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**THE ROLE OF COMMUNITY IN THE  
RETENTION/ATTACHMENT PROCESS:  
A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF THE  
EMBEDDEDNESS MODEL**

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Bachelor of Management  
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2002

A Research Project submitted  
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of the University of Lethbridge  
in partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree

**MASTER OF SCIENCE IN MANAGEMENT**

Faculty of Management  
The University of Lethbridge  
Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada

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RETENTION/ATTACHMENT PROCESS:  
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EMBEDDEDNESS MODEL**

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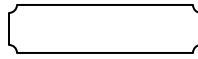
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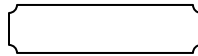
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*The simplest truths often meet with the sternest  
resistance and are slowest in getting general  
acceptance.*



**FREDERICK DOUGLASS, 1870**



## **Abstract**

Why do people stay with organizations? This study looked into the role of an individual's community involvement as a motivator to stay with an organization. It was postulated that the strength of the ties or attachments to a community as a factor that influence their decision to continue in a specific employment relationship. Interviews were conducted with twelve employees from the hotel/resort industry in a major resort area in the Canadian Rockies. Data gathered illustrated that leisure or recreational activities played a major role for the participants in their decision to accept employment with an organization and to stay. The research demonstrated that industry, employment type and location may play a significant role in the strength of the organizational or community attachments formed by employees. The research did demonstrate strong support for the 'job embeddedness' model (Lee & Mitchell, 2001); however, these qualitative findings suggest community organizational membership performs a minor role in the attachment/retention process.

## **Acknowledgments**

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## List of Abbreviations

CPIN .....Community **P**roject **I**Nterviewee

## CHAPTER ONE

### *Introduction*

We all live and work in a community<sup>1</sup>, whether it is large or small, a city, town, village or hamlet. The strength of our ties or attachments to that community is what binds us, or allows us to leave that community. The numerous ties or attachments that one can form are represented by the friendships that are developed with others in the community, the availability of leisure activities that one wishes to pursue or membership in various community organizations. Business organizations are part of a community.

Organizational theory teaches us that communities can play the role of a resource, an opportunity or a threat to an organization (Daft, 1991; Hatch, 1997; Hickman, 1998). But what role does the community play in the life of an employee? Does the membership in community organizations such as church groups, political organizations, and socially oriented organizations (e.g., Boy Scouts, Girl Guides) play a major role in the employee attachment/retention process? Do the attachments that employees develop in the community help bind them to the organization? The answer to these questions is found in the interaction between the employee, the organization and the community. This research project explores these questions using a qualitative approach.

As noted, communities play a significant role in the success or failure of an organization. In this research project the location of the focal organizations and the community is a major resort area in western Canada. In the Rocky Mountains leisure

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<sup>1</sup> There are numerous definitions of community Aristotle defined it as “a group of individuals known to one another and living to buy a bond of goodwill, manifested two acts of reciprocity in a framework of economic autarchy” (Winthrop, 1991). For this study community shall be defined as “a social network of interacting individuals, usually concentrated into a defined territory” (Johnson, 1994, p. 80).

activities are skating, skiing or snowboarding in the winter and hiking, biking, canoeing in the summer or fishing in all kinds of weather all year round (Government of Alberta, 2003). And of course year round one can enjoy the magnificent scenery of the Rocky Mountains. On the west coast of Australia the leisure activities are surfing, deep sea diving or lying on the beach and soaking up the sun (Australian Tourist Commission, 2003). In the Caribbean the leisure activities are much the same as Australia, however golf is also a major activity (Bahamas Ministry of Tourism, 2003). All these resort areas have one thing in common; they are communities. These communities are comprised mainly of individuals who are employees of various service industry organizations such as hotels and resorts. People flock to the areas to enjoy the activities that the area offers or to seek employment.

These resort communities are exceptionally transient by nature. The influx of tourists flows with the seasons and moderates the business activity of the community, hence creating the transient nature. For example, in the Canadian Rockies late November to late April is the ski season, the peak of which is the month of December. Between late June and early September is the peak season for the tourist industry as people crowd into the area to enjoy summer in the parks. Typically, hotels and resorts employ 50 to 100 percent more employees during this peak summer season (Statistics Canada, 2000). This cyclical nature of the industry creates the transient flow of employees. The hotel resort industry is aware of the transient nature of their employees and plan for it. However, according to the Human Resource Directors of the two hotels in this research project the seasonally adjusted turnover rates of resorts are well above similar properties in city areas.

Organizations invest considerable resources in their employees (Lee, & Mitchell, 1994; Simons & Hinkin, 2001). These costs are reflected in recruitment programs, selection processes, training programs, and benefit packages (including competitive wages) (Mobley, 1982; Simons & Hinkin, 2001). The costs of employees leaving and having to replace these individuals is a significant cost for organizations in terms of human-resources , work units , organizational readjustments and financial considerations (Lee, & Mitchell, 1994).

According to Mitchell and co-authors voluntary turnover<sup>2</sup> is a problem that plagues many organizations (Mitchell, Holtom, Lee, & Graske, 2001a). These authors state that approximately half the American work force will leave their job in the next half decade (2001a). The reasons for turnover are many, some are organizationally driven (e.g. unfair treatment of self or of a co-worker, duties that require an act that goes against one's beliefs) and others are of a personal nature (e.g. a job offer from another firm, a divorce, or the birth of a new child) (2001a).

There are individual and organizational level costs<sup>3</sup> that are incurred due to voluntary turnover (Mobley, 1982; Mitchell et al., 2001a). Individual or personal costs can be evident in the stress that an individual suffers when exposed to the uncertainty and ambiguity of the new position, new job or a new location (Mobley, 1982; Mitchell et al., 2001a). This stress may be felt by family members as they must make adjustments in their lifestyle as well (e.g. making new friends, settle into a new school or adjusting to a new work load schedule of the parent) (Mitchell et al., 2001a).

---

<sup>2</sup> Turnover – “The cessation of membership in an organization by an individual who receives monetary compensation from the organization” (Mobley, 1982, p. 10). There are two distinct types – voluntary (quits) and involuntary (dismissals). (Hom & Griffeth, 1995, Mobley, 1982).

<sup>3</sup> For more complete listing of the costs and benefits of turnover see Appendix 1.

Organizational costs are numerous and at times difficult to assess fully (Mobley, 1982). Valuable knowledge, expertise, and established relationships with clientele are examples of some of the indirect costs that are suffered (1982). Direct costs can be seen in the hours required by staff to process administrative requirements, to do exit interviews, the cost of overtime to cover shifts until a replacement worker can be found, advertising to fill the vacant position, processing the candidates, interviewing, selection of the replacement and formal and informal training costs (1982). Estimated replacement costs range from \$10,000 and \$30,000 per employee for approximately 70% of all jobs. A New York law firm associate will cost as much as \$200,000 to replace. An American research group, the Hay Group, calculated replacement costs at approximately 50 to 60% of an individual's annual salary (Mitchell et al., 2001a).

A study published in 2001 in the *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Quarterly* put the price of turnover in the hotel resort industry at \$10,000 US per individual (Simons & Hinkin, 2001). Thus it is not presumptuous to say that turnover costs the hotel/resort industry millions of dollars every year. The high cost of turnover is not a phenomenon limited to the hotel/resort industry; all industries feel the brunt of the cost of turnover. A reduction in turnover can save organizations money in terms of training, replacement costs, lost revenue due to inefficiency caused by lack of experience, and inefficiencies in inadequate staffing levels (Hom & Griffeth, 1995; Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982).

There are also positive aspects to the turnover phenomena. For the organization, turnover can result in new ideas, innovation, and adaptation as new employees bring new ideas (Staw, 1980; Mobley, 1982). Resistance to organizational changes may be reduced if those resistant to change are among the leavers and new employees are hired with the

skills and attitude that reflect the required changes (Staw, 1980; Mobley, 1982).

Organizations may see a reduction in conflict particularly if the individuals that leave were those that are causing the conflict (Staw, 1980). For the individual, turnover may create opportunities, both laterally and vertically. Also the individual may experience less conflict at the personal level (Staw, 1980).

Management has been aware of the cost of turnover since the early 1900's. In response to this concern about cost, research on turnover by academics has been ongoing for many decades (Muchinsky & Morrow, 1980). Despite almost a century of research on turnover, little is known about the phenomena (Hom & Griffeth, 1995). A 1995 meta-analysis indicated that the proportion of variance shared by levels of satisfaction and turnover was 3.6% and the proportion shared by intention to leave and actual leaving was 12% (Hom & Griffeth, 1995). Six years later in 2001 Mitchell and co-authors declared that, "researchers' collective effort to predict turnover has not been very successful. Even the more complex theories with multiple attitudes and assessments of perceived alternatives, leave about 75% of the variance in turnover unexplained" (2001a, p.99). Mitchell et al. believe it is time to approach the problem of turnover from a different viewpoint and that would be from the viewpoint of the attachment process (2001a.).

There has been considerable research performed on turnover, i.e. why people leave organizations, but little research has been carried out on employee retention - why people stay in organizations (Flowers & Hughes, 1973; Maertz & Campion, 1998). By studying why people remain with an organization, academics and practitioners can gain a better understanding of how to reduce turnover and increase retention (Mitchell et al., 2001a). Vincent Flowers and Charles Hughes in their article *Why Employees Stay* (1973)



state that, “the reasons why employees stay are equally or more important to a company that seeks to maintain a motivated and productive workforce” (p. 49). They further state that it is important for an organization to understand why people stay at a job and then by understanding those reasons they can create policies and procedures that augment these best practices and increase employee retention (1973).

There are benefits to be gained by organizations by increasing employee retention. Organizations may experience increased sales due to retaining more experienced employees (Huselid, 1995). They can use their knowledge gained from experience to better serve their customers and perhaps create repeat business, thus increasing sales (1995). The knowledge, information, and skills that an experienced employee uses can increase organizational efficiency and productivity (1995). An increase in efficiency and productivity will lead to an increase in profitability and the increase in profitability will lead to an increase in market value (Huselid, 1995; Simons & Hinkin, 2001). Thus, an increase in employee retention rates not only creates financial benefits for an organization through the savings generated by the reduction of turnover, but also creates profit through increased sales and efficiency (Huselid, 1995; Simons & Hinkin, 2001).

“To understand the turnover process more fully, researchers need to study both stayers and leavers” (Lee, Mitchell, Wise & Fireman, 1996, p. 22). Over the last decade Thomas Lee and Terence Mitchell have actively pursued research into the turnover and retention processes. Along with co-authors they have developed a model for voluntary turnover and a theory regarding organizational attachment. The unfolding model of voluntary turnover theorizes the possible pathways that an individual will take in the turnover process (Lee & Mitchell, 1994). The embeddedness model postulates that an

individual will become enmeshed or experience inertia due to the bonds that he or she may form within the organization or community (Mitchell et al., 2001a). The authors have attempted to capture the complex psychological process that an individual experiences in the turnover or retention process.

