_ENREF_42)). Although researchers have considered associations between selected HR practices that are representative of ability-enhancing (e.g. training) and motivation-enhancing HR (e.g. compensation) ([Bambacas and Kulik, 2013](#_ENREF_3); [Bergiel et al., 2009](#_ENREF_4)), they have so far overlooked opportunity-enhancing HR. This includes a range of employee involvement and empowerment practices that could reasonably be considered as potential determinants of both job embeddedness and job performance.

Second, we note that theory and research linking HRM practices to employee performance has yet to consider the role of job embeddedness as an intervening mechanism. To date, HRM-job embeddedness studies have focused solely on employee turnover or turnover intentions as the distal mediated outcome ([Bambacas and Kulik, 2013](#_ENREF_3); [Bergiel et al., 2009](#_ENREF_4); [Hom et al., 2009](#_ENREF_20)). This is despite the fact that JET has been used to explain not just “why people stay”, but also “why people perform” ([Burton et al., 2010](#_ENREF_9); [Lee et al., 2004](#_ENREF_30); [Sekiguchi et al., 2008](#_ENREF_41)).

Third, while job embeddedness was originally conceptualized as a multi-dimensional construct ([Mitchell et al., 2001](#_ENREF_34)), studies have almost universally relied on a single aggregated measure of embeddedness ([e.g., Sekiguchi et al., 2008](#_ENREF_41)). However, recent reviews of job embeddedness studies argue that it is important to disaggregate the job embeddedness measure into its dimensions when considering its impact on dependent variables ([Jiang et al., 2012b](#_ENREF_23); [Lee et al., 2014](#_ENREF_29); [Zhang et al., 2012](#_ENREF_49)).

Directly addressing these theoretical and methodological issues, our study seeks to advance the job embeddedness literature by examining the impact of employees’ perception of HRM on job embeddedness at the dimensional level and, in turn, employees’ job performance. We make two key contributions to the HRM and job embeddedness literatures. First, we propose that the (a) ability-enhancing, (b) motivation-enhancing, and (c) opportunity-enhancing HR practices experienced by employees will directly influence their feelings of job embeddedness. By simultaneously examining the pathways that exist between the three HR bundles and different job embeddedness dimensions, we provide a more comprehensive perspective on how organizations can capitalize on these different mechanisms, by identifying targeted HR practices that impact different embeddedness components. Second, we extend the scope of the AMO framework of HR by proposing that job embeddedness dimensions act as important mediators in the HRM–individual job performance relationship. Thus, we provide additional insights into how HR practices help promote better job performance, specifically by ensuring that employees (a) are a good fit to the job, (b) feel connected to others within the organization, and (c) would have to give up things of value if they left.

Next, we present our theoretical model, discuss the methods we use to test our predictions, and report our findings. We conclude by discussing the theoretical and practical implications of our findings and propose possible directions for future research.

**THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

**Job embeddedness**

The job embeddedness construct comprises a broad set of psychological, social and financial deterrents to leaving an organization. [Mitchell et al. (2001](#_ENREF_34)) suggest that employees who are exposed to more of these restraining forces become increasingly embedded in their current job and, as a consequence, are less likely to voluntarily exit the organization. The original conceptualization of job embeddedness included two dimensions,[[1]](#footnote-1) organization and community embeddedness, with each dimension further categorized into three independent components: fit, sacrifice and links ([Mitchell et al., 2001](#_ENREF_34)). Fit is defined as “an employee’s perceived compatibility or comfort with an organization” ([Mitchell et al., 2001, p. 1104](#_ENREF_34)). A strong fit may indicate elevated perception of compatibility or comfort with the organization and the larger work environment. Hence, the better the fit, the greater the likelihood that employees will feel professionally and personally tied to their employers ([Holtom and Inderrieden, 2006](#_ENREF_19)). Links are the “formal or informal connections between a person and institutions or other people” ([Mitchell et al., 2001, p. 1104](#_ENREF_34)). The more links that connect an employee with other people in his or her web, the more the employee becomes “stuck” or rooted in the job and the organization because leaving the organization might involve cutting or rearranging those personal ties. Sacrifice is characterized as “the perceived cost of material or psychological benefits that may be forfeited by leaving a job” ([Mitchell et al., 2001: 1104-1105](#_ENREF_34)). Thus, financial (e.g. high pay or attractive benefits) and psychological (e.g. loss of organizational support) losses that would be incurred by quitting potentially deter turnover.

Although originally used as one overall job embeddedness construct by Mitchell et al. (2011), much of the subsequent research separates it into its two major dimensions, namely, organizational (i.e., on-the-job) and community (i.e., off-the-job) embeddedness (e.g., [Jiang et al., 2012b](#_ENREF_23); [Kraimer et al., 2012](#_ENREF_27); [Lee et al., 2004](#_ENREF_30)). Organizational embeddedness focuses on aspects of the organizational environment that embed the individual (e.g., person-job fit, promotion opportunities), whereas community embeddedness focuses on aspects of the community that embed the individual in their job ([Mitchell et al., 2001](#_ENREF_34)). Because our study examines on firm level HRM practices, with job performance as the criterion measure, we used on-the-job embeddedness as the focal variable for this study.

Within the job embeddedness literature, there have been a number of calls for studies to disaggregate the job embeddedness measure into its constituent dimensions ([Jiang et al., 2012b](#_ENREF_23); [Lee et al., 2014](#_ENREF_29)). In their recent review, Lee et al. (2014: 14) pointed out that although “only a handful of studies examine the separate dimensions of links, fit, and sacrifice... much can be learned from studying these components, especially that researchers often find different relationships across these dimensions and across samples”. For example, Ramesh and Gelfand (2010) found that dimensions of embeddedness are differentially predictive between India and the United States; the fit dimension of job embeddedness was a better predictor in the US than in India, whereas the links dimension was a better predictor in India than in the US. With respect to the impact of HRM on job embeddedness, [Bambacas and Kulik (2013](#_ENREF_3)) found that different HR practices were differentially associated with fit, links and sacrifice dimensions. Given such evidence and rising calls to disaggregate the job embeddedness measure, we examine the impact of HRM on the fit, sacrifice and links components, and in turn, on job performance.

