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(IJEPC)**[www.ijepec.com](http://www.ijepec.com)**A STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF OFF-THE-JOB  
EMBEDDEDNESS AND ON-THE-JOB EMBEDDEDNESS ON  
EMPLOYEE RETENTION IN MALAYSIAN PRIVATE  
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This work is licensed under [CC BY 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)**Abstract:**

Employee retention (ER) among academic staff remains a major challenge for the universities and deserve more attention from researchers. Due to radical change in teaching method place additional pressure on the academic staff and lead to high turnover. Job embeddedness can be more significantly explain the variance in ER. However, little research done to examine the relationship between Off-the-job-embeddedness (JEOff) and on-the-job-embeddedness (JEOon). Furthermore, due to the unclear conclusion for the impact of JEOff and JEOon on ER based on past studies, this study aims to exam the relationship between JEOff and JEOon as well as both impact on ER. The stratified sampling technique was used to draw 482 samples from population. The model was tested by applying The Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM). JEOff and JEOon were found to have direct significant impact on ER. But the effect size of JEOff on ER is smaller as compared with JEOon. Moreover, JEOff could be related to JEOon significantly with the largest level of effect-size. ER could be increased by enhancing JEOff through JEOon as mediator. This study provides additional insight for human resource practitioners from Malaysian Private Universities in designing more effective system to retain their academic staff.

**Keywords:**

Employee Retention, On-The-Job Embeddedness, Off-The-Job Embeddedness, Malaysian Private University.

## Introduction

Human assets are the most important factor of production and play a very important role in making the success of the organisation. For those talented employees who have high capability will make a significant contribution to the organisation, they could help to gain competitive advantage which is very important for the success of organization (Minchington, 2010; Singh, 2019). Similar to Malaysian Private Universities, all the academic staff play a crucial role and serve as “engine room” in the system of university. The overall university system quality would be much depended on the academic staff. It is vital to keep high employee retention so that can continue to keep high quality of educational system in order to gain the competitive advantage (Jacob et al., 2021).

Cascio (2003) describes retention as an employer’s initiative to keep their employees stay with their organization in longer period of time. Normally, it is referring to avoid staff resign voluntary. Employee retention become more and more challenging and importance nowadays (Holtom et al., 2020). Maintaining the high rate of employee retention is a big challenging issue for Malaysian Private University (Manogharan et al., 2018). With the explosion of the global pandemic in 2019, all people are advised to stay at home and avoid direct social interaction with peers, friends and relatives. There is an unprecedented destruction in the education system and all the education institutions need to be closed (Wu et al., 2022). The higher education institutions, including Malaysian private universities, have taken immediate action to conduct online classes and stop all university-related activities to avoid the virus spreading rapidly. All the academic staff and students could be protected by implementing this new normal (Leal Filho et al., 2021).

These sudden and drastic changes have caused additional pressure for academic staff (Kinman & Wray, 2020; Wray & Kinman, 2022). All the academic staff are required to stay at home and conduct all the classes and meeting via online platforms such as zoom, microsoft teams, google meet and so on (Azman & Abdullah, 2021). The transition from physical class to online class and blended learning is one of the biggest changes for academic staff. Will et al. (2020) pinpointed that such a change takes a lot of time and effort to conduct the class. For online teaching, academic staff always feel that they are teaching alone (Kaufmann & Vallade, 2020) due to there is always no respond from students (Ragawi & Zahary (2017). They always experience loneliness as well as difficult days of isolation. This will lead to high level of stress and anxiety for academic staff (Bozkurt et al., 2020). Hussin et al., (2021); Yanguas et al. (2018) argued that the feeling of loneliness and lacking in social connection could be correlated significantly with psychological problems, for instance high depression and anxiety, which might contribute to high level of psychological stress.