It is because of this attempt to capture the complex psychological process or the ‘why’ of turnover and retention that the embeddedness model will be used as the theoretical underpinning for this research project. One of the major contributions that academic research offers is the pathway to practical solutions to complex problems. By gaining a further understanding in an under-researched area, organizations can develop programs that will foster employee retention. The research into turnover has already produced great savings to organizations (Hinkin & Tracey, 2000). By focusing on the role that community plays in the attachment process this research project will add to the volume of information available to practitioners so they are better able to serve the needs of their stakeholders including customers and employees.

The following chapter will assess the literature to date on the turnover/retention phenomenon. Due to the sheer volume of articles and books, Chapter 2 will be limited to an overview of the models of turnover theory. Chapter 3 will delve into the construct that forms the theoretical basis of this project, embeddedness, and the construct that embeddedness was drawn from i.e. the unfolding model of voluntary turnover. The methodology of research of this research project will be elaborated upon in Chapter 4. The next chapter, Chapter 5, will present the data collected. Chapter 6 presents the reader with this author’s interpretation of the data and the final chapter elucidates on the

limitations of the project and the recommendations that arise from the research of this project.

## CHAPTER TWO

### *Voluntary Turnover: History and Research*

Academic research has been conducted in the area of voluntary employee turnover/retention since the early 1900s (Mobley, 1982). In depth study began in the late 1950s and early 1960s and the flow of research and interest has continued since then (Hom & Griffeth, 1995; Mobley, 1982). Over a thousand articles have been published on turnover/retention (Hom & Griffeth, 1995; Muchinsky & Morrow, 1980) with at least twelve different models of the turnover process proposed. Two excellent analyses have been published in book form; William H. Mobley's *Employee Turnover: Causes, Consequences and Control* - 1982; and Peter W. Hom and Rodger W. Griffeth's *Employee Turnover*- 1995. Due to limited space and the sheer volume of research, this chapter will review only nine of the key models of turnover. A review of employee turnover models will provide insight into the history and development of turnover research.

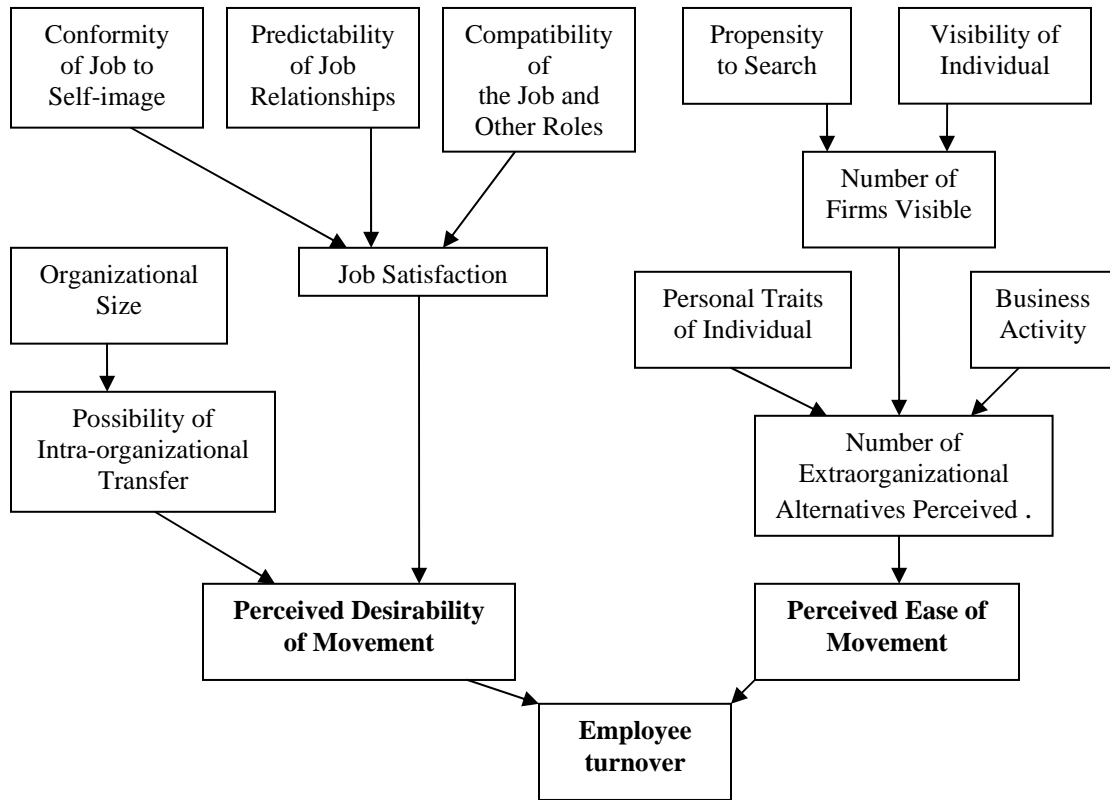
#### ***Model 1 – Theory of motivation***

A general theory of motivation<sup>4</sup> (see Figure 1) was introduced by James. G. March and Herbert A. Simon in their landmark book *Organizations* (1958). The theory, called organizational equilibrium, simply stated that as long as an organization pays an individual monetary inducement that matches or exceeds the individual's input into the organization, the individual will remain a member of the organization (1958). Thus both the individual and the organization strive to maintain a balance or state of equilibrium

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<sup>4</sup> Based on Bernard-Simon theory of organizational equilibrium. (March & Simon, 1958)

between the inducements and how much work the individual is willing to provide. The balance is maintained by two distinct functions: the perceived desirability of movement and the perceived ease of movement (1958).



*Figure 1* March & Simon's model of motivation -1958

From "Organizations" by J. G. March and H. A. Simon, 1958, p. 99, 106.

The perceived desirability of movement is now synonymous with job satisfaction (Hom & Griffeth, 1995). March and Simon (1958) identified job satisfaction as a key factor in both turnover and absences. They identified three major factors of satisfaction: a) "conformity of the job characteristics to the self-characterization held by the individual"; b) "predictability of instrumental relationships on the job"; and c) "compatibility of work requirements with the requirements of other roles" (1958, pp. 94-

95). The first factor simply held that an individual will become dissatisfied if there is a perceived difference between reality and what the individual feels is fair (1958). The second factor refers to what an individual is required to do and whether it is perceived as just (1958). The third factor whether or not an individual got along with his fellow employees or accepted the demands of the job (e.g. 40 hours a week, Monday through Friday) (1958).

March and Simon (1958) also recognized that factors exterior to the organization could influence the employee and their third factor of satisfaction was to capture this concept. They postulated that, “The greater the congruence of work time patterns with those of other roles, the greater the compatibility of the job and other roles” (1958, p. 97).

The second function, perceived ease of movement, is now commonly defined as job alternatives. The determining factors were, “visibility of the individual, level of business activity, propensity to search, number of organizations visible, personal characteristics, and number of extra organizational alternatives perceived” (March & Simon, 1958, p 106). An individual would be more likely to leave an organization if there were ample work available, or they had desirable characteristics or skills and the desirability, and ability to do a job search. The visibility of the individual may also attract job offers from other organizations (1958).

March and Simon’s model laid the foundation for the theories of turnover that followed (Hom & Griffeth, 1995). The concepts of job satisfaction and perceived alternatives still play a major role in theories of voluntary turnover and job embeddedness. The role of researchers and theorists that followed was to expand the model and test the validity of new models, which is the goal of this project.

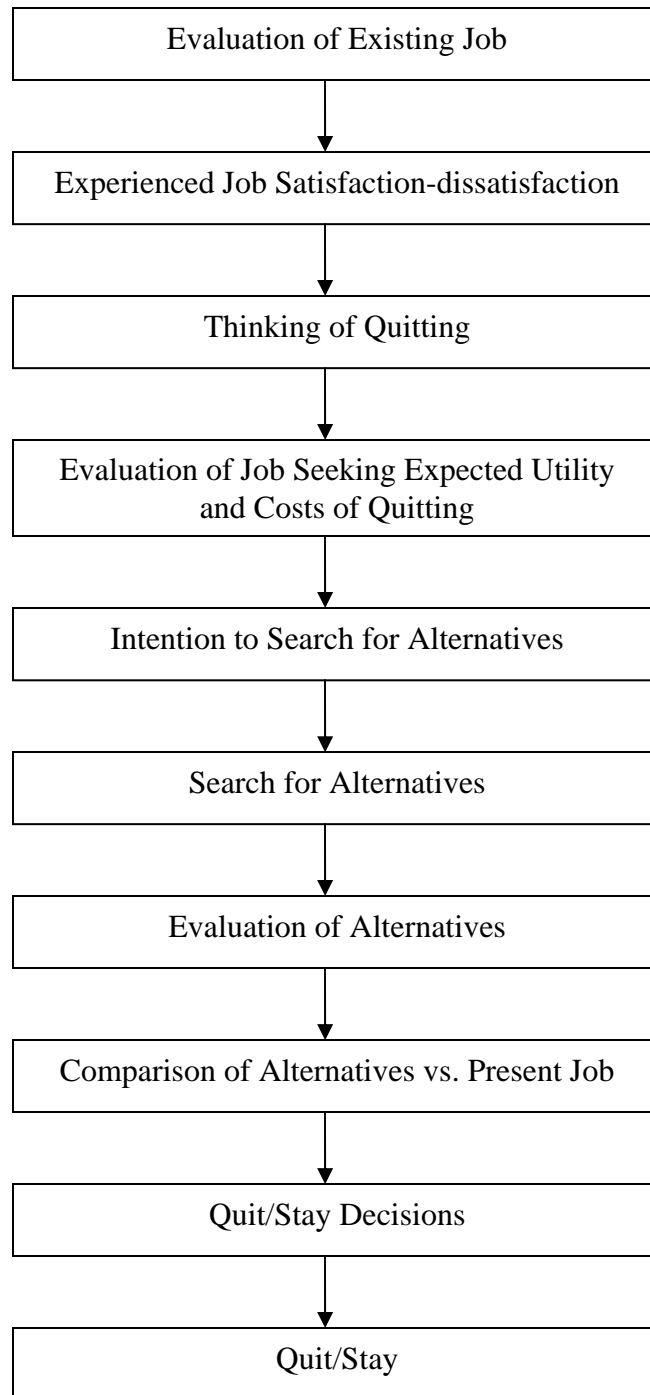
### ***Model 2 – Model of unmet expectations***

In 1973 Lyman Porter and Richard Steers advocated that an individual's unmet expectations were the main determinants of employee turnover (Hom & Griffeth, 1995; Mowday et al., 1982). Each individual has a distinct set of expectations, which may include such items as pay, promotions, supervisors, and peer relations (Porter & Steers, 1973). These authors posited that dissatisfaction will result if employees' expectations were not met and the dissatisfaction will result in turnover (1973). The Steers and Porter model became the dominant explanatory model that provided the basis for realistic job previews (Hom & Griffeth, 1995).