**Job embeddedness and employee performance**

Although job embeddedness has been studied primarily as an “anti-withdrawal” construct affecting voluntary turnover, research has shown that it can also impact job performance, both task performance ([Burton et al., 2010](#_ENREF_9); [Halbesleben and Wheeler, 2008](#_ENREF_15); [Lee et al., 2004](#_ENREF_30); [Lev and Koslowsky, 2012](#_ENREF_32); [Sekiguchi et al., 2008](#_ENREF_41); [Wheeler et al., 2012](#_ENREF_45)), and organizational citizenship behaviors ([Burton et al., 2010](#_ENREF_9); [Lee et al., 2004](#_ENREF_30); [Lev and Koslowsky, 2012](#_ENREF_32); [Sekiguchi et al., 2008](#_ENREF_41)). Of the two original dimensions of job embeddedness, research suggests that on-the-job (organizational) embeddedness is a better predictor of employee job performance than off-the-job (community) embeddedness ([Allen, 2006](#_ENREF_1); [Lee et al., 2004](#_ENREF_30); [Sekiguchi et al., 2008](#_ENREF_41)).

Several reasons have been advanced for the observed job embeddedness-performance relationship ([Lee et al., 2004](#_ENREF_30); [Sekiguchi et al., 2008](#_ENREF_41)). First, it has been suggested that people with high levels of on-the-job embeddedness will tend to be motivated to perform through concern “that lower job performance may endanger the status of being employed and/or attached to their jobs” ([Lee et al., 2004: 714](#_ENREF_30)). Second, employees who are highly embedded are involved in and tied to projects and people (i.e., links), they feel well-suited to their jobs and are able to apply their skills (i.e., fit), and believe they would relinquish valued things if they quit (i.e., sacrifice). Finally, Wheeler and colleagues ([Halbesleben and Wheeler, 2008](#_ENREF_15); [Harris et al., 2011](#_ENREF_16); [Wheeler et al., 2012](#_ENREF_45)) explain the job embeddedness–job performance linkage in terms of conservation of resources (COR) theory. COR theory describes how people develop, protect, and allocate personally valuable, yet finite, affective, cognitive, and physical resources while participating in their jobs ([Hobfoll, 1989](#_ENREF_17)). Accordingly, employees discretionally allocate resources while also protecting and replenishing resources; this process explains how and why people are motivated to perform and remain within a specific firm. [Halbesleben and Wheeler (2008](#_ENREF_15)) conceptualized job embeddedness as a state of abundant resources. They argued that the links component represents person-to-person relationship resources; fit the sense of belonging an employee feels to the job, company, and community; and sacrifice the “primacy-of-loss” tenet of COR. In linking embeddedness to performance, the authors argued that job embeddedness promotes performance through the extra resources enjoyed as a result of being embedded in the job (e.g., better access to job advice and assistance). Thus, we hypothesize the following:

*Hypothesis 1: On-the-job fit (a), sacrifice (b), and links (c) are positively related to employees’ job performance.*

**High-performance HR practices and job embeddedness**

Over the past two decades, an extensive body of empirical research ([Combs et al., 2006](#_ENREF_11); [Jiang et al., 2012a](#_ENREF_22); [Subramony, 2009](#_ENREF_42)) has shown that particular bundles and/or configurations of HRM policies and practices contribute to: (1) positive individual level outcomes such as greater employee commitment and satisfaction, better task performance ([Gong et al., 2009](#_ENREF_14); [Kehoe and Wright, 2013](#_ENREF_24)) and organizational citizenship behaviors ([e.g., Kehoe and Wright, 2013](#_ENREF_24)); and (2) desirable organizational outcomes such as lower turnover (e.g., [Kehoe and Wright, 2013](#_ENREF_24); [Kuvaas and Dysvik, 2010](#_ENREF_28); [Sun et al., 2007](#_ENREF_43)), higher productivity and improved financial performance (e.g., [Collins and Smith, 2006](#_ENREF_10); [Gong et al., 2009](#_ENREF_14)).

Recent reviews of the strategic HRM literature highlight two key themes. First, it is suggested that “coherent systems of mutually reinforcing HR practices are likely to better support sustainable performance outcomes than are any individual practices” (Kehoe & Wright, 2013: 368; for review discussion, also see [Boselie et al., 2005](#_ENREF_6); [Combs et al., 2006](#_ENREF_11); [Jiang et al., 2012a](#_ENREF_22); [Subramony, 2009](#_ENREF_42)). Second, Kehoe and Wright (2013: 368) observe that “a commonality across practices in any high-performance approach is a focus on promoting workforce ability, motivation, and opportunity... to perform behaviors consistent with organizational goals”. In line with this, the ability-motivation-opportunity (AMO) model of HRM proposes that high performance HR systems comprise three sub-systems (bundles of HR policies & practices) that focus on enhancing employees’ (a) knowledge, skills, abilities, (b) motivation, and (c) opportunity to perform (e.g., [Gardner et al., 2011](#_ENREF_13); [Jiang et al., 2012a](#_ENREF_22); [Kehoe and Wright, 2013](#_ENREF_24); [Kinnie et al., 2006](#_ENREF_26); [Lepak et al., 2006](#_ENREF_31); [Subramony, 2009](#_ENREF_42)).

*Ability-* or *skill-enhancing* HR practicesare designed to ensure that employees are appropriately skilled, and include those related to recruitment, selection, and training. *Motivation-enhancing* HR practices aim to increase employees discretionary effort and persistence, and include those pertaining to compensation, benefits and performance appraisal. *Opportunity-enhancing* HR practicesare designed to empower employees to use their skills and motivation to achieve organizational objectives, and include teamwork, participation in decision-making and information-sharing ([Gardner et al., 2011](#_ENREF_13); [Subramony, 2009](#_ENREF_42)). The logic underlying the AMO model of HRM is that:

*“people perform well when they are able to do so (they can do the job because they possess the necessary knowledge and skills), they have the motivation to do so (they will do the job because they are adequately incentivized), and their work environment provides the necessary support and avenues for expression*” ([Kinnie et al., 2006: 41](#_ENREF_26)).

Following Mitchell and colleagues’ ([Lee et al., 2004](#_ENREF_30); [Mitchell et al., 2001](#_ENREF_34)) suggestion that job embeddedness can be developed through organizational practices, four studies have examined the influence of HR practices upon job embeddedness ([Allen, 2006](#_ENREF_1); [Bambacas and Kulik, 2013](#_ENREF_3); [Bergiel et al., 2009](#_ENREF_4); [Hom et al., 2009](#_ENREF_20)). Allen (2006) showed that organizations socialization tactics promote embeddedness and reduce employee turnover intentions. [Bergiel et al. (2009](#_ENREF_4)) found that job embeddedness mediated the effects of compensation, growth opportunities and supervisor support on turnover intentions. [Hom et al. (2009](#_ENREF_20)) found that job embeddedness mediated the effects of a mutual-investment employment relationship (a relationship in which the employer offers high inducements in exchange for high employee contributions) on turnover intentions. Most recently, [Bambacas and Kulik (2013](#_ENREF_3)) found that job embeddedness mediated between employee perceptions of three groups of HR activities (performance appraisal, rewards, and employee development) and turnover intentions.