These sudden and drastic changes in teaching styles and lacking in social interaction have caused additional burden for academic staff which would raise the stress level for the academic staff (Kinman & Wray, 2020; Wray & Kinman, 2022). Thus, according to Manogharan et al. (2018), the rate of turnover unexpectedly and shockingly high especially for head of faculty and senior lecturer. The rate of retaining academic staff still remain a big challenge for the universities and should put more attention by scholars and researchers. However, many researchers have studied on employee retention in various industry such as mining industry in Autralia (Parmenter & Barnes, 2021), IT sector in India (Nayak et al., 2021), travel agency industry in Hong Kong (Choy & Kamoche, 2021), pharmaceutical companies in Lebanon (Hejase et al., 2016), retail sector in Lebanon (Al Shaher & Zreik, 2022), telecom industry in

Pakistan (Younis & Ahsan, 2021), hotel industry in Indonesia (Saputra & Riana, 2021), hospital in India (Bharath, 2021), telecom industry in Indonesia (Frimayasa, 2021), hotel industry in Korea (Chung et al., 2021), construction companies in Korea (Park et al., 2021), lighting company in Indonesia (Soenanta et al., 2021) and so on. There are only a few studies have been conducted on employee retention in Private University, especially in Malaysia.

The latest statistical analysis from the researchers have shown that job embeddedness (JE) could explain the variance more significantly in employee retention (ER) than the conventional construct. The theory of ER, which has proven that JE is useful for the leader in retaining the staff. JE could explain the variance significantly in retention if compare with the traditional construct such as job satisfaction, job alternative and organisational commitment (Holtom et al., 2020). According to the theory proposed by Mitchell et al. (2001), JE could be divided into off-the-job embeddedness (JEOff) and on-the-job embeddedness (JEon). Mitchell et al. (2001) argued that JE could capture more complete view to predict the turnover. Yang et al., (2011) claimed that JE has significant impact on ER. However, there is little empirical study have been done to examine the relationship between the dimensions of JE (JEOff and JEon). This study more emphasis on the relationship between JEOff and JEon as well as how is the impact of both dimensions on ER.

Furthermore, many past studies have studied the relationship between JEon and ER. Coetzer et al. (2019) found that JEon significantly affecting turnover intention negatively. This result aligned with the study of Engelbrechta et al. (2021) pinpointed that JEon can be related with turnover intention negatively. For those employees with high JEon would tends to have lower turnover intention and would continue to stay in their organisation. Besides, Maska and Riyanto (2020) also have done study in Jakarta and found that JEon has a negative and significant effect on turnover intention in the pharmaceutical laboratory industry. However, according to Lee et al. (2004) argued that JEon does not predict the turnover significantly. The data of their study have been obtained from the international financial institution. The survey forms have been distributed to the employee working from five different unit of organisation.

Besides, there are some past studies have found that JEOff can be related significantly to ER. According to Lee et al. (2004), JEOff has significant effect on turnover intention. This result is in line with Jiang et al. (2012) who has done meta-analysis and also found that JEOff can be related negatively with turnover intention significantly. However, Engelbrechta et al. (2021) pinpointed that there is no real impact of JEOff on employee stay intention. This result aligned with the study of Ampofo et al. (2017) and Purba (2015) which argued that JEOff cannot be correlated directly with turnover intention. Allen (2006); Halbesleben & Wheeler (2008); Ramesh and Gelfand (2010) also found that JEOff has insignificant effect on turnover.

In view of different results obtained from past studies, there is unclear conclusion on the impact of JEOff as well as JEon on ER. Therefore, this study aims to explore further to fill this gap by examining further the relationship between JEOff and JEon as well as both impact on ER amongst academic staff in Malaysian Private Universities which could be supported by spill-over theory and social exchange theory. This study formulated four research questions (RQs) to be addressed as: 1) RQ1-Is JEOff significantly related to JEon? 2) RQ2-Is JEon significantly related to ER? 3) RQ3-Is JEOff significantly related to ER? 4) RQ4-Does JEon mediate the relationship between JEOff and ER? Thus, this study could provide new perspectives on ER for

Human Resource (HR) practitioners from Private Universities in Malaysia whereby could help them to implement different practices to retain the academic staff more effective and efficiency.