The model of unmet expectations was an important step in turnover research because it, “acknowledges the existence of personal attributes, which underpin expectation levels” (Hom & Griffeth, 1995, p. 54). Porter and Steers (1973) argued that research should focus more on the psychological processes of employee turnover. Critics of the model pointed out that the met expectations concept was perhaps too simplistic and that the model did not deal with job alternatives (Hom & Griffeth, 1995).

### ***Model 3 – Intermediate linkages model***

The 1977 Mobley model of employee turnover also focused on job satisfaction (Mobley, 1982). It was an intermediate linkages model (see Figure 2) that outlined seven steps to turnover starting from job dissatisfaction (1982). As suggested by Porter and Steers the intermediate linkages model focused on the psychological processes of turnover (Mobley, 1982). Due to the individual nature of psychological processes Mobley stated it was not necessary to follow the steps in sequence or it was possible to miss steps entirely (Lee & Mitchell, 1994). The importance of the model was the identification of



*Figure 2* Mobley's intermediate linkages model, 1977

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From "Employee turnover: Causes, consequences, and control" by W. H. Mobley, 1982, p. 123.



the behavioural process that leads from dissatisfaction to turnover (Mowday et al., 1982).

“The model’s great values are its rich description of the psychological process between job efforts and turnover” (Lee & Mitchell, 1994, p. 52). This ‘rich description’ vaulted the Mobley model into being the dominant model of psychological approaches to the turnover phenomena (Hom & Griffeth, 1995). This model dominated research over the next decade and continues to be a part of turnover models (1995).

#### ***Model 4 – Expanded model of employee turnover***

In 1979 the model was expanded by Mobley, R. Griffeth, H. Hand, and B. Meglino to reflect the complexity of the turnover process (Mobley, 1982). The expanded model included antecedents of satisfaction (individual, including nonwork factors), job expectations and economic-labour market conditions (see Figure 3) (1982). Also included in the model along with satisfaction as a direct antecedent of an intention to quit, were the attraction-expected utility of the present job and attraction-expected utility of alternatives (1982). The complexity of the model can be attested to by the fact that as of 1995, “many of the model’s propositions remain untested” (Hom & Griffeth, 1995, p. 66).

Mobley’s definition of job satisfaction from the 1979 study has become the accepted definition (Hom & Griffeth, 1995). He defines job satisfaction as “the discrepancy between what an individual values and what the situation provides” (Mobley, 1982, p. 102). This discrepancy can be assessed on two different levels; personal or organizational. An individual can experience dissatisfaction with fellow workers or

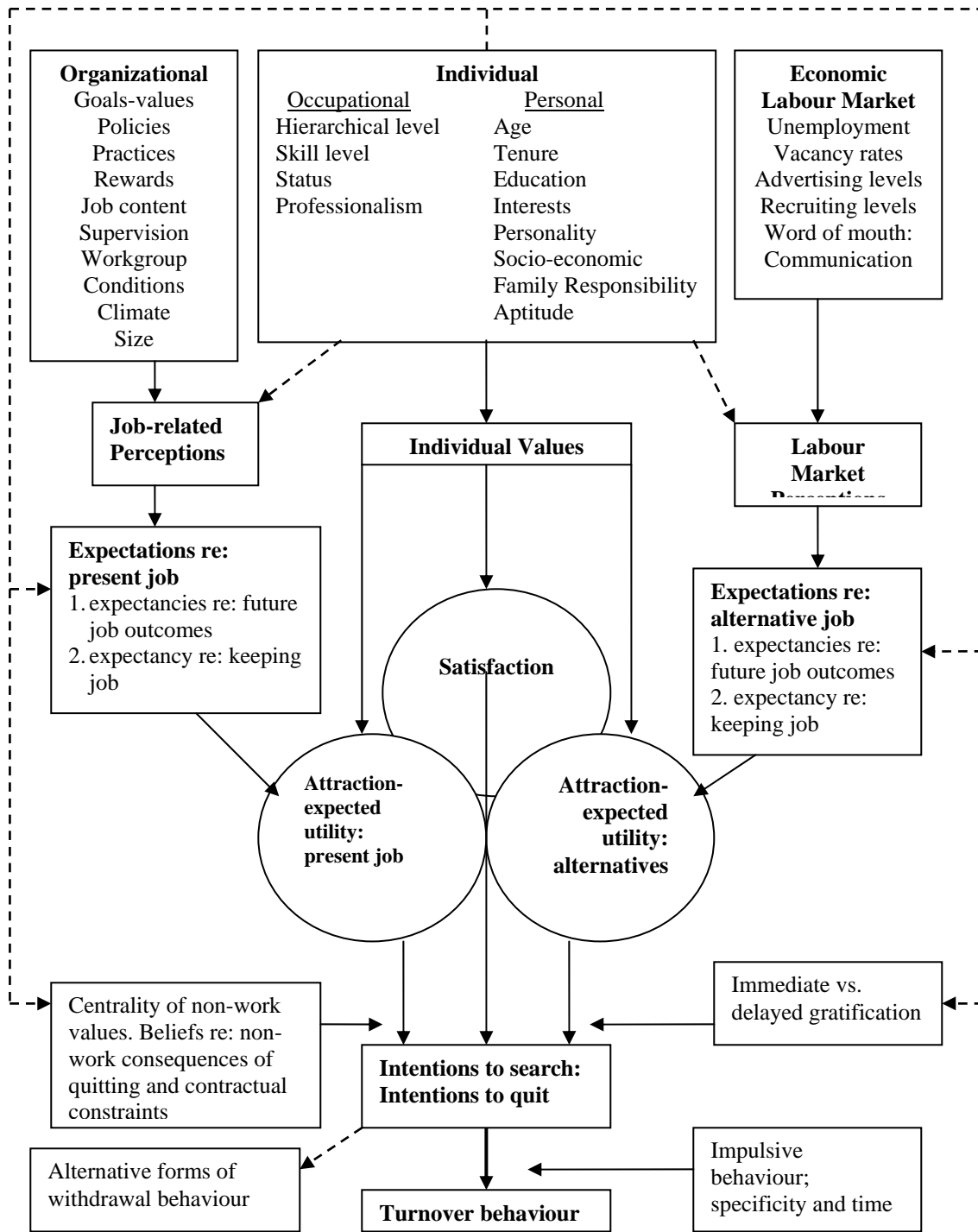


Figure 3 Mobley, Griffeth, Hand, & Meglino's expanded model of turnover, 1979

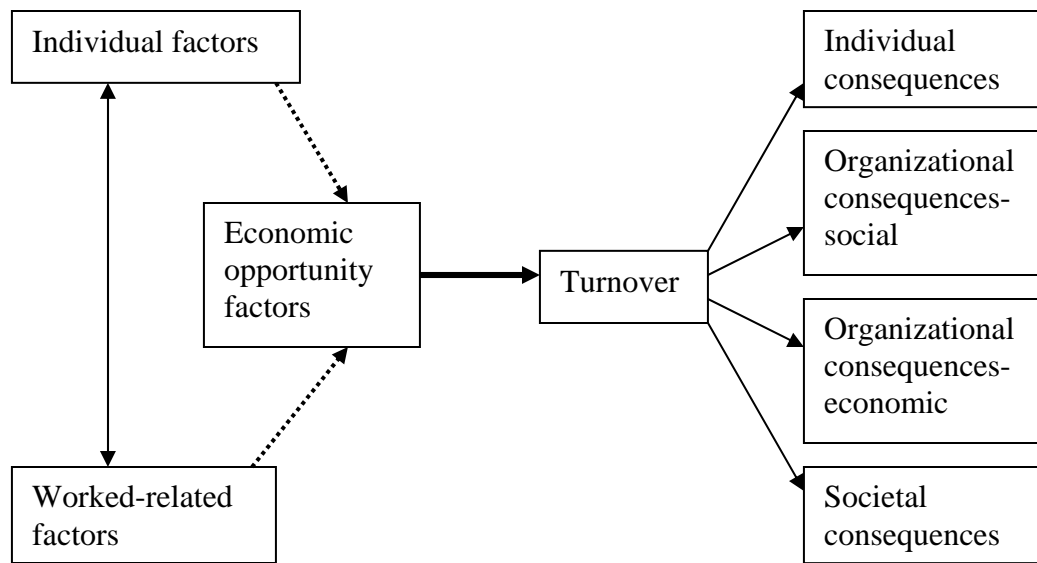
From "Employee turnover: Causes, consequences, and control" by W. H. Mobley, 1982, p. 127.

supervisors (a discrepancy of individual values) and an individual can experience dissatisfaction on the organizational level; thus experiencing a discrepancy between individual values and organizational values (1982). Numerous authors validate the role of personal values in job satisfaction (Finegan, 2000; Kirchmeyer, 1992). If individuals are unable to pursue these values in their job they will become dissatisfied; thus increasing the level of intention to leave the organization (Mobley, 1982).

***Model 5 - multidisciplinary model of voluntary turnover***

Researchers Paul Muchinsky and Paula Morrow (1980) reviewed the literature to that date and devised three disciplinary separations: sociology, psychology, and economics. Psychologists primarily studied the interaction of individual characteristics (intelligence, personality, aptitude, and biographical data) and job satisfaction (1980). Sociologists and organizational theorist concentrated on the impact of societal structural and organizational structural factors on employee turnover (1980). Economists focused market statistics and factors such as business cycles or labour statistics (1980). According to researchers Muchinsky and Morrow (1980), little integration and synthesis of theories regarding turnover has occurred among disciplines. Thus, after completing a meta-analysis the authors developed a multidisciplinary model of voluntary turnover (see Figure 4) (Hom & Griffeth, 1995).

The model attempts to integrate the three streams of research (Hom & Griffeth, 1995). Individual factors can be seen to represent the psychological aspects, work related factors represent organizational structural factors and the combination of individual factors and work related factors were present in the societal structural



*Figure 4* Muchinsky & Morrow's 1980 model of turnover

From "A Multidisciplinary Model of Voluntary Employee Turnover" by Paul M. Muchinsky and Paula C. Morrow, 1980, *Journal of Vocational Behaviour*, 17, p.274.

factors (Muchinsky & Morrow, 1980). Finally, the economic factors are represented by the economic opportunity variables. These factors feed directly into the turnover scenario and result in four consequences: individual, organizational-social, organizational-economic, and societal (1980). The model attempts to represent the dynamic nature of turnover; the relationship between the factors ebbs and flows with the environment that surrounds them (1980).