Although these studies provide some evidence that high performance HR practices are associated with job embeddedness, none captures the full scope of the AMO conceptualization of HRM practices. Only two of these studies ([Bambacas and Kulik, 2013](#_ENREF_3); [Bergiel et al., 2009](#_ENREF_4)) include more than one category of HR practice (as represented within the AMO model). Moreover, whilst both these studies explored *ability-enhancing* ([e.g., training, Bergiel et al., 2009](#_ENREF_4))and *motivation-enhancing* practices (e.g., compensation and rewards, growth opportunity, [Bambacas and Kulik, 2013](#_ENREF_3); [Bergiel et al., 2009](#_ENREF_4)), neither examined the third pillar of AMO - *opportunity-enhancing* HR practices. Opportunity-enhancing practices (e.g., team-based work, information sharing and employee involvement, etc.) are designed to empower motivated employees to utilize their knowledge, skills and abilities to achieve organizational objectives ([Jiang et al., 2012a](#_ENREF_22); [Subramony, 2009](#_ENREF_42)). We anticipate that all three sub-systems of HRM practice (ability-, motivation-, and opportunity-enhancing) will be involved in shaping on-the-job embeddedness. We discuss next the potential for all three elements of HRM practice (ability-, motivation-, and opportunity-enhancing) to influence on-the-job fit, links and sacrifice.

*Ability-enhancing HR practices*. Because they include recruitment, selection and training and development practices, we expect ability-enhancing HR to play a major part in determining the extent to which a person perceives that they are a good fit to the job and organization. However, since training and development leading to the enhancement of one’s human capital is frequently viewed as a benefit of employment, we also anticipate that this bundle of HR practices would be perceived as something that would be forfeited or sacrificed in the event that a person quit their job. Given that these activities frequently involve socialization processes, ability-enhancing practices may also relate to the extent to which a person feels connected to others at work. Thus, we hypothesize the following:

*Hypothesis 2a: Ability-enhancing HR practices positively relate to the fit, links and sacrifice dimensions of job embeddedness*.

*Motivation-enhancing HR practices*. Motivation-enhancing HR practices incorporate activities designed to encourage employees to expend effort on the job, and include those associated with performance appraisal, compensation, job security, and the use of incentives. Being provided with secure, rewarding work is likely to increase both the extent to which people feel that they fit where they are and the sense of potential sacrifice associated with leaving. In many instances, performance appraisals are based on input from multiple sources (peers, subordinates) and incentive pay is based on group rather than individual performance. Such practices can serve to bind employees more closely to each other in the performance of their work, and thereby intensify linkages. Consequently, we hypothesize the following:

*Hypothesis 2b: Motivation-enhancing HR practices positively relate to the fit, sacrifice and links dimensions of job embeddedness.*

*Opportunity-enhancing HR practices*. According to Jiang et al. (2012b), HR practices that create the opportunity to perform are those related to job design, the use of teams, employee involvement, grievance and complaints-handling processes and the widespread sharing of information. Job characteristics such as autonomy and skill variety provide the flexibility and discretion that enables a person to achieve a greater fit between their knowledge, skills, abilities and other personal attributes (e.g. values) and the roles they perform. Teamwork and employee participation and involvement are likely to strengthen ties to others within the workplace (links), while an incumbent would be likely to consider the intrinsic satisfaction derived from enriched and empowered work as a potential loss (sacrifice) if exiting from the role. Thus, we hypothesize the following:

*Hypothesis 2c: Opportunity-enhancing HR practices positively relate to the fit, sacrifice and links dimensions of job embeddedness.*

As discussed previously, job embeddedness has been found to mediate between features of the job/organizational context and a number of employee attitudes and behaviors ([Holtom and Inderrieden, 2006](#_ENREF_19)). For example, it acts as a mediator between HR practices and employee turnover (e.g., [Allen, 2006](#_ENREF_1); [Bambacas and Kulik, 2013](#_ENREF_3); [Bergiel et al., 2009](#_ENREF_4)), between leader-member exchange and outcomes such as job satisfaction and turnover ([Harris et al., 2011](#_ENREF_16)), individual dispositions (e.g. conscientiousness) and performance ([Lev and Koslowsky, 2012](#_ENREF_32); [Sun et al., 2012](#_ENREF_44)), and also between aspects of the employment relationship and outcomes such as affective commitment and intention to quit ([Hom et al., 2009](#_ENREF_20)). However, despite the empirical evidence linking HRM to job embeddedness, and job embeddedness to employee performance that we discussed earlier, researchers have yet to propose that job embeddedness is one of the mechanisms whereby AMO HRM practices are able to generate superior employee performance. Nevertheless, existing evidence on the mediating role of job embeddedness in relationships between HRM and other employee outcomes leads us to the following predictions:

*Hypothesis 3: On-the-job fit (a), sacrifice (b) and links (c) mediate the positive relationships between ability-enhancing HR and job performance.*

*Hypothesis 4: On-the job fit (a), sacrifice (b) and links (c) mediate the positive relationships between motivation-enhancing HR and job performance.*

*Hypothesis 5: On-the-job fit (a), sacrifice (b) and links (c) mediate the positive relationships between opportunity-enhancing HR and job performance*.

**METHOD**

**Organizational context**

Our study was carried out in a medium-sized Chinese transportation company, operating under the ownership of a provincial government. Before 2007, ownership of the company had changed several times from state-owned to partially privatized, and then back to the provincial transportation bureau due to poor financial performance. A new round of reforms began in 2007, when the bureau appointed a new General Manager to the company. The ongoing impact of these reforms formed the backdrop to our research in the company. Data were collected from employees working in each of eight self-contained business units: transportation office, security department, logistics center, international transportation center, warehouse, export and import center, and two port sites. The corporation from which the sample was drawn provides the opportunity for considerable variance with regard to actual HR practice implementation across business units based on its agreed unit autonomy, which allows managers within each unit to manage their various employees as they deem most appropriate. Consequently, employees at the same job level but who work in different business units may be managed with different HR practices.