## Literature Review

### *Off-the-job Embeddedness and On-the-job Embeddedness*

The relationship between JEOff and JEon could be explained by spill-over theory which was introduced by Wilensky (1960). Spill-over theory propose that employee emotions, behaviour, stress level as well as their attitudes can be carried over from one life area to another, such as from home to work. (Rothbard & Dumas, 2006). According to Chan et al. (2019), JEOff could be related with JEon significantly. With strong off-the-job embeddedness, the academic staff would receive strong support from the community members, for example: family members, friends and relatives (Kiazad et al., 2015). The close bonding and relationship with the members from the community could promote positive mood and well-being of academic staff. The emotional well-being could be enhanced if employees have deep psychological and emotional connection with the community (strong JEOff). At the same time, high probably these positive outcomes would overflow from non-work to the working place and promote the positive effect toward JEon as per proposed by spill-over theory. For instance, an academic staff being have strong network with their community (family members, relatives, friends) would prevent them from emotional exhaustion and show great passion to communicate and work together with their colleagues and supervisors in their university. Besides, they also would have greater force to involve in their work activities such as meeting, consultancy, training, teaching, supervision, research, community services, administration and so on (Chan et al., 2019; Ryan & Deci, 2017). Hence, it is anticipated that JEOff affecting JEon significantly. RQ1 can be made into H1.

RQ1: Is off-the-job embeddedness significantly related to on-the-job embeddedness?

H1: Off-the-job embeddedness is significantly related to on-the-job embeddedness.

### *On-the-job Embeddedness and Employee Retention*

The relationship between JEon and ER could be explained by Blau's (1964) social-exchanged theory. According to social exchange theory, employees are more willing to put out extra effort at work in return for the employer's goodwill. Employees with high level of JEon are more comfortable in the workplace, appreciate the perks provided by their employer, and have a higher willingness to give back to their employer by continuing their employment (Kristof-Brown, et al., 2005). JEon was proven that it plays a constructive role in figuring out the voluntary turnover (Jiang et al., 2012). Coetzer et al. (2019) found that JEon could be related to turnover intention negatively. With high JEon, the academic staff would perceive that their individual values well match with values of university, for instance, their extra efforts in teaching and research are well recognised by the university such as giving the awards, they would be more attracted to stay longer with the current university. Besides, for those staff with high JEon would have close social interaction with colleagues and supervisors, it would be difficult for them to leave the university. Staff would preferable to continue their employment and stay with their current university because it is a bit challenge for them to rebuild the close relationship with colleagues and supervisors if they change job to another university (Elfenbein and O'Reilly, 2007; Halbesleben & Wheeler, 2008; Mitchell et al., 2001). Hence, it is anticipated that JEon affecting ER significantly. RQ2 can be made into H2.

RQ2: Is on-the-job embeddedness significantly related to employee retention?

H2: On-the-job embeddedness is significantly related to employee retention.

### ***Off-the-job Embeddedness and Employee Retention***

JEoff is a factor occur outside the setting of an organisation which is able to provide the resources to employees. Many past studies have found that JEoff can reduce the turnover rate (Holtom et al., 2020; Jiang et al., 2012). Employees with high level of JEoff are more likely to have strong connections with community members such as family, relatives and friends, as well as reasonable compatibility with activities in the society. By using Wilensky's (1960) spill-over theory, for those employees with high level of JEoff could deal better with the stressors in working place. Researchers have pinpointed that JEoff, for instance, the integration of family and community, is the key reason why employee continue to stay in the organisation (Lee et al., 2004; March & Simon, 1958). If academic staff could tie well with their family members, relatives and friends from the community, they would be waiting for society activities such as celebration of birthday, time-off with friends, relatives and family members. The close bonding with community would be developed slowly from time to time and this might lead to stronger social networking. Strong social networking from outside the organisation is an important source of emotional support for employees to deal with high level of stress in the working place. The stronger the bonding with the community, it makes them more difficult to leave their current organisation. Therefore, the greater JEoff, the stronger ER (Holtom et al., 2020; Philip & Medina-Craven, 2022). Hence, it is anticipated that JEoff affecting ER significantly. RQ3 can be made into H3.