***Model 6 – Model of voluntary turnover***

Steers and Mowday model of 1981 (see Figure 5) includes factors of Mobley's intermediate linkages model and introduces job performance and nonwork influences (Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982). The authors name five unique aspects of the model: 1) recognition of the role of available information regarding the job and organization; 2) job performance as an influence on affective responses; 3) the role of job attitudes other than

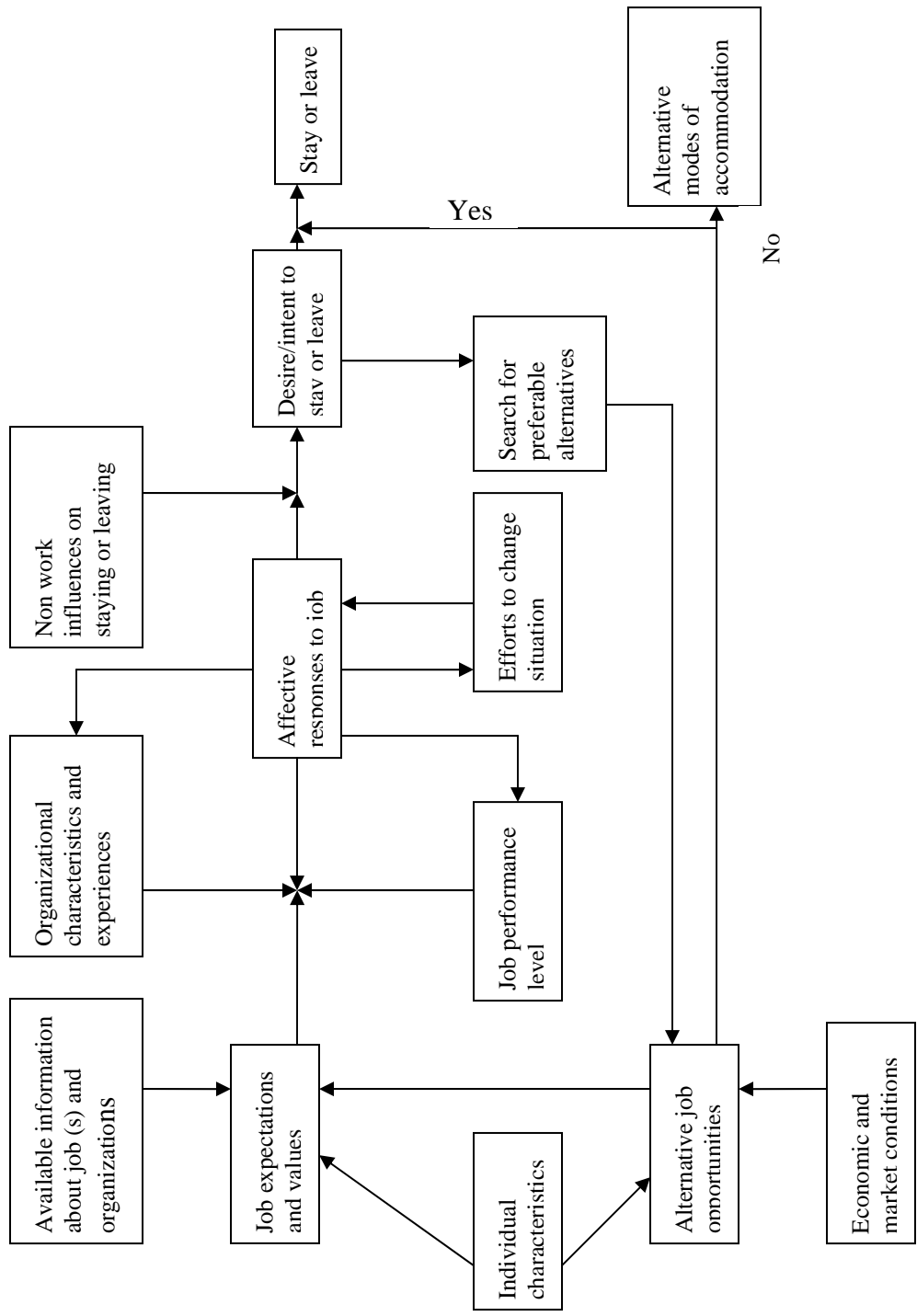


Figure 5 Steers & Mowday's model of voluntary turnover 1981.

From "Employee-Organization Linkages" by R. Mowday, L. W. Porter & R. M. Steers, 1982, p. 124.

job satisfaction as antecedents to an employee's leaving; 4) a greater emphasis on nonwork influences as they affect intentions to leave; 5) possibility that disaffected employees may try to change the situation in prior to leaving (Mowday, et al., 1982).

The model was tested in 1987 by Thomas Lee and Richard Mowday (one of the model's original authors). The test was an empirical study done through a sample group of 445 employees at a financial institution (Lee & Mowday, 1987). From the test results the authors discovered that nonwork influences were non-significant. Lee and Mowday (1987) go on to suggest that nonwork influences may be more salient to the individual as tenure with the organization increases. The authors did realize the importance of nonwork influences in turnover research. "Despite our nonsupportive data, it seems inappropriate to recommend deleting nonwork influences and efforts to change the situation from a model on the basis of a single study." (1987, p. 738).

Another important contribution made by authors was the accepted definition of organizational commitment (Hom, & Griffeth, 1995; Mobley, 1982). The authors, Mowday, Steers and Porter, define organizational commitment as;

...the relative strength of an individuals identification with and involvement in a particular organization. It can be characterized by at least three related factors:

- (1) a strong belief and acceptance of the organization's goals and values;
- (2) a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization; and
- (3) a strong desire to maintain membership in the organization. (Mowday, Steers & Porter, 1979, p 226).

Mowday and co-authors (1979) stress that the difference between organizational commitment and job satisfaction is the holistic nature of organizational commitment. The individual has an "attachment to the employing organization including its goals and values" (Mowday et al., 1979, p 226). This attachment is not only expressed in the

employee's actions but also in the individual's beliefs and opinions (Mowday et al., 1979, 1982).

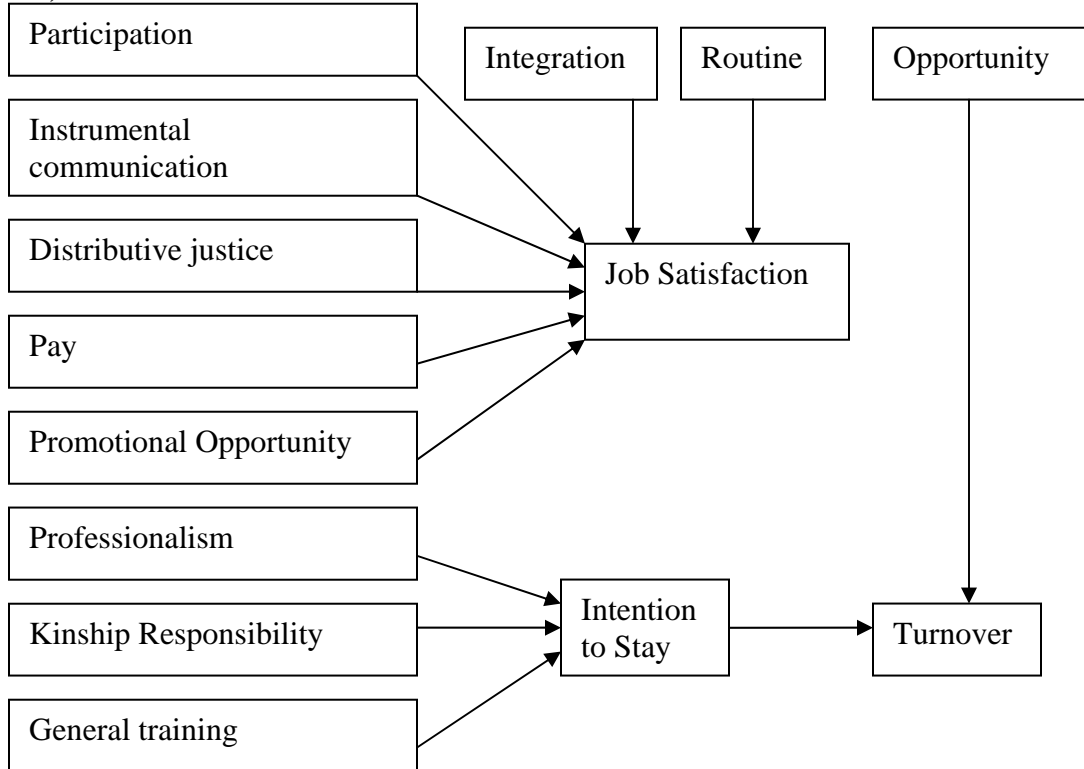
***Model 7 – Price and Mueller's model of turnover***

In 1977 a sociologist, James Price, established a model integrating previous research and theorized the factors of pay, communication (instrumental and formal), centralization, and integration acted to mould an individual's job satisfaction (Hom & Griffeth, 1995). The model also proposed that the availability of alternative job opportunities moderated the relationship between job satisfaction and turnover (Hom & Griffeth, 1995). After testing the model in 1981, Price and Mueller revised and expanded the model and they repeated the process in 1986.