**Participants and procedure**

Data were collected using questionnaires, which were translated from English into Chinese by two of the authors who are fluent in both languages. To maximize translation equivalence (Mullen, 1995), the final Chinese text was back-translated into English by a bilingual research assistant, and then pilot-tested on a sample of employees from the participating company. The final instrument comprised two separate questionnaires for employees and supervisors. The employee questionnaire measured their perceptions of HR practices and job embeddedness, while their supervisors rated employees’ job performance. The questionnaires, along with cover letters explaining the research objectives, were randomly distributed to managers and employees working in various departments and positions. Questionnaires were given to 32 managers and 228 employees who completed the surveys during regular working hours and returned them in pre-provided envelopes. Participation was voluntary and participants assured of the confidentiality of responses ([Podsakoff et al., 2003](#_ENREF_38)).

A total of 197 (76%) valid paired-responses were received. The average age of respondents was 37.78 years (*SD* = 8.31), average organizational tenure was 7.63 years (*SD* = 7.17), and 34.7 per cent were female. In terms of their education, 16.8 per cent had high school level education or below, 48.4 per cent held a diploma degree and 34.2 per cent a bachelor degree. In addition to the survey data collection, we conducted a total of 17 semi-structured interviews with participants from various departments and job levels. Interviewees were asked about the types of HRM practices implemented in the organization, and the perceived impact of these practices on employees.

The following quote from a senior manager, who joined the company in 1997 and had experienced several different ownerships, conveys a sense of the company’s recent investment in its employees, operational processes and equipment:

*“We’ve invested a lot in order to improve our employees’ working conditions, and in ways to retain them. For example, we improved migrant workers’ living conditions by providing new low-cost dormitories. We also modified our wage calculation, and have witnessed a very healthy pay rise from year to year since the reform. We feel far more secure in our jobs and happier in the workplace.” (Senior Manager 1)*

The interview data generated insights into ways in which this organization’s HRM system might be affecting employees’ perception of their links, fit and potential sacrifices via different paths, as illustrated by the quotes presented below.

*“We’ve changed the way we reward our employees, especially the manual workers. Instead of just focusing on increasing wage levels, we had to look for other ways to promote commitment, and reward and retain them. For example, we provide them with cheap accommodation, encourage and support those migrants who want to bring their family with them, or register their children at local schools.” (Senior Manager 2)*

 *“Since the reform, updating and connecting our HR practices and policies to the company’s goals has been a central focus for the senior management team. We are keen to use HR practices that ensure we hire the right people, but also to develop and motivate them to perform at their best and, most importantly, to retain them.” (Senior Manager 3)*

*“We are no longer just recruiting and hiring. Now we are considered to have a role in promoting social connections and performance, both of individuals and the organization. For example, we’ve introduced many different social events in order to promote employees’ consecutiveness with each other and the company. This helps new employees to get to know others and to fit in better.” (HR assistant 1)*

Our interviews also reinforced the notion that job embeddedness plays an important role in promoting job performance.

*“It’s very important for our employees to feel that their work is closely connected with others in the company. I have often found that the best performers are not just the ones who have skills and knowledge, but those who also have a sense of responsibility both to the organization and to their coworkers.” (Manager 2)*

*“I really appreciate the connection and friendship I have with my colleagues. We look after each other, and try our best to perform well so that we can all have a bright future with the company.” (Employee 2)*

*“It’s simple, I have too much to lose if I don’t perform well. My network is here, my family is here, and my child goes to the local school here. I feel that I have to perform well so that I don’t feel guilty. The last thing I’d want is to lose my job due to poor performance results.” (Employee 3)*

**Measures**

The items used to operationalize the constructs in this study are reported in the Appendix. Except where noted, survey-based measures used seven-point Likert-format scales (1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree).

**HRM practices**We focus on employees’ perceptions of HR practices in this study, guided by the understanding that employees "experience and interpret the same set of HR practices differently” (Liao et al., 2009: 384), and that it is these perceptions which are most influential when it comes to attitudinal and behavioral outcomes (Kehoe and Wright, 2013). We assessed employees’ perceptions of the existence of ability-enhancing, motivation-enhancing and opportunity-enhancing HRM practices using 23 items selected from scales used in previous studies of employee perceptions of HR practices ([Huselid, 1995](#_ENREF_21); [Kehoe and Wright, 2013](#_ENREF_24); [Liao et al., 2009](#_ENREF_33); [Sun et al., 2007](#_ENREF_43); [Zacharatos et al., 2005](#_ENREF_48)). In keeping with previous research using the AMO model of HRM ([Gardner et al., 2011](#_ENREF_13); [Jiang et al., 2012a](#_ENREF_22); [Kehoe and Wright, 2013](#_ENREF_24); [Kinnie et al., 2006](#_ENREF_26); [Lepak et al., 2006](#_ENREF_31); [Subramony, 2009](#_ENREF_42)), we categorized these practices into three domains: ability-, motivation- and opportunity-enhancing. We drew on a number of established measures to develop our own measures of the categories of HRM.

For ability-enhancing HR practices, we asked about training provision, selectivity in recruitment processes, and developmental feedback provided by supervisors, given that these practices are likely to increase employees’ level of knowledge and skills ([Gardner et al., 2011](#_ENREF_13); [Kehoe and Wright, 2013](#_ENREF_24); [Sun et al., 2007](#_ENREF_43); [Zacharatos et al., 2005](#_ENREF_48)). Specifically, we measured perceptions concerning selectivity in staffing by asking employees about the hiring process and the general quality of selected job candidates. We tapped into perceptions of training provision by asking employees about the extent to which they perceived the existence of formal training for skill improvement and acquisition of new knowledge. Feedback on job performance was assessed by asking employees to rate the availability of feedback designed to improve their job performance. Cronbach’s alpha was .90.

For motivation-enhancing HR practices, we asked employees to rate whether they perceive their wage is higher than that of other companies in the same industry ([Zacharatos et al., 2005](#_ENREF_48)), whether they receive merit-based compensation ([Gardner et al., 2011](#_ENREF_13); [Kehoe and Wright, 2013](#_ENREF_24)), and take part in a formal performance appraisal ([Kehoe and Wright, 2013](#_ENREF_24)). In addition, we assessed employees’ perceptions concerning extra benefits provided by the organization above and beyond the insurance required by the Social Insurance Law.[[2]](#footnote-2) We developed this item based on our interview data, and asked employees about the availability and importance of extra benefits such as housing benefits. Cronbach’s alpha was .90.