RQ3: Is off-the-job embeddedness significantly related to employee retention?

H3: Off-the-job embeddedness is significantly related to employee retention.

### ***On-the-job Embeddedness as Mediator***

Resulting from the expression of theoretical as per the above discussion, it offers an explanation to believe that JEon mediates the relationship between JEoff and ER. In other words, strong level in JEon could make staff to keep long-term employment with their current university by increasing the level of JEoff. If the individual personal value is fit well with the surrounding non-working environment from the community and they have strong connection with nonwork activities from the community such as charity affairs, drawing classes and so on (Huang et al., 2021), so they are embedded strongly in their community. The positive emotional well-being of academic staff could be enhanced by obtaining strong connection with the activities and members from the community. With strong connection and close relationship with the members from community could provide emotional support to academic staff and prevent them from the feeling of frustration in their working place in which employee emotions, behaviour, stress level as well as their attitudes can be carried over from home to work (Rothbard & Dumas, 2006) as proposed by spill-over theory. Having said that with the strong emotional support from the community, academic is able to handle well their emotion and better deal with their students, colleague and supervisors in the university as well as great involvement in their work activities such as teaching, research work, meeting and so on. They tend to be more embedded in their job. The positive impacts are likely to shift from nonwork domain to work domain. Then, the stronger JEon would make them feel harder to leave their university and prefer to continue their employment with the university due to the norm of reciprocity as per proposed by social exchange theory. Therefore, JEon mediates the relationship between JEoff

and ER (Chan et al., 2019; Ryan & Deci, 2017). Hence, it is anticipated that JEon as mediator as below proposed hypothesis. RQ4 can be made into H4.

RQ4: Does on-the-job embeddedness mediate the relationship between off-the-job embeddedness and employee retention?

H4: On-the-job embeddedness mediates the relationship between off-the-job embeddedness and employee retention.

### Research Framework

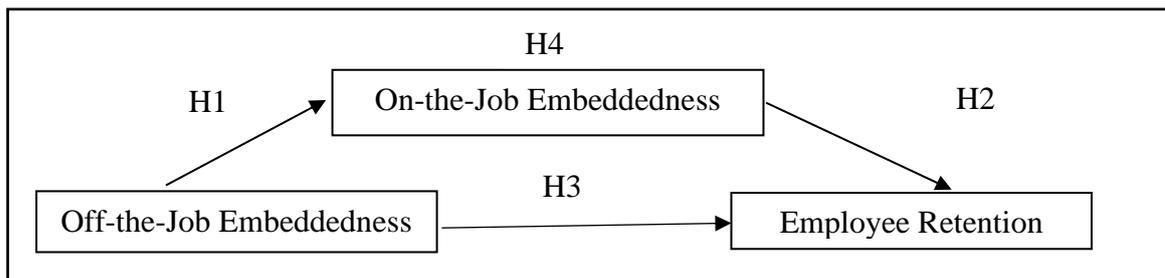


Figure 1: Research Framework

On the basis of the above-mentioned discussion in the literature, Figure 1 shows the proposed research framework for this study. It is anticipated the direct effect of JEoff on JEon, JEon on ER, JEoff on ER as well as mediating role of JEon which could be supported by spill-over theory and social exchange theory.