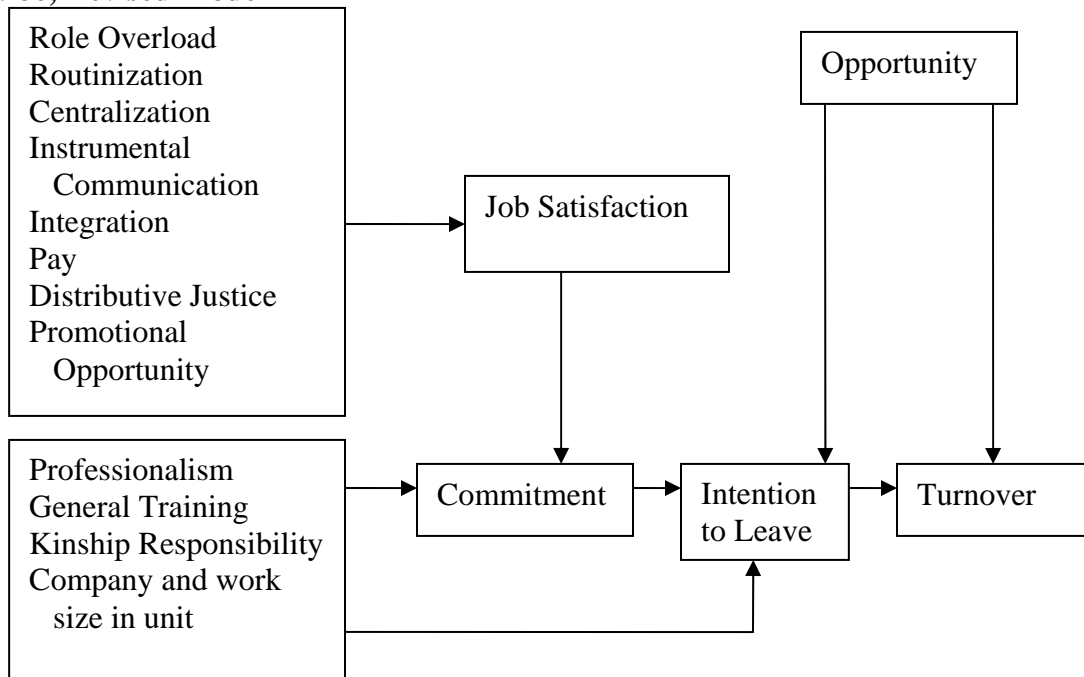
The 1981 Price and Mueller model (see Figure 6) contended that “repetitive work reduces satisfaction and that workers who are participating in job related decisions, receiving work related information, forming close friendships with others at work, earning good and fair compensation, and enjoying opportunities for promotion are more likely to be satisfied” (Hom & Griffeth, 1995, p. 60). It also proposed that professionalism, generalized training, and minimal kinship responsibilities weakened an individual's intention to remain with the organization (Hom & Griffeth, 1995).

The 1986 Price and Mueller model (see Figure 6) revised their 1981 model by introducing role overload and family pay as antecedents to satisfaction (Hom & Griffeth, 1995). Workgroups and size of the organization were added as antecedents of organizational commitment and intent to leave. Price and Mueller also interjected commitment to the organization as a mediator between job satisfaction and intent to leave (Hom & Griffeth, 1995).

**1981, Model**



**1986, Revised Model**



*Figure 6* Price & Mueller's 1981 & revised 1986, model of turnover.

From "Employee Turnover" by P. W. Hom & R. W. Griffeth, 1995, p. 61.



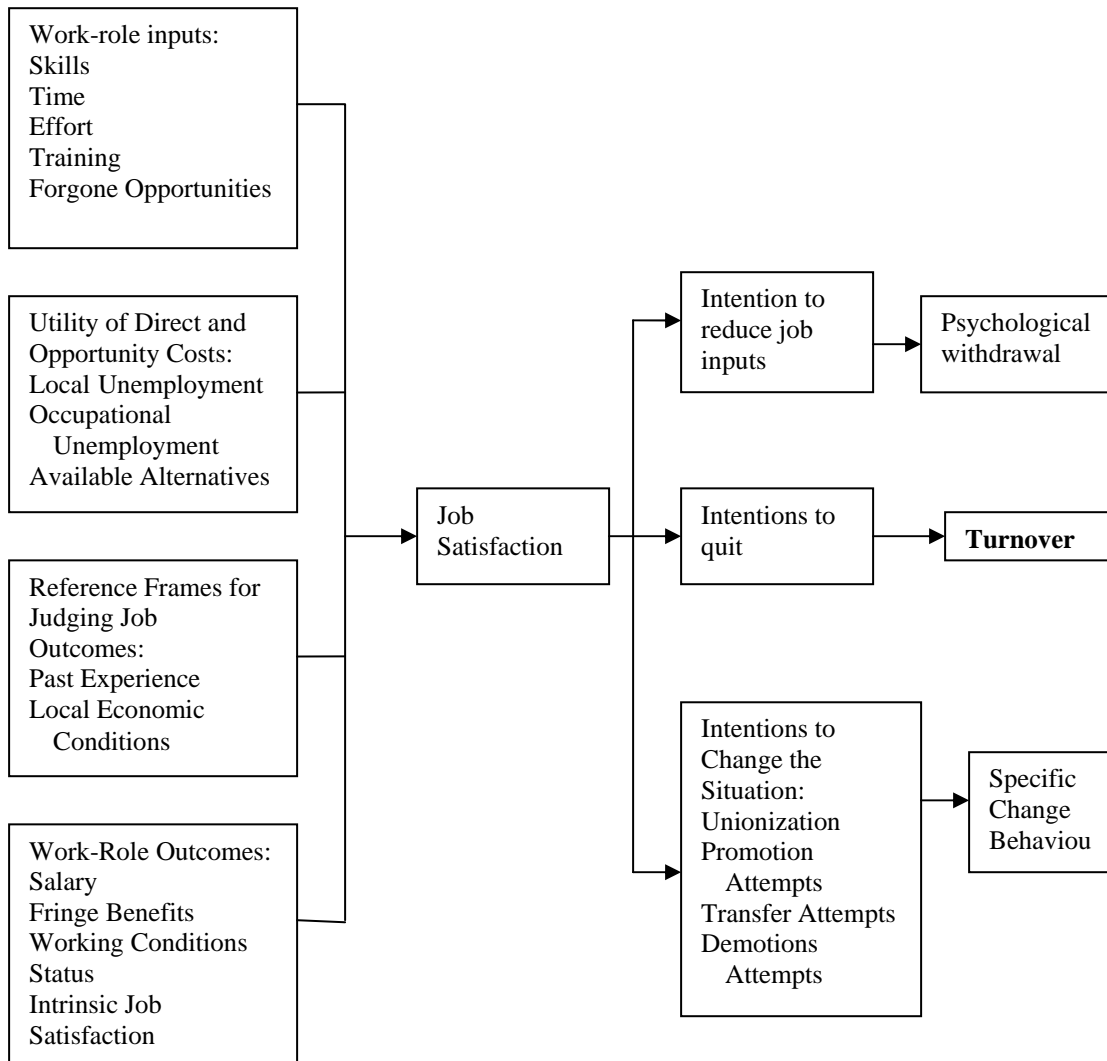
Although Price and Mueller through their research developed a comprehensive set of determinants of turnover and introduced salient variables that have now become accepted as part of the withdrawal process, their true contribution to voluntary employee turnover was their rigorous methodology (Hom & Griffeth, 1995).

They pioneered causal modeling techniques to assess structural networks, evaluating the nomological validity of a theory as well as its predictive validity, the customary preoccupation. They carefully constructed scales to assess model constructs and validity and reliability. For example, they factor analyzed items reflecting the same construct and created reliable factor-based scales of items with high factor loadings (average .75 reliability). Such painstaking validation stands in marked contrast to traditional ad hoc operationalizations and provided psychometrically sound scales for investigations into turnover (Hom & Griffeth, 1995, p. 62).

Price and Mueller's rigorous methodology still stands as a model for research standards (Hom & Griffeth, 1995).

#### ***Model 8 – Labour-economic model of turnover***

The labour and economic market factors were researched thoroughly in the Hulin, Roznowski, and Hachiya model of 1985 (see Figure 7). Although the model focused only on economic factors, it was important in that it identified different types of quitters (Hom & Griffeth, 1995). Marginal employees were seen as employees who enter the work force in order to take advantage of market conditions and when having accumulated enough monetary resources they will quit seeking more pleasurable or personally advantageous pursuits (e.g., traveling or education) (Hulin, Roznowski & Hachiya, 1985). Marginal drifters was a classification that referred to individuals who take full-time employment due to an abundance of jobs in the labour market, become dissatisfied, and quit without an alternative because they believe that any other job would be better (Hulin et al., 1985). Individuals who left organizations for reasons other than work (e.g., retirement) was a



*Figure 7* Hulin, Roznowski, & Hachiya's labour-economic model of turnover, 1985.

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From "Employee Turnover" by P. W. Hom & R. W. Griffeth, 1995, p. 81.

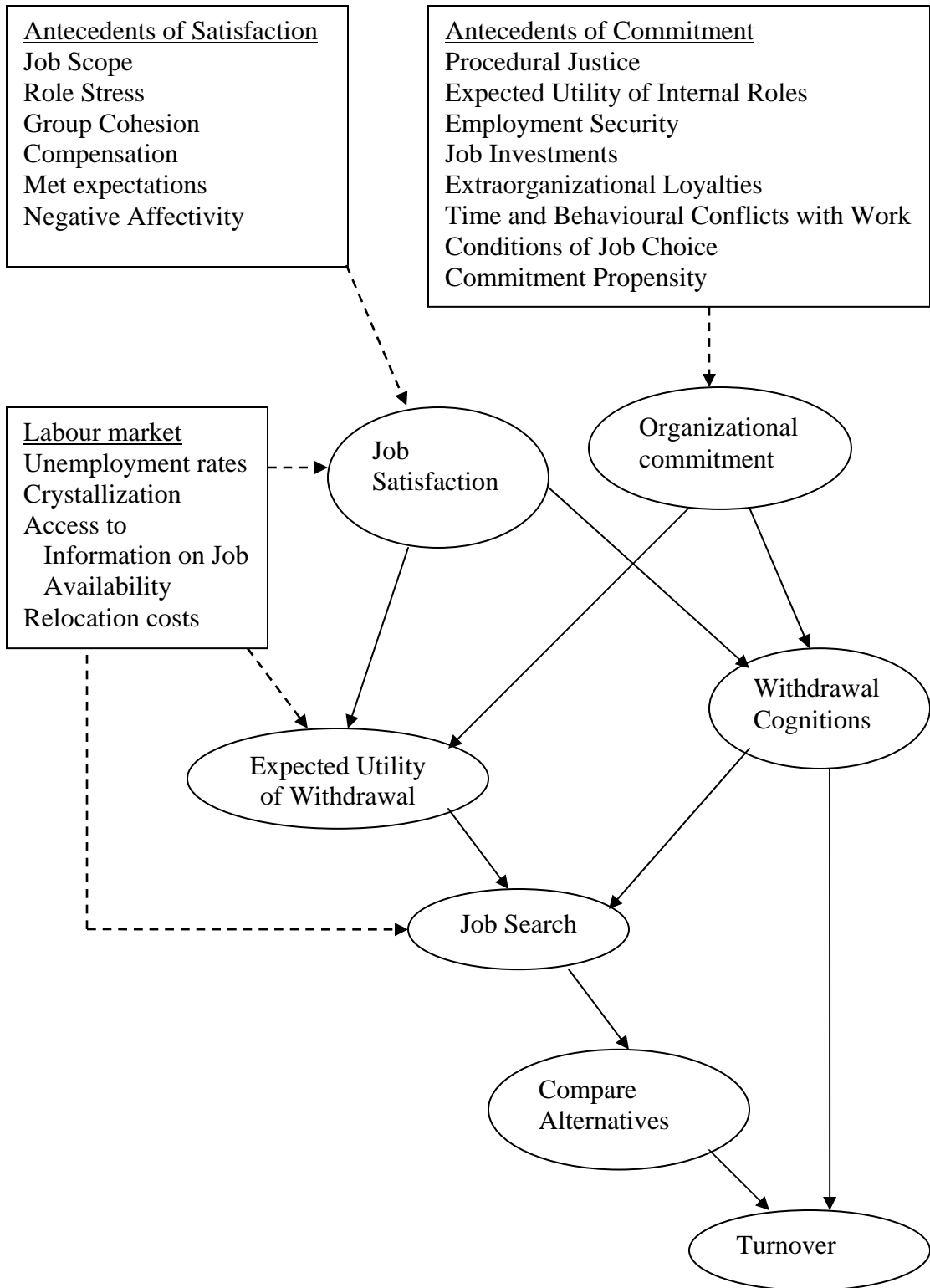
second insightful classification (Hom & Griffeth, 1995).