For opportunity-enhancing HR practices, we assessed employees’ perceptions regarding teamwork by asking them to rate the extent to which their work is organized in team format ([Zacharatos et al., 2005](#_ENREF_48)), the opportunity to participate in decision-making processes and the existence of decentralized participation processes, regular information-sharing communication regarding the organization’s performance ([Gardner et al., 2011](#_ENREF_13); [Kehoe and Wright, 2013](#_ENREF_24); [Zacharatos et al., 2005](#_ENREF_48)), and employees’ autonomy in making job design modifications in terms of how the work is done ([Kehoe and Wright, 2013](#_ENREF_24)). These practices were included because they are likely to improve employees’ sense of involvement and importance, and to increase employees’ perceived opportunity and motivation to make meaningful contributions to their work ([Combs et al., 2006](#_ENREF_11); [Jiang et al., 2012a](#_ENREF_22); [Kehoe and Wright, 2013](#_ENREF_24)). Cronbach’s alpha was .92. The items for all three HRM measures are presented in Appendix.

**Job embeddedness** We used [Holtom et al. (2006](#_ENREF_18))'s 9-item measure of on-the-job embeddedness. This measure assesses the fit, links and sacrifice elements of job embeddedness and has performed well in previous studies ([Burton et al., 2010](#_ENREF_9); [Felps et al., 2009](#_ENREF_12)). Sample items include “I feel like I am a good match for this company” (fit), “I would sacrifice a lot if I left this job” (sacrifice), and “I work closely with my co-workers” (links). Cronbach’s alphas were .78 (fit), .76 (sacrifice), and .78 (links).

**Job performance** Supervisors rated their employees’ level of job performance using six items from the scale developed by [Williams and Anderson (1991](#_ENREF_46)). Sample items include “he/she can adequately complete assigned duties” and “he/she fulfills responsibilities specified in their job description”. Cronbach’s alpha was .92.

**Control variables** We included tenure, gender and educational background as controls as these demographic variables have been found to covary with employee performance ([Halbesleben and Wheeler, 2008](#_ENREF_15); [Lee et al., 2004](#_ENREF_30)). We excluded age which is highly correlated with tenure (r = .83, p < .001). Organizational tenure was measured in years. Gender was dummy-coded (0 = male; 1 = female). Educational background was measured in four categories.

**RESULTS**

**Descriptive statistics**

Descriptive statistics and intercorrelations for the study variables are presented in Table 1. An initial investigation of the results revealed some high correlations (r > .50), ranging from .51 (ability-enhancing HR and organizational links) to .76 (ability- and opportunity-enhancing HR), indicating the potential issue of multicollinearity. We conducted a multiple linear regression model to obtain the variance inflation factor (VIF) for all variables. While different critical VIF values have been used as rules of thumb to indicate excessive or serious multicollinearity, a common rule of thumb is that if VIF > 10, the multicollinearity is severe ([Neter et al., 1989](#_ENREF_36)). The VIF values of 1.09 to 2.98 in Table 1 are substantially below the conventional cut-off of 10, which indicate that the independent variables do not have a severe multicollinearity problem. Therefore, all variables were retained for regression analyses.

‘PUT TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE’

**Confirmatory factor analysis**

To assess the discriminant validity of our three HRM dimensions, we conducted two confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) using Mplus 7.1 ([Muthén and Muthén, 2009](#_ENREF_35)). We compared our focal three-factor model with an alternative one-factor model in which all the HR practices were collapsed into a single factor. Our results reveal that the three-factor model fits the data well (χ2 /df = 2.37, CFI = .92; TLI = .90; RMSEA = .08; SRMR = .07), with factor loadings all higher than .50. The three-factor model also fits the data significantly better than the alternative one-factor model (χ2/df = 6.25, CFI = .68; TLI = .63; RMSEA = .17; SRMR = .13). These results suggest that using the AMO model to categorize HR practices is more suitable than the traditional single HR bundle for this study.

To assess the discriminant validity of the job embeddedness components we conducted two further CFAs. When we compared our focal three-factor model with an alternative one-factor model in which all the embeddedness items were collapsed into a single factor, our results showed that the three-factor model fitted the data well (χ2/df = 2.93; CFI = .95; TLI = .92; RMSEA = .01; SRMR = .05), and that factor loadings were all higher than .50. The proposed three-factor model also fitted the data significantly better than the alternative one-factor model (χ2/df = 5.56; CFI = .85; TLI = .81; RMSEA = .15; SRMR = .07).

We also examined the adequacy of the hypothesized seven-factor measurement model. The seven factors were allowed to be related. The fit indices for the measurement model were acceptable (χ2/df = 1.76, CFI = .92; TLI = .91; RMSEA = .06; SRMR = .08). As indicated in Table 2, the seven-factor model was better than three alternative models: Model 1, which combined all the HR practices into a single factor (χ2/df = 2.50, CFI = .83; TLI = .81; RMSEA = .09; SRMR = .08); Model 2, which combined all three job embeddedness components to form an aggregated measure (χ2/df = 1.88, CFI = .90; TLI = .89; RMSEA = .07; SRMR = .09); and Model 3, which combined the three sub-systems of HR practices into a single factor, and the three job embeddedness sub-components into a single factor (χ2/df = 2.62, CFI = .82; TLI = .80; RMSEA = .09; SRMR = .08).

‘PUT TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE’

**Hypothesis testing**

To test our hypotheses, we employed the multiple mediation SPSS macro developed by [Preacher and Hayes (2008](#_ENREF_39)) to compute coefficients for the proposed direct and indirect paths (See Table 3). With regard to the multiple mediation model (Hypotheses 3, 4 and 5), Preacher and Hayes’s approach has two advantages over alternative methods of testing mediation. First, multiple mediating variables can be assessed simultaneously, thus providing direct and indirect values for each mediation path while accounting for other mediation paths. Second, bootstrapping methods are used to generate confidence intervals for estimates of the product of *a* and *b* model coefficients for the indirect or mediated effects; this approach makes any violations of the assumption of normality less problematic. The totality of all the estimated indirect effects permits the construction of a 95% confidence interval for the effect size of each indirect effect. If the values of the estimated effect sizes within the confidence interval include zero, this indicates a non-significant effect. This approach has been used successfully in a number of published studies (e.g., [Brauer and Er-rafiy, 2011](#_ENREF_8); [Wiltermuth, 2011](#_ENREF_47)).

‘PUT TABLE 3 ABOUT HERE’

Hypotheses 1a-1c predicted that employees’ perceived fit, sacrifice and links would be positively related to their job performance. The three embeddedness sub-components were significantly and positively related to job performance in all three multiple mediation models, thus providing support for Hypotheses 1a-1c.