### Methodology

Stratified proportionate random sampling technique was used to select the samples for this study. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2019), all the subgroups could be tested fairly to increase the efficiency by using this technique. This study is mainly targeted on those full-time academic staff who are currently working in the top six Malaysian Private University based on QS World University Rankings (2021-2022). They could be as good indicator and benchmark for other Malaysian private universities which can help them in identifying a better HR practice (Engelkemeyer, 1998). The population size approximately is 3688 academic staff designating from tutor to senior professor. In total 2793 online questionnaire have been distributed via email to the academic staff. However, only 482 sets of usable online questionnaires have been received with 17.1% of response rate. 482 sets is enough to represent the whole population because it has met the minimum amount of 351 sample size based on Krejcie and Morgan's table. Therefore, it is sufficient for data analysis. Based on total 482 respondents, there is 57.7% and 42.3% of survey respondents are female and male respectively. Majority of survey respondents are under age of 31-40 years old (43.4%) and only 5.2% of survey respondents are under age of 30 years old and below. Besides, the survey respondents composed of 32.4% and 19.1% are under age if 41-50 and >50 years old respectively. Furthermore, the individual races consisting of 44.8% of survey respondents are Chinese, 35.5% of survey respondents are Malay and 13.9% of survey respondents are Indian. Besides, 5.4% of survey respondents are under "other" category and 0.4% of survey respondents did not provide the answer and it was reported as missing-data.

For ER, the measurement was adopted from Kyndt et al. (2009) in which consists of 11 items. There is 7 positive items and 4 negative items respectively. The 4 negative items are item 8, 9, 10 and 11. All items are designed in 7 points likert scale and under reflective indicators which they are replaceable from one to another (Kyndt et al., 2009; Pan et al., 2021). Clinton, et al. (2012) have developed a new measurement for JE with 12 items. It can overcome the weak points of original measure such as mixed type of format and lengthy format. There are two dimensions of JE, namely as JEon (organisation) and JEOff (community). Both of this dimension contains of three sub-dimensions (Fit, link and sacrifice) (Mitchell et al., 2001; Philip & Medina-Craven, 2022). Clinton, et al. (2012) have designed 2 items for each sub-dimension. In other words, Clinton, et al. (2012) have designed total 6 items for JEon (organisation) and JEOff (community) respectively. This new measurement is reflective measurement which is considered good in reliability and validity. Therefore, it was suitable to be adopted in this study. Seven (7) points likert scales is applied to all items. According to Mitchell et al. (2001), JEon and JEOff are under formative-higher-order-constructs which are formed by these 3 subdimensions (fit, link and sacrifice) as lower-order-construct. All the sub-dimensions cannot be replaceable to each other.

## Results and Discussion

### Results

The Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) technique was applied to test the model in this study. According to Hair et al. (2019), PLS-SEM is more suitable to be applied in the research model which consist of reflective-formative measurement. In this study, the construct of JEon and JEOff are formed by fit, link and sacrifice as formative construct (Mitchell et al., 2001). They used higher-order construct model which JEon and JEOff are higher-order construct and fit, link and sacrifice are lower-order construct which are measured by reflective measurement (Clinton, et al. 2012). However, ER is measured by reflective measurement (Kyndt et al., 2009; Pan et al., 2021). Thus, it is advisable to use PLS-SEM is more appropriate in this study. Two-stage approach is applied in this study by using the technique of bootstrapping as well as PLS algorithm to build outer model (measurement model) (Kim, 2022; Noma et al., 2021). Besides, the inner model (structural model) can be built by using procedure of complete bootstrapping (Kim, 2022). In addition, the predictive relevance in the structural model can be tested by using the technique of blindfolding (Kim, 2022; Sukhov et al., 2022). The measurement model mainly can be grouped into 2 different groups: Reflective and formative measurement model. For the latent constructs of this study, such as ER is under reflective measurement model (Kyndt et al., 2009; Pan et al., 2021). However, for JEon and JEOff are under combination of both (Clinton et al., 2012; Mitchell, 2001).