The model and classifications of quitters help to resolve the controversy regarding why people left organizations though they may not have been dissatisfied (Hom & Griffeth, 1995). Hulin and co-authors postulated that the different types of quitters use different pathways in the turnover process (Hulin et al., 1985). Clarification of “behavioural responses to dissatisfaction” (Hom & Griffeth, 1995, p.82) and the limiting to economic factors are the main criticisms of the model; however, the benefit of the model was the impetus for other researchers to develop and validate scales regarding behavioural responses to dissatisfaction (Hom & Griffeth, 1995).

#### ***Model 9 – Revised alternative linkages model of turnover***

The 1991 revised intermediate-processes model of Hom and Griffeth furthered their 1984 revision of Mobley’s intermediate linkages model. They postulated that an individual's job dissatisfaction lead to thoughts of quitting followed by the consideration of the decision to quit and then evaluation of the perceived or expected costs and benefits of a job search and of leaving the organization (Hom & Griffeth, 1995). At this point the individual can proceed along one of two paths (Hom & Griffeth, 1995). Individuals who perceive that finding alternative employment will pose no problem or have other alternatives besides work available (e.g., retirement) will merely quit. Individuals following the second path perceive that job alternatives are available and will pursue a job search. If they find an alternative that is perceived to be better than their current job they will quit (Hom & Griffeth, 1995).

Hom and Griffeth’s (1995) work was an important step in turnover research by demonstrating the multidimensional aspects of turnover. Their 1995 revision (see Figure 8) included organizational commitment, labour market factors and the antecedents of



*Figure 8* Hom & Griffeth's, 1995, revised alternative linkages model of turnover

From "Employee Turnover" by P. W. Hom & R. W. Griffeth, 1995, p. 108.

satisfaction and commitment. The authors theorize that labour market factors acted as a mediating variable for the job satisfaction, expected utility of withdrawal and job search factors (Hom & Griffeth, 1995).

By matching an individual's values and beliefs with those values and beliefs held by the organization, the commitment that individuals will have towards the organization will be greater (Flowers & Hughes, 1983; Hom & Griffeth, 1995; Mobley, 1982).

Research has also shown that perceived organizational support of the individual will strengthen the commitment the employee has to the organization thus reducing the likelihood of turnover (Allen, Shore, & Griffeth, 2003; Huselid, 1995). Thus, the greater the fit the individual has with the organization the more likely the individual will remain with the organization.

Missing from the model was the influence of nonwork factors. Research has verified that there are three important aspects of turnover/retention; organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and nonwork domains (Cohen, 1997; Lee & Mitchell, 1994). Aaron Cohen confirmed nonwork domains as a separate part of the larger turnover construct in his 1997 study. Nonwork domains comprise activities, experiences, and other factors outside the organization (Cohen, 1995, 1997; Kirchmeyer, 1992). An individual's family life, spousal relationship, community activities, political affiliations, and religious affiliations exemplify nonwork domains (Cohen, 1995, 1997). A great deal has been written on nonwork domains in recent years (Cohen, 1995, 1997; Kirchmeyer, 1992), but little has been written on community activities as a nonwork influence.

A paper by Thomas Lee and Stephen Maurer (1999) went as far as to say that an individual's family structure and commitments influences organizational commitment

and turnover intent. The authors state that the social control of a member's family structure can direct the individual's behaviour and also the allocation of a family member's time and energy (Lee & Maurer, 1999). Using human capital theory Lee and Maurer (1999) argued that limitations to one's time and energy, forces an individual to utilize time between the family and work (1999). This increases the social pressures or controls of the allocation of time and energy devoted towards or away from the family or work. Therefore, having a spouse who is also employed or having children will strengthen or weaken organizational commitment regarding intention to leave. Social pressures will increase or decrease the amount of time an individual can devote to the job thus creating an external factor that weakens or strengthens the commitment process (1999).

The unfolding model of Lee and Mitchell (1991) encompassed the concepts of organizational commitment, job satisfaction and nonwork influences. The theory broke down the turnover process into two separate factors, organizational and community (1991). These two factors are, in turn, broken down into three concepts of fit, links and sacrifice (1991). The model captures the psychological and sociological nuances of the turnover process. A criticism of the model may be the lack of economic factors. However, to date the theory "accords greater theoretical attention to the origin of the turnover process, an aspect that prevailing formulations neglect" (Hom & Griffeth, 1995, p. 85)

The focus of research has expanded over the last 45 years to include other attitudes such as organizational commitment, and job involvement, perceived organizational support, and nonwork influences (Hom & Griffeth, 1995). Models have

grown from simple conceptualizations to models showing the complexity of the turnover process. Understanding of the turnover process is progressing through a process of conceptualization and testing. The latest model that requires testing is the unfolding model of voluntary turnover. Chapter three will review the model as well as its companion model job embeddedness which deals with the employee retention/attachment process.

## CHAPTER THREE

### *The Unfolding Model and the Embeddedness Model*

Over the last four decades researchers have focused on the two original concepts as purposed by March and Simon (1958). These two concepts, job satisfaction and perceived alternatives, have been pursued by researchers using two research streams, namely market oriented and psychologically oriented (Lee & Mitchell, 1994). Lee and Mitchell define the market oriented research as a pull theory or external to the individual. These external concepts consist of job alternatives, and the supply and demand of labour. Psychologically oriented research finds “constructs internal to the employee, a push theory” (1994, p. 51). Thus, internal concepts focus on job related perceptions and attitudes. The market and psychological studies separately explained a degree of the variance of voluntary turnover. Lee and Mitchell (1994) suggest that;

Labour market studies have produced a reasonably good predictor results for aggregated employee turnover rates, often in explaining more than 50% of the variance. In contrast, the psychological studies of individuals typically have explained less than 15% of the variance in voluntary employee turnover (1994, p. 51)

Market oriented research seems to explain when or what economic conditions will lead to or assist voluntary turnover and psychological research attempts to explain why the individual partakes in voluntary turnover.

It is the ‘why’ of voluntary turnover that is crucial for academics and practitioners to understand. A valid complaint is that little is determined regarding the reasons and the processes involved in leaving (Lee, Mitchell, Holtom, McDaniel & Hill, 1999). By combining the two research streams into a more holistic approach Thomas Lee and



Terence Mitchell strive to reach that understanding. Other researchers, Hulin, Roznowski, and Hachiya (1985) have suggested that the consideration of push and pull oriented studies seems more likely to produce significant insights into the understanding of voluntary turnover than does a more narrow focus. Lee and Mitchell present the unfolding model as a theory that uses both push and pull approaches and conditions (Lee, & Mitchell, 1994).

### ***The Unfolding Model***

The ‘unfolding model’ of voluntary turnover was first published in 1991 by Lee and Mitchell in *Motivation and Emotion*. The theory was in response to these authors’ discontent with the existing models of voluntary turnover (Lee & Mitchell, 1991). The ‘unfolding model’ draws upon the accumulated research of voluntary turnover and delves into decision making research for the underpinning of the theory (Lee & Mitchell, 1991). The authors attempt to create a model that is holistic in view and from this holistic viewpoint the authors created the companion construct, job embeddedness, to explain employee retention.

The unfolding model uses as a basic construct for generic decision making, Beach and Mitchell’s 1990 image theory. Lee and Mitchell (1994) state that image theory requires the reader to accept some general assumptions regarding the decision process that are contrary to classical decision theory. The assumptions are:

1. evaluation seldom is extensive;
2. choice occurs relatively rarely;
3. behaviour largely is pre-programmed;
4. decision makers possess a variety of different strategies for making choices, many of which have quite different aims than the maximization of expected utility; and
5. the field has abandoned its single-minded allegiance to the economic view of decision making (1994, p. 54).

Rather than choosing options Beach purposes that fit screening is the most salient process (Beach & Mitchell, 1990).

Screening is a mechanism that determines whether incoming information or potential changes in people's behaviour actually become options in a decision process. Screening is a fairly rapid but crude process that ascertains whether new information can be integrated easily into a set of three domain-specific images: value, trajectory, and strategic. (Lee, & Mitchell, 1994, p. 56)

The value image comprises an individual's beliefs, morals, ideals, general values, standards, and individual principles which identify that person as an individual (Beach & Mitchell, 1990). Trajectory image is the set of goals of the individual that revitalizes and guides the individual's behaviour (Beach & Mitchell, 1990). Behavioural tactics and strategies that an individual utilizes and believes effective to obtain their goals defines the strategic image (Beach & Mitchell, 1990).

Images an individual uses in the decision process could be framed in reference of their goal hierarchies (Lee & Mitchell, 1994). General and widespread goals might represent the value image (e.g. integrity, beauty, or wealth); distal but specific goals might represent the trajectory image (personal economic condition, desired level educational achievement); surface or proximal goals are then strategic goals (wage level, grade point level) (1994).

People are continually assailed with information such that possible changes in behaviour could occur (Beach & Mitchell, 1990). This bombardment of information comes from advertising through the media, Internet, friends or family (Lee & Mitchell, 1994). An individual is bombarded with information from the moment they awake; the individual screens the information and either rejects or ignores the information and is rarely forced into a decision (1994).

Beach & Mitchell (1990) postulate within image theory if an option makes it through the screening process comparison of the options are made to the status quo. This is the most common decision instrument and the status quo wins in the majority of cases (1990). An individual's behaviour typically remains the unchanged but an individual's images may alter a little over time (1990). What the authors are trying to say is we are who we are and that to motivate us, to change the status quo, requires a shock to the system.

The importance of image theory to turnover research is that it attempts to understand the varying influences that occur in a person's life. Individuals have images of each of the different influences that affect their lives and the strongest of these influences are work, family, friends, recreation, and ethics/spiritual (Lee & Mitchell, 1994). The strength of the images that are held by these factors controls the speed of which decisions will be made by the individual (Beach & Mitchell, 1990).