Hypotheses 2a-2c predicted that three sub-systems of HR practices would be positively associated with organizational fit, sacrifice and links. As shown in Table 3, ability-enhancing HR had a significant, positive relationship to organizational fit (.45, p < .001), sacrifice (.56, p < .001), and links (.46, p < .001), and thus Hypothesis 2a is supported. Opportunity-enhancing HR was also significantly and positively related to fit (.44, p < .001.), sacrifice (.55, p < .001), and links (.39, p < .001), which supports Hypothesis 2b. However, motivation-enhancing HR was significantly and positively related to fit (.17, p < .001) and sacrifice (.24, p < .001), but was not significantly related to links (.08, n.s.), which provides partial support for Hypothesis 2c.

Hypotheses 3-5 (a-c) predicted that fit, sacrifice and links would mediate the relationship between different sub-systems of HR and employee job performance. Three separate multiple mediation models, all with job performance as the dependent variable, were used to examine the mediation effects. Following Preacher and Hayes (2008), we used a bootstrapping method that included 95% confidence intervals, with 1000 bootstrap resamples to test the significance for indirect effects of each HR sub-system via the potential mediating variables on job performance. When zero is not in the 95% confidence interval, one can conclude that the indirect effect is significantly different from zero at p < .05 and, thus, that the effect of the independent variable (the three sub-systems of HR) on the dependent variable (job performance) was mediated by the proposed variables (fit, sacrifice and links).

Results of the analyses to test Hypotheses 3a-3c showed that the estimated total effect of ability-enhancing HR on job performance was .52 (p < .001). All three mediators, fit (β = .35, p < .001), sacrifice (β = .18, p < .05), and links (β = .16, p < .01) had significant direct paths to job performance. Ability-enhancing HR also had significant indirect effects on job performance as mediated through fit (β = .16, p < .001), sacrifice (β = .10, p < .05), and links (β = .08, p < .05). However, these indirect effects were only partially supported as ability-enhancing HR still had a significant direct effect on job performance (β = .19, p < .001) after controlling for all mediators, although the magnitude is lower than without the mediators being controlled for (β = .52, p < .001). As shown in Table 3, results from bootstrapping revealed that the true indirect effects for fit, sacrifice and links were estimated to lie between .10 and .23, .03 and .20, and .02 and .13, respectively. These indirect effects can be interpreted as significant because the bootstrap confidence intervals were entirely above zero, and thus we can conclude that fit, sacrifice and links (partially) mediate the ability-enhancing HR and task performance relationship. Thus, Hypotheses 3a-3c were partially supported.

In the results of the test of Hypotheses 4a-4c (see Table 3), the estimated total effect of motivation-enhancing HR on job performance was significant (β = .19, p < .05). All three mediators, fit (β = .37, p < .001), sacrifice (β = .24, p < .05), and links (β = .21, p < .001) were directly and significantly related to job performance. The results showed significant indirect effects for organizational fit (β = .07, p < .01) and sacrifice (β = .06, p < .05), but an insignificant indirect effect for organizational links (β = .02, n.s.). Furthermore, the direct relation of motivation-enhancing HR to job performance became insignificant (β = .06, n.s.), after accounting for all three mediators, suggesting full mediating effects. The bootstrapping results confirmed that indirect effects of organizational fit and sacrifice were significantly different from zero at p < .05. The true indirect effects for fit, sacrifice and links were estimated to lie between .02 and .13, and .02 and .11, respectively. Therefore, Hypotheses 4a-4b were supported, and we can conclude that organizational fit and sacrifice mediate the relationship between opportunity-enhancing HR and job performance.

Analysis of Hypotheses 5a-5c showed job performance to be significantly and directly influenced by opportunity-enhancing HR practices (β = .51, p < .001), fit (β = .35, p < .001), sacrifice (β = .16, p < .05), and links (β = .19, p < .01). Opportunity-enhancing practices also had significant indirect effects on job performance as mediated through fit (β = .16, p < .01), sacrifice (β = .09, p < .05), and links (β = .07, p < .01). However, the indirect relationships were only partially supported, as opportunity-enhancing HR still had a significant direct effect on job performance (β = .20, p < .001) after controlling for all mediators, although the magnitude is lower than without the mediators being controlled for (β = .51, p < .001). The results from bootstrapping revealed that the true indirect effects for fit, sacrifice and links were estimated to lie between .09 and .25, .003 and .18, and .03 and .13, respectively. Thus we can conclude that organizational fit, sacrifice and links partially mediate the relationship between opportunity-enhancing HR and job performance, supporting Hypotheses 5a-5c.

**Supplementary analyses**

Although we theorized that all three HR practice domains would influence each of the job embeddedness components, it is possible that fit, links and sacrifice are more closely associated with particular HR practices than with others. For example, ability-enhancing practices might have a greater impact on fit, than motivational- or opportunity-enhancing practices. To explore whether or not this might be the case, we carried out a series of additional post-hoc analyses. First, we examined whether any one set of HR practices was more strongly related to the fit component of embeddedness than others. We constrained the coefficient for ability- and motivation-enhancing HR to be equal. The Wald chi-square of .01 was non-significant at the .05 level. A similar result was found when we constrained the coefficient for ability- and opportunity-enhancing HR, and the Wald chi-square yielded a non-significant value of .20. These findings suggest that no one HR dimension was more strongly associated with the fit dimension than another. Second, we examined whether the links component of embeddedness was more strongly related to one set of HR practices than another. To do this, we first constrained the coefficients for opportunity- and ability-enhancing HR. The Wald chi-square value of 3.30 was marginally significant at the .10 level. Next, we constrained the coefficients for opportunity- and motivation-enhancing HR. The Wald chi-square value was not statistically significant (.13). Finally, we examined whether the sacrifice component of embeddedness was more strongly related to one set of HR practices than another. When we constrained the coefficients for ability- and opportunity-enhancing HR, the Wald chi-square value was non-significant (.02). Similarly, when we constrained the coefficient for motivation- and opportunity-enhancing HR, the Wald chi-square yielded a value of .11 which is not statistically significant. We therefore concluded that the data did not appear to favor one set of HR practices over another in terms of the strength of their associations with fit, links and sacrifice.