### Reflective Measurement

According to two stage approach, the validation of reflective-lower-order measurement could be done in stage one. For indicator reliability, due to the loading value for item 4 of ER is the lowest value and less than 0.40, it has been removed from the measurement of ER. For all reflective indicators, their factor loadings can meet the preferable threshold value at least 0.40 as proposed by Reinartz et al. (2009). All the 22 items can be kept and remained in the model. Besides, the internal reliability also is satisfactory due to the value of Cronbach Alpha for all items are greater than 0.7 as proposed by Fornell & Larcker (1981); Hair et al. (2019). Furthermore, composite reliability for all the reflective-lower-order-indicators are greater than 0.8 (Nunnally, 1978). The AVE for each reflective-lower-order-indicators have complied with

the minimal requirement of 0.5 which in line with the proposal of Hair Jr et al. (2016); Hair et al. (2019). The results indicated the convergent validity is established. In addition, discriminant validity can be tested by using Heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) as per proposed by Henseler et al. (2015). For criterion test, the HTMT values for all reflective indicators are lower than the threshold value 0.85 (Kline, 2011) except JEoff-sacrifice-JEoff-link. Despite of it cannot meet the threshold for criterion test (HTMT0.85), but there is another method to test the discriminant validity called as statistical test by running bootstrapping to generate the confidence interval (CI) which the value of HTMT should not close to 1 and should below than 1.0 (HTMT1) (Franke & Sarstedt, 2019; Henseler et al., 2015). The results show the value of confidence interval (CI) for HTMT under statistical test (HTMT1) is below 1 for all reflective indicators. Thus, the results indicated the discriminant validity is established.

### ***Formative Measurement***

According to two step approach, the higher-order-construct could be validated in stage two. The issue of multicollinearity, construct validity as well as indicator reliability should be examined to determine the quality of formative measurement (Hanafiah, 2020). Based on the result, JEon as higher-order-construct does not have any multicollinearity issue with the lower-order-constructs (JEon-fit, JEon-link and JEon-sacrifice) due to the value of outer VIF is lower than the value of 3.0 as in line with recommendation of Hair et al. (2019). Similarly, the value of outer VIF for JEoff also is lower than the value of 3.0 which also indicating higher-order-construct of JEoff also does not have any multicollinearity issue with the lower-order-constructs (JEoff-fit, JEoff-link and JEoff-sacrifice). Furthermore, the results show that the outer weight for JEon-fit (0.500) and JEon-sacrifice (0.522) can be related to JEon significant due p-value is less than 0.05 as proposed by Franke et al. (2008); Hair Jr et al. (2014); Roberts & Thatcher (2009) as well as the value of outer loadings are greater than 0.5 as proposed by Hair et al. (2012). Despite of the p-value for outer weight of JEon-link (0.087) is greater than 0.05 (insignificant), but the outer loading for JEon-link (0.723) is more than 0.7. Therefore, it does not need to be removed and can be maintained as proposed by Hair et al. (2012); Hair et al. (2019). For JEoff, the p-value for the outer weight of JEoff-fit, JEoff-link and JEon-sacrifice are less than 0.05 which indicating they are significantly related to JEoff as well as their value of outer loadings are also greater than 0.5. Therefore, they should be maintained and kept in the measurement of formative-higher-order-construct (JEoff).

### ***Structural Model***

Analysis of multicollinearity is crucial to be run first to make sure that there is no high correlation among the variables in the structural model (Tsagrisa & Pandisb, 2021; Zhang et al., 2020). For this study, there is no multicollinearity issue due to the inner VIF values for JEon and JEoff to ER (2.226) and for JEoff to JEon (1.00) in which less than 3.0 as per proposed by Hair et al. (2019). Next, for purpose of testing the structural model and hypotheses, there are five most common assessment criteria: i) coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ), ii) significance of the structural model relationship, iii) effect size ( $f^2$ ) as well as iv) prediction relevance ( $Q^2$ ). (Hair et al., 2019; Chin, 2010). Based on Table 1, ER has the value of R-squared 0.707 which bigger than 0.26 under the level of substantial as proposed by Cohen (1988). The  $R^2$  value of 0.707 stating that JEon and JEoff as the predictors can explain 70.7% of the variance of ER. Furthermore, JEon has the value of 0.551 for  $R^2$ . The values of 0.551 is also bigger than 0.26 which also can be classified under substantial level, It stated that JEoff as the predictor can explain 55.1% of the variance of JEon. For the significance of the structural model relationship, the results show that ER can be related with JEon ( $B=0.754$ ,  $P=0.000$ ) and JEoff ( $B=0.671$ ,