Within the screening process it seems that images are used in a sequential manner; thus new information goes through a process of comparison of information with in the relevant content area and set image (Beach & Mitchell, 1990). This means that the individual will categorize the information according to existing images (i.e. family, values, work or goals) (Lee & Mitchell, 1994). This process is followed by comparison with the other images at the value image then the trajectory image and finally the strategic image (Beach & Mitchell, 1990). However, as an alternative to accepting or rejecting the information or options, an individual may alter the image; a goal or tactic may be changed in order to facilitate the information or options (Beach & Mitchell, 1990). Therefore, the more information or weak images or multiple alternatives or

conflict within the alternatives may start a greater amount of cognitive activity path (Beach & Mitchell, 1990).

The use of image theory as an understanding for the decision path<sup>5</sup> that one follows suggests that an event or as Lee and Mitchell term it “a shock to the system” (1994, p. 56) which triggers the individual to stop and remember the significance or consequence of the shock in relation to their job (Lee & Mitchell, 1994). “A shock is an event that generates information or has meaning about a person's system of beliefs and images” (Mitchell & Lee, 2001, p.199). This shock to the system maybe a new supervisor or a new company policy or a spouse being offered a different job position. In fact, there may be multiple shocks to the system (Lee & Mitchell, 1994).

The shock to the system acts as a catalyst for cognitive activity (Beach & Mitchell, 1990). The result of the cognitive activity may or may not be a conscious thought to voluntarily leave the organization and may or may not have been a surprise to the individual (Lee & Mitchell, 1991, 1994). An individual's “unique personal characteristics and experiences” (Mitchell & Lee, 2001, p.200) form their images and decision frames<sup>6</sup> thus influencing how the shock becomes interpreted. A shock to the system, for the purposes of this theory, must cause an individual to consider voluntarily leaving the organization (Lee & Mitchell, 1991, 1994). Once an individual has initiated deliberations regarding leaving the organization they follow one of four decision paths that ‘unfold’ over time (Lee & Mitchell, 1991, 1994).

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<sup>5</sup> “Decision path summarizes how employees interpret their work environment; how they identify decision options; and how they enact responses.” (Mitchell & Lee, 2001, p. 199)

<sup>6</sup> Decision frame- “The social and cognitive context that surrounds the experienced shock provides a frame of reference within which employees interpret the event” (Mitchell & Lee, 2001, p.200).

Shocks to the system bring a conceptual understanding to the initiation process of turnover (Lee & Mitchell, 1994). By bringing this understanding to turnover theory one can see that influences of the individual's environment, work and nonwork, can create shocks or a series of multiple shocks that prod the employee out of the state of inertia (Lee & Mitchell, 1994). Thus, shocks can be seen as, a) personal events external to the organization (e.g. winning a lottery, a death of a loved one or the birth of a child), b) personal events related to employment (e.g. a job offer from another organization, an offer of early retirement or merely an argument with a superior), or c) organizational events (mergers, downsizing or transfer to different location) (Lee & Mitchell, 1994).

*Decision Path 1: shock to the system and a memory program resulting in a match; a script driven decision.* (see Figure 9) This decision path involves very little time in the decision process to quit (Lee & Mitchell, 1991, 1994). However, the memory probe and matching process to prior experiences does involve an active cognitive process. As stated this is a script driven decision, which means the individual has already formed an a priori decision (Lee & Mitchell, 1991, 1994). In other words, they have already developed a plan of action, thus little thought is required. Scripts appear to be due to idiosyncratic attributes of the individual (Mitchell & Lee, 2001).

An example of Decision Path 1 may be if an individual works for a small firm and has already formed the decision that he or she does not want to work for a larger firm and then if the smaller firm is purchased by large conglomerate then the individual will make the automatic decision to leave the firm. Mobley (1982) termed this type of decision behaviour, impulsive behaviour. Individuals may forgo a process of job search due to the strength of their prior decisions, ethics, rules or experiences (Lee & Mitchell, 1991,



1994). Lee and Mitchell state, “our own anecdotal evidence suggests that people occasionally quit without reference to the job satisfaction or to other job alternatives” (Lee & Mitchell, 1994, p. for 57).

In the hotel resort industry many of the turnover decisions by employees follow Decision Path 1. Younger employees may take employment in the hotel resort industry to save enough money for a designated purpose (e. g., university or college education or traveling) (Lee & Mitchell, 1994). Once they have accumulated sufficient resources they leave the organization (Lee & Mitchell, 1991, 1994). Lee & Mitchell (1994) reference several articles that demonstrate the same principle regarding temporary or part-time employees. This decision to quit involves a prescribed response that is automatic in nature and requires no active consideration of possible alternatives (Lee & Mitchell, 1991, 1994). The decision is neutral in nature however, decisions may be positive (e.g., winning a lottery) or negative (e.g., being taken over by a large conglomerate) (Lee & Mitchell, 1991, 1994).

*Decision Path 2: shock to the system, no match, and no specific job alternatives; a pushed decision.* (see Figure 9) This decision path revolves around the concept that there is no appropriate response, rule of action or experience that can be drawn from to form a decision by the individual (Lee & Mitchell, 1991, 1994). The type of shock to the system maybe the same as Decision Path 1 the only difference is the individual does not have a prior formed decision path (1991, 1994). The individual will use value, trajectory, and strategic images to assess the situation. The ability to integrate personal principles regarding the shock is determined by the value image; a decision regarding personal goals, staying with the organization, falls under the category of trajectory image and the

individual's strategic image ascertains whether the shock will make a difference to goal-oriented plans (1991, 1994). Although positive and neutral shocks can initiate action, it is more likely that this decision path will be initiated by a negative shock (1991, 1994). A decision may be made to change an image to facilitate the decision; thus, it is possible for an individual to maintain the status quo (stay with the organization) or to leave. The decision in this case may result in a scripted behaviour for future shocks that may be similar (e.g., an individual may change their images regarding a merger with another organization for financial reasons and future merger images will be shaped by the image created by the first merger) (1991, 1994).

*Decision Path 3: shock it to the system, no match in presence of specific job alternatives; a pull decision.* (see Figure 10) Decision Path 3 is similar to Decision Path 2 except that there are one or more specific employment opportunities available (Lee & Mitchell, 1991, 1994). Once again the shock which, maybe positive (a job offer from a competitor), negative (being passed over for a promotion) or neutral (a merger) initiates cognitive action regarding prior experience or matching rule probe; however, as with Decision Path 2 there is no prior experience to draw from or no match to an existing rule (1991, 1994). The availability of the employee and opportunities combined with no match creates a far more complex image comparison process (1991, 1994).

Value, trajectory, and strategic image are once again used to evaluate the available employment opportunities (Lee & Mitchell, 1991, 1994). This will lead to a decision whether the employment opportunity fits of the individuals images. Finally the individual will directly compare their current organization to the alternative organization and weigh the perceived benefits of each (profitability test) (1991, 1994). If the perceived



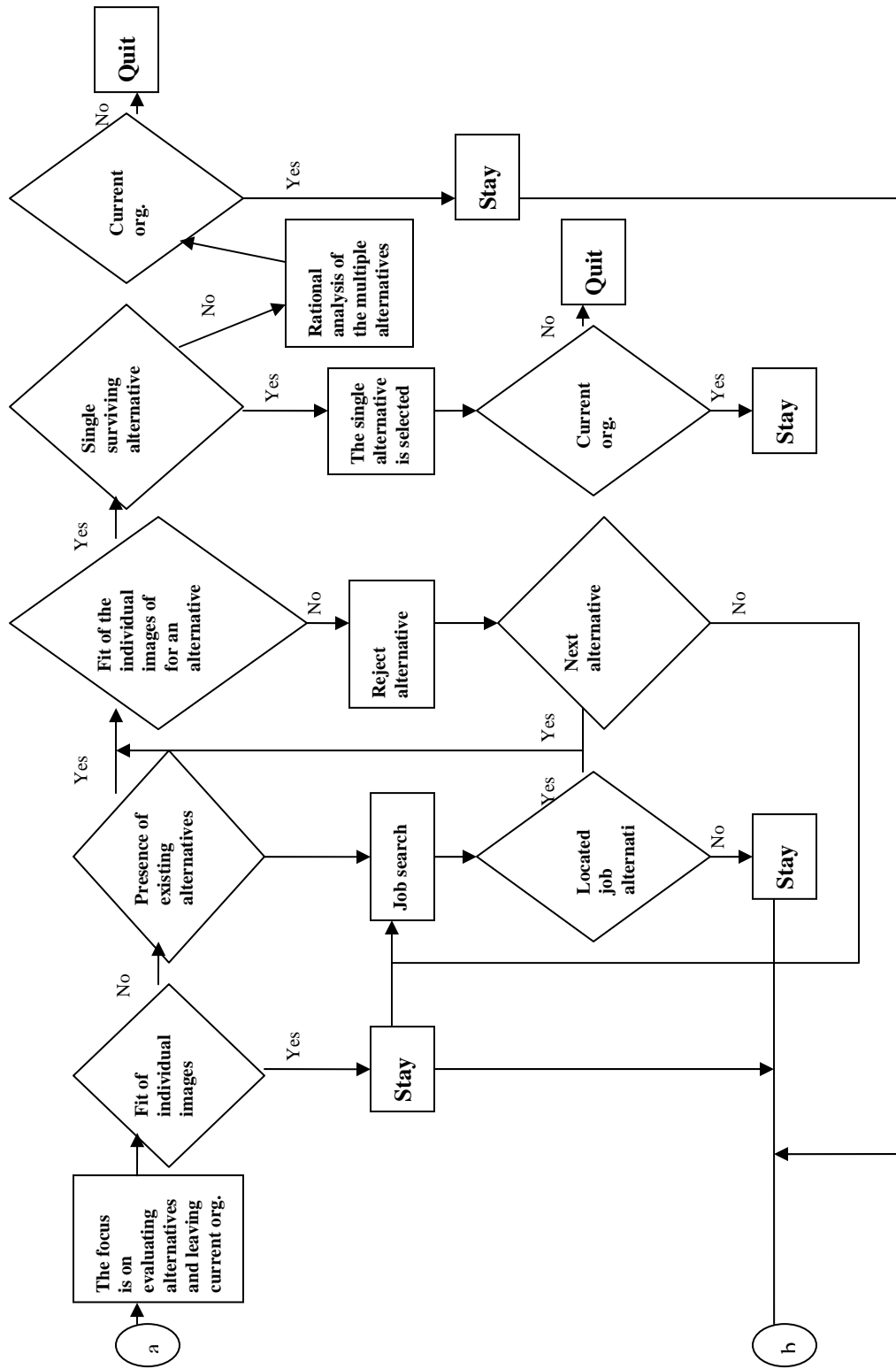


Figure 10 Unfolding model of voluntary turnover, 1994-Decision paths # 3.