**DISCUSSION**

The primary purpose of this study was to explore the relationships between employees’ perceptions of the use of high-performance HR practices, job embeddedness at the dimensional level and employees’ job performance. Despite increasing scholarly attention being paid to job embeddedness and its consequences, questions remain as to how organizations can actively embed their employees in an organization ([Lee et al., 2014](#_ENREF_29); [Zhang et al., 2012](#_ENREF_49)). For example, in their recent review of job embeddedness, Lee et al. (2014: 15) pointed out ambiguity over “what sort of human resource strategies increase or decrease embeddedness”. Accordingly, examining HR practices’ role in embedding employees in an organization and, subsequently, improving their job performance is of value to both the HRM and job embeddedness literatures. To address this need, as well as recent calls in the literature for studies to disaggregate the job embeddedness measure into its component dimensions when considering its impact on various dependent variables ([Jiang et al., 2012b](#_ENREF_23); [Lee et al., 2014](#_ENREF_29); [Zhang et al., 2012](#_ENREF_49)), we developed and tested a model incorporating both AMO and job embeddedness theory, in which job embeddedness dimensions mediate the relationships between employees’ perceived HR practices and job performance.

In general, our findings support our predictions. Firstly, our study provides empirical evidence about the effect of HRM practices as they relate to the fit, sacrifice and links dimensions of job embeddedness and job performance. By drawing on the AMO framework ([Kinnie et al., 2006](#_ENREF_26); [Lepak et al., 2006](#_ENREF_31)), our investigation provides evidence that different sub-systems of HRM contribute to job embeddedness dimensions differently. This is a much needed contribution to understanding the antecedents and consequences of job embeddedness. Our study confirms [Bambacas and Kulik's (2013](#_ENREF_3)) findings that unique HR practices impact each of the job embeddedness dimensions differently. The results revealed that ability- and opportunity-enhancing HR practices are each positively related to the fit, sacrifice and links components of job embeddedness, whereas motivation-enhancing HR practices related positively to organizational fit and sacrifice. While motivation-enhancing HR also positively predicted organizational links, the effect was not statistically significant. One possible explanation for this non-significant relationship is the nature of motivation-enhancing practices such as higher wages and pay for performance. Such practices signal a positive valuation by the company of employees and their efforts, thus fostering an increased sense of both person-job and person-organization fit ([Gardner et al., 2011](#_ENREF_13); [Kehoe and Wright, 2013](#_ENREF_24)). Furthermore, the intrinsic satisfaction derived from better person-job/organization fit is likely to be something the incumbent would consider as a potential sacrifice were they to leave the organization. Thus, greater use of motivation-enhancing practices may increase perceived fit and sacrifices, rather than create and/or enhance a sense of connection between an employee and his/her co-workers and the organization.

Secondly, the results demonstrated the role of job embeddedness components in mediating the relationship between HR practices and employee job performance. In line with our predictions, we established that ability- and opportunity-enhancing HR can enhance employee job performance, through their effects in better embedding employees by increasing fit, sacrifice and links. We further established that motivation-enhancing HR is likely to embed employees by its effects on increasing fit and sacrifice. Our results confirm Bambacas and Kulik’s (2013) findings that organizational HR practices can impact upon employees’ work behaviors by increasing various aspects of job embeddedness. We extended their study by investigating whether unique bundles of HR practices may embed employees differentially by increasing their sense of fit, sacrifice and links. Our research is the first to provide empirical support for the AMO model of HRM-job embeddedness-job performance associations. Our demonstration of a mediation effect indicates that employees’ perceptions of HR practices affect their job performance to at least some extent through their effect on their perceived organizational fit, sacrifices and links. These results are likely to have significant implications for job performance across a variety of organizational settings.

Thirdly, the results also showed that the three components of job embeddedness all related positively to employee job performance. These associations are consistent with both our predictions and previous studies ([Halbesleben and Wheeler, 2008](#_ENREF_15); [Lee et al., 2004](#_ENREF_30); [Lev and Koslowsky, 2012](#_ENREF_32); [Sun et al., 2012](#_ENREF_44)). Our study provides additional empirical support to the contention that an embedded employee is likely to be more motivated to enhance their performance. An increased perception of fit can enhance an employee’s desire to contribute to the organization. This, in turn, increases the potential sacrifices they would incur were they to leave the organization. Furthermore, in settings where employees are interdependent and interact frequently links are likely to deepen; this may encourage mutual helping behaviour that raises overall job performance levels ([Lev and Koslowsky, 2012](#_ENREF_32)).

Finally, our findings provide empirical support to the argument that ability-, motivation- and opportunity-enhancing HR practices are best viewed as “three distinct... rather than interchangeable indicators of HR systems” (Jiang et al., 2012: 1278). Our three-factor model fits the data significantly better than a model combining the three sub-systems into a unidimensional HR system. Similarly, our results also affirm the importance of disaggregating the job embeddedness construct into its fit, sacrifice and links components. By simultaneously examining the pathways that exist between each job embeddedness dimension and its antecedents and outcomes, our results confirm that fit, sacrifice and links are distinct constructs. This is consistent with both the original conception of job embeddedness as a multi-dimensional construct (Mitchell et al., 2001), and recent calls for its disaggregation ([Jiang et al., 2012b](#_ENREF_23); [Lee et al., 2014](#_ENREF_29); [Zhang et al., 2012](#_ENREF_49)).

**Contributions to practice**

Our findings indicate that organizations can benefit from actively managing employees’ job embeddedness; we found positive effects of embeddedness upon individuals’ job performance. Thus, organizations should derive advantages from developing organizational cultures which enhance fit, links and sacrifice. Managers can foster employee embeddedness through implementing a range of high performance HR practices. For example, fit can be increased by matching employees’ knowledge, skills, and abilities through comprehensive selection processes, providing job specific training and development, as well as demonstrating organizational commitment to them through long-term career plans and developmental performance appraisals. Organizations might cultivate and strengthen links through HR practices such as team-based compensation, teamwork structures, long-term projects and internal labor markets. Meanwhile, offering competitive remuneration packages and benefits, and firm-specific training opportunities can raise sacrifice costs. Finally, our results suggest that high performance HR systems increase embeddedness, which in turn improves job performance. Given these mediation effects, organizations should regularly survey employees’ job embeddedness and respond in a timely manner to indications of low or reduced embeddedness before it culminates in behaviors that lead to deteriorating job performance.