$p=0.000$ ) significantly. Furthermore, JEOff also can be related with JEon significantly ( $B=0.671$ ,  $p=0.000$ ). Thus, this constituted that H1, H2 and H3 are supported. Next, the effect size for each hypothesis is crucial to be assessed to examine the magnitude level of size effect as proposed by Sullivan and Feinn (2012). For the paths of H1 (1.226) and H2 (0.872), the effect size can be categorized at large level as per proposed by Cohen (1992). However, for the path of H3, the effect size value is 0.019 which is smaller than the value of 0.15 and can be categorized less than small level. For predictive relevance (Q2), by making use of 7 for distance of omission (D), Table 1 show the predictive relevance (Q2) of JEon and JEOff on ER is 0.358. The value of Q2 for ER is bigger than 0.35 which the level of predictive relevance can be classified at large level of predictive relevance as per proposed by Chin (2010).

**Table 1: Results of Structural Model**

| Hypotheses (Path) | Beta  | SD    | t-Statistics | P-value | Results   | R2    | F2    | Q2    |
|-------------------|-------|-------|--------------|---------|-----------|-------|-------|-------|
| H1: JEOff -> JEon | 0.742 | 0.03  | 25.137       | 0.000   | supported | 0.551 | 1.226 | NA    |
| H2: JEon -> ER    | 0.754 | 0.039 | 19.359       | 0.000   | supported | 0.707 | 0.872 | 0.358 |
| H3: JEOff -> ER   | 0.112 | 0.045 | 2.48         | 0.013   | supported |       | 0.019 |       |

Note: R2=Explanatory Power, F2=Effect Size, Q2=Predictive Relevance, SD=Standard Deviation, JEon=On-the-job Embeddedness, JEOff=Off-the-job Embeddedness, ER=Employee Retention.

Based on Table 2, p-value for indirect effect which JEon as the mediator is 0.000 with beta value 0.560. Besides, there is significant total effect ( $p=0.000$ ) as well as direct effect (p-value 0.013) of JEOff on ER because of the p-value is smaller than 0.05. As a result, JEon mediates the relationship between JEOff and ER partially. Thus, H4 is supported.

**Table 2: Mediation Results**

| Total Effect |         | Direct Effect |         | Indirect Effect    |         |                 |
|--------------|---------|---------------|---------|--------------------|---------|-----------------|
| Coefficient  | P-value | Coefficient   | P-value | Coefficient        | P-value | Results         |
| 0.672        | 0.000   | 0.112         | 0.013   | H4:JEOff->JEon->ER | 0.560   | 0.000 supported |

Note: JEon= On-the-job Embeddedness, JEOff=Off-the-job Embeddedness, ER=Employee Retention.

## Discussion

For the direct effect, the results revealed that JEOff has significant direct effect on JEon and its level of effect size is at largest level. Therefore, the result supported H1 in this study. This finding is consistent with Chan et al. (2019) and Ryan & Deci (2017) which agreed that beneficial and ad favourable effect from community (nonwork) would overspill to organisation (workstation) which is able to enhance the favourable impact of JEon as proposed by Spillover theory. This study has found that if the academic staff have strong bonding and highly embedded in their community which can help them to void any issue of emotional burnout. This could lead to positive impact on the work activities. They would highly embedded in their university. Besides, JEon was found has significant impact on employee retention in this study and its level of effect size is at large level. Therefore, H2 is supported. This result is consistent with Coetzer et al. (2019), Jiang et al. (2012), Purba et al. (2016), Holtom, (2016) and Saghieh & Nosrati, (2020). They found that JEon could be related to turnover intention negatively. The academic staff would be attracted to continue to stay in their current university due to they have close social interaction with colleagues and supervisors as well as their individual value well