From "The Unfolding Model of Voluntary Turnover and Job Embeddedness" by Terence Mitchell and Thomas Lee, 2001, in B. Staw Ed. Research in Organizational Behavior, 23, p. 202.

benefits of the alternative organization exceed the perceived benefits of the current organization the employee will quit. An individual in this situation may be satisfied and committed to the organization but the perceived benefits of leaving outweigh the perceived benefits of staying (1991, 1994).

*Decision Path 4: no shock to the system; affect initiated.* (see Figure 9) Unlike Decision Paths 1, 2, 3 there occurs no shock to the system to initiate any cognitive activity (Lee & Mitchell, 1991, 1994). This decision path is seen as a natural process that one initiates occasionally to assess their current position (1991, 1994). Lee and Mitchell reference an article by Weiss, Nicholas, and Link, 1992, in which the authors state, “a person's a reaction to a job events often bypasses cognitive, rational analysis and has a direct impact on affective responses to jobs. Thus, a person would come to be dissatisfied with his or her job without undergoing various comparisons of images” (1994, p. 58). Organizations are fluid organic entities that gradually change as the world around them changes. These gradual changes may cause an individual to reassess their fit with the organization (1991, 1994).

Decision Paths 3 and 4, according to Lee and Mitchell (1991, 1994), represent the current models of turnover regarding to the role job dissatisfaction plays in the decision to quit. The authors believe that the model demonstrates that job dissatisfaction leads sequentially to a lack of organizational commitment, job alternative searches, a greater ease of movement, and stronger intention to leave the organization; thus, a higher likelihood of the individual leaving the organization (1991, 1994). Within Decision Path 4 there are two decision paths (1991, 1994). One involves a job search after dissatisfaction occurs; however, prior to the individual leaving the organization (1991,

1994). The second decision path is similar to Decision Path 2 in that the individual may leave the organization without evaluation of job alternatives (1991, 1994).

In data gathered from five separate samples<sup>7</sup> the authors found that 95% of the individuals involved used the decision path as described in the unfolding model (Mitchell et al., 2001a). Table 1 provides an overview of the mental deliberations required for the decision paths. Decision Paths 1, 2, and 3 accounted for 63% of those individuals and the remaining 37% followed paths 4A and 4B. Of the five possible decision paths, paths 3 and 4B were the most commonly followed (Mitchell et al., 2001a).

**Table 1.** A Heuristic Summary of the Unfolding Model

			Shock	
			Present	Absent
Mental	Deliberations			
Minimal	Decision Path No. 1: Script driven			
Moderate	Decision Path No. 2: Push decision	Decision Path No. 4a: Affect initiated		
Extensive	Decision Path No. 3: Pull decision	Decision Path No. 4b: Affect initiated		

From “The unfolding model of voluntary turnover and job embeddedness: foundations of for comprehensive theory of attachment,” by Terence R. Mitchell and Thomas W. Lee, 2001, in B. Staw & L. L. Cummings (Eds.), *Research in Organizational Behavior*, 23, p. 208.

<sup>7</sup> The five studies used quantitative methodologies and one combined qualitative and quantitative methods. The studies had a total sample population of almost 1500 individuals. The sample population was drawn from banking institutions, accounting institutions, a retail grocery store and hospital institutions. (Mitchell et al., 2001a)

The results of the studies demonstrate why traditional turnover models are not highly predictive (Mitchell et al, 2001a). The turnover process is far more complicated because people leave jobs not because of dissatisfaction but because of an event that sends a shock to the system and they often leave without alternatives (Mitchell & Lee, 1991, 1994). Very few of these individuals left because of a shock based solely on a monetary basis (Mitchell et al, 2001a). Uncontrollable by the organization<sup>8</sup> non monetary results of the studies demonstrate why traditional turnover models are not highly predictive (2001a). The turnover process is far more complicated shocks were a common instigation to the leaving process (2001a).

As expected the study showed that the time span of the unfolding paths occurred at different rates (Mitchell et al, 2001a). Those individuals that used path 3 took a greater period of time to leave then those that used path 1 or 2. It is difficult to assess the time required for a decision using paths 4A and 4B due to their reflective nature (2001a).

There are several variables that may affect the inception of the decision paths (Lee & Mitchell, 1994). They are the self concept, commitment propensity, work history, and strong versus weak situations (1994). The self-concept has a variety of dimensions involving self-esteem, task the specifics of efficacy, a general self efficacy, locus of control and affectivity. These decisions may affect the decision path because they all deal with the psychological profile of the individual (1994). An individual with strength in these areas would be able to make decisions quickly, with self-confidence and will have more preset plans or rules (1994).

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<sup>8</sup> “Slightly over half of the people (128) left because of shocks that were external to the organization (e.g., spouse relocation, unsolicited job offer, pregnancy), while 99 left because of internal shocks (e.g., a poor evaluation, merger, disagreement with boss).” (Mitchell et al, 2001a, p. 101).

Commitment propensity mixes individual experiences and characteristics that an individual carries with them when joining an organization that assists in developing a stable link to the organization (Lee & Mitchell, 1994). Individuals with a strong commitment propensity are more likely to develop a strong sense of commitment to the organization; thus, more likely followed Decision Path 2 (1994).

Individuals with a work history that involves voluntarily leaving several organizations experience and explain their turnover behaviour differently than those who have little history of turnover (Lee & Mitchell, 1994). These individuals will have predetermined scripts regarding the leaving of an organization and therefore more likely to follow Decision Path 1 (1994).

The cues that occurred to signal appropriate actions taken by employees are embedded in work situations (Lee & Mitchell, 1994). The situations may be compelling and uniformly interpreted (strong) or hidden and not uniformly interpreted (weak) (1994). Therefore, the likelihood of a scripted behaviour occurring is greater in strong situations. Once again work history or the more situational strength the individual has to draw on the shock is more likely to initiate Decision Path 1 (1994).

The benefit of the unfolding model is in its holistic viewpoint towards turnover. The model offers four pathways of decision making which “were theorized to capture more of the evolutionary (hence the term unfolding) confluence of personal, situational, and accidental forces on the decision to leave an organization than current models” (Lee & Mitchell, 1991, p. 118). The model encompasses the psychological mechanisms (habits, scripts and schemas) that form of large part of an individual's organizational or nonwork life through the understanding of decision path by using the image theory (Lee

& Mitchell, 1991, 1994). The model grasps employee turnover as a complex process, more so than traditional theories imply (Lee et al., 1996). The model draws into focus factors involving psychological behaviour driven by work and nonwork influences that not only affect turnover but retention issues as well (Mitchell et al, 2001a).

### ***Job Embeddedness***

Very little research has focused on how and why an individual decides to remain with an organization and the determinants of the attachment (Maertz & Campion, 1998). Mitchell and co-authors believe that the staying or leaving decision processes involve different psychological and emotional processes (2001a). Factors precipitating leaving may be at odds with factors that strengthen retention (Mitchell & Lee, 2001). The authors believe that this observation is critical in developing a better understanding and predictability of both turnover and retention (Mitchell et al, 2001a). To this end they developed a companion model to the unfolding model of voluntary turnover, the job embeddedness model of the employee retention.

The core concept of job embeddedness can be explained by an idea from psychology and field theory (Lewin, 1997). In psychology embedded figures are images used in psychological testing and they are immersed in their backgrounds. By being attached to their backgrounds embedded figures become one with the surroundings and thus, it is hard to separate them from the background (Mitchell, Holtom, Lee, Sablinski, & Erez, 2001b).

Lewin's (1997) field theory is a comparable idea. In field theory aspects of individuals' lives are symbolized and connected by a perceptual life space and he purpose that individuals view themselves as entangled in a net of various factors or forces and connections (Lewin, 1997). The entanglements may be loosely or strongly attached to the

individuals (Mitchell & Lee, 2001). Connections can vary between few or many and near or far (Lewin, 1997). An image is formed of the individual being both attached and stuck; which implies inertia; the more embedded the individual becomes the greater the likelihood that they leave their job is marginalized (Mitchell & Lee, 2001). Therefore, using these two concepts the authors apply a net or web like analogy as a visual tool to explain the job embeddedness model (Mitchell, Holtom, Lee, Sablinski, & Erez, 2001b).

As discovered by turnover researchers, nonwork factors influence employment status and environment (Cohen, 1995; Lee & Mauer, 1999). These nonwork factors including community organizational commitment, family and recreational activities can act as bonds that prompt an individual to remain with an organization or to leave it (Cohen, 1995; Lee & Mauer, 1999).

An area that might be termed non-affective or non-attitudinal is a large area that has been omitted from the traditional view of work related areas that may cause an individual to remain with an organization (Mitchell et al, 2001a). These non-affective or non-attitudinal areas are represented by the attachments (e.g., co-workers) or activities (e.g., company bowling league) or organizational sponsored community services (e.g., sponsorship of charitable events) (2001a). If an individual was to leave an organization they would have to give up or sacrifice monetary and non-monetary benefits (2001a, b). Monetary benefits that may be sacrificed would include items such as pension, health care coverage, and wages (2001a, b). The individual may sacrifice non-monetary benefits such as friendships and networks that they have developed in the organization or seniority or perks (e. g., a large office, a parking spot closer to the building) or a routine that they are comfortable with (2001a, b).

Job embeddedness represents a holistic representation of factors including work and nonwork factors that influence retention (Mitchell et al., 2001a). Each of these factors, including the ones above, act as a strand woven in a spider's web emanating out from the center point, an individual's job (2001a).

The number of connections may vary, the distance of strength of the attachments may vary, and the over all connectedness of the web (attachments among nodes) may vary. Leaving a job may greatly disturb that web, and it was our belief that it was this web like quality, or embeddedness, that often keeps people on the job (2001a, p.101).

Therefore, the strength of these threads or bonds, attachments to the organization or attachments to the community, are what holds or embeds the individual in the organization. An individual's embeddedness in the organization may also create feelings of being stuck or trapped like a fly caught in a spider's web (Mitchell et al., 2001a, b).

The job embeddedness model encompasses both areas of work (organization) and nonwork (community) and divides both into three factors: links, fit, and sacrifice (2001, b).

*Links* - "Links are the connections between a person and other people, groups, or organizations" (Mitchell et al., 2001a, p.102). Organizational links for the individual may be friendships that have been developed for networking relationships (Mitchell et al., 2001a, b). Community links are friends, family, relatives or relationships in community organizations which are established in the community through recreational activities or community organizations (e.g. church, schools) (Mitchell et al., 2001a, b). A large volume of research supports the importance of nonwork or community links (see Cohen, 1995 & 1997; Lee & Mauer, 1999). The salience of particular links may be determined by



population-specific factors such as geographic