**Limitations and further research opportunities**

Several potential limitations should be noted. Firstly, although supervisors rated the job performance outcome variable independently, most data were collected during one time period. While job embeddedness is a potential antecedent of job performance, the reverse direction may also hold given that embeddedness can develop over time. Thus, future research could employ a longitudinal design to explore how changes in embeddedness influence job performance. Another potential limitation is that we directed our efforts to the on-the-job dimension of embeddedness. In so doing, we adopted existing studies’ suggestion that on-the-job embeddedness would be more relevant to employee work-related outcomes such as job performance (e.g., Sekiguchi et al., 2008). However, off-the-job embeddedness such as community and family embeddedness may also influence job performance ([Lee et al., 2004](#_ENREF_30); [Ramesh and Gelfand, 2010](#_ENREF_40)). In future research, adding off-the-job embeddedness, and either disaggregating it into the original six components ([Mitchell et al., 2001](#_ENREF_34)), or the more recent suggestion of nine components ([Ramesh and Gelfand, 2010](#_ENREF_40)), may lead to meaningful research results. Thirdly, we did not examine the antecedents of variability in employees’ perceptions of different sub-systems of HR practices. Although we posit the likely importance of consistent and effective implementation in shaping employees’ HR practice perceptions, empirical work is needed to examine the relative significance of potential antecedents. Fourthly, the generalizability of our findings might be limited. For example, a state-owned enterprise might offer fewer pay-for-performance practices and have more generous benefits ([Kim et al., 2010](#_ENREF_25)). These factors might account for the generally less significant impact of motivation-enhancing HR practices upon job embeddedness and its insignificant impact on job performance that we report in this study. The nature of job performance may vary significantly across industries and jobs, thus raising the possibility of other boundary conditions for our results, which future research could explore. Finally, we encourage future research to explore the main effects and interactions of the AMO model of HRM sub-systems and job embeddedness upon individual and organizational outcomes.

**Conclusion**

Job embeddedness has emerged as a major predictor of employee turnover, however, questions remain regarding both what contributes to its development and its predictive power on “why people perform”. Our study directly addresses these questions. The findings demonstrate that the AMO model of HRM focused on developing employees’ knowledge, skills, and abilities might enhance their embeddedness by directly increasing their fit, sacrifice and links. Our results also indicate the value of utilizing the job embeddedness construct at its component level. In addition, the study demonstrated the indirect effect of the AMO-model of HRM on employee job performance via the effects of the embeddedness components. We hope our preliminary findings spur additional research to further understand how strategic HRM can enhance job embeddedness via different pathways, and when and how job embeddedness sub-components might help predict a range of important work outcomes.

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Table 1. Descriptive statistics among research variables

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|   | Variable | Mean | SD | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 1 | SEX | 0.67 | 0.57 | *(1.09)* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2 | EDU | 4.15 | 0.77 | .002 | *(1.27)* |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3 | Tenure | 14.54 | 8.31 | .13 | -.42\*\* | *(1.38)* |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4 | Ability-enhancing HR | 4.22 | 1.14 | .10 | -.11 | -.14 | *(2.76)* |  |  |  |  |  |
| 5 | Motivation-enhancing HR  | 5.23 | 1.24 | -.22\*\* | .01 | -.19\* | .15\* | *(1.21)* |  |  |  |  |
| 6 | Opportunity-enhancing HR | 4.31 | 1.13 | .05 | -.02 | -.13 | .76\*\* | .25\*\* | *(2.42)* |  |  |  |
| 7 | Organizational Fit | 5.11 | 1.07 | .09 | -.09 | .07 | .48\*\* | .20\*\* | .47\*\* | *(2.69)* |  |  |
| 8 | Organizational Sacrifice | 4.71 | 1.12 | .06 | -.06 | -.10 | .58\*\* | .26\*\* | .56\*\* | .74\*\* | *(2.98)* |  |
| 9 | Organizational Links | 5.43 | 1.05 | .08 | -.11 | .02 | .51\*\* | .09 | .42\*\* | .55\*\* | .59\*\* | *(1.65)* |
| 10 | Task Performance | 5.26 | 1.06 | .06 | -.11 | .12 | .57\*\* | .23\*\* | .55\*\* | .69\*\* | .67\*\* | .58\*\* |

\*p < .05 \*\*p < .01

Values in italic are VIFs

Table 2. Fit statistics for alternative models a

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Models** | **χ2/df** | **CFI** | **TLI** | **RMSEA** | **SRMR** |
| Theoretical seven-factor model | 1.76 | .92 | .91 | .06 | .08 |
| Alternative model 1b (five-factor) | 2.50 | .83 | .81 | .09 | .08 |
| Alternative model 2c (five-factor) | 1.88 | .90 | .89 | .07 | .09 |
| Alternative model 3d (three-factor) | 2.62 | .82 | .80 | .09 | .08 |

a n = 197

b Five factors are (1) a single high performance HR system factor which combines ability-, motivation- and opportunity-enhancing HR practices, (2) organizational fit, (3) organizational sacrifice, (4) organizational links, and (5) task performance

c Five factors are (1) ability-enhancing, (2) motivation-enhancing, (3) opportunity-enhancing HR, (4) a single job embeddedness factor which combines organizational fit, sacrifice and links, and (5) task performance

d Three factors are (1) a single high performance HR system factor which combines ability-, motivation- and opportunity-enhancing HR practices, (2) a single job embeddedness factor which combines organizational fit, sacrifice and links, and (3) task performance

Table 3. Summary of mediation results for ability-, opportunity-, and motivation-enhancing HR with task performance as dependent variable

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| IV | M | Effect of IV on M | Effect of M on DV | Direct effect | Indirect effects | Total effects | LL 95% CI | UL 95% CI |
| Ability-enhancing HR | Organizational Fit | .45\*\*\* | .35\*\*\* | .19\*\*\* | .16\*\*\* | .52\*\*\* | .10 | .23 |
| Organizational Sacrifice | .56\*\*\* | .18\* | 10\* | .03 | .20 |
| Organizational Links | .46\*\*\* | .16\*\* | .08\* | .02 | .13 |
| Opportunity-enhancing HR | Organizational Fit | .44\*\*\* | .35\*\*\* | .20\*\*\* | .16\*\* | .51\*\*\* | .09 | .25 |
| Organizational Sacrifice | .55\*\*\* | .16\* | .09\* | .003 | .18 |
| Organizational Links | .39\*\*\* | .19\*\* | .07\*\* | .03 | .13 |
| Motivation-enhancing HR | Organizational Fit | .17\*\* | .37\*\*\* | .06 | .07\* | .19\* | .02 | .13 |
| Organizational Sacrifice | .24\*\*\* | .24\*\* | .06\* | .02 | .11 |
| Organizational Links | .08 | .21\*\*\* | .02 | -.01 | .05 |

Note. DV, dependent variable; M, mediating variable; IV, independent variable

+ p < .10 \*p < .05 \*\*p < .01 \*\*\*p < .001

1. Ramesh and Gelfand (2012) expanded this original conceptualization to include a new dimension, family embeddedness, which comprises the three facets of fit, sacrifice and links. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The Social Insurance Law, administered by the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security, covers pension, medical, work-related injury, unemployment and maternity insurance. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)