match with the values of university (receive recognition from the university) as proposed by social exchange theory. It is a bit difficult to rebuild close network if they leave. In addition, the impact of JEOff on employee retention was found less than small level of effect size but at significant level. Thus, H3 is accepted. This finding is supported by Dawley & Andrews (2012), Holtom et al. (2020), Jiang et al. (2012) and Philip & Medina-Craven (2022). The researchers have found that the turnover rate could be reduced by enhancing JEOff. According to Lee et al. (2004) and March & Simon (1958), they argued that the more employees embedded in their community, the more probably they would like to stay longer in their current organisation due to they would gain more social support and stronger social networking from outside their current university which is an important source of emotional support. Emotional support is one of the effective ways to help academic staff to deal better with stress in the working place in which it can be carried over from one life area to another as proposed by spill-over theory.

For the indirect effect of JEon, the findings of this study revealed that JEon mediates the relationship between JEOff and ER significantly. Therefore, H4 is accepted. This finding is supported by the study of Chan et al. (2019) and Ryan & Deci (2017) which is proven that ER could be increased by having higher level of JEon as the mediator. However, the direct effect of JEOff on ER also significant but the magnitude of the significant is less than small level of effect size. This result indicated JEon as a mediator need to be paid more attention because it plays a crucial role in increasing employee retention among academic staff in Malaysian Private university. In other words, on-the-job embeddedness mediates the relationship between JEOff and ER partially. JEOff has direct and indirect impact on ER. This study mainly to test the relationship between JEOff, JEon and ER without examining the impact of each sub-dimensions (fit, link and sacrifice) of JEOff as well as JEon. This study can be expanded by exploring the impact of these six dimensions on ER in order to give better picture and clearer understanding on ER among academic staff in Malaysian Private University.

## Conclusion

This study provides some implication of practical for HR practitioners from Malaysian private universities. There are a few helpful ideas that can be proposed to HR practitioners to keep the long-term relationship of employment with their academic staff. The HR practitioners from the university has got to emphasise on formulating better suited policies and system to enhance JEOff among academic staff which could give rise to JEon in order to increase ER. This off-the-job factor (non-work domain) is crucial in keeping the staff in longer time of period (Kiazad et al., 2015), but it is always lookout by many researchers. Therefore, this study would like to propose some ways to improve JEOff among academic staff. The HR practitioners from the university could enhance community-fit dimension by putting some efforts to make staff individual value could be compatible with the value of community. The HR practitioners should always keep academic staff informed and keep them up to date with latest information of community activities by sending email or all the details information could be highlighted in the office notice board. The HR practitioners should always encourage staff to participate in the community activities. By joining these community activities can help staff to reduce the gap and improve the matching between their personal value and the value of community (Ainslie & Huffman, 2019). Furthermore, the HR practitioners could enhance community-link dimension by encouraging all academic staff not only act as colleagues but become part of the community to reduce the feeling of loneliness outside the university. The managers should be trained to concern more about their staff living area and social connection outside the

university. They need to support and help each other not only restricted to work-linked issue but also for nonwork-linked issue. Staff with strong social networking, they would feel more comfortable and enjoy living in the community (MindTools, 2022). HR practitioners are advised to provide training the enhance academic staffs' technology skill. This technology can help staff to communicate and maintain connections with community members as well as participate in virtual community activities more effectively. For those academic staff could embedded well in their community, HR practitioners are advised to prevent staff transfer from one location to another location. This study could help HR practitioners to get better idea to design more effective policy and system in order to keep the academic staff to stay in their university even there is any better opportunity arise.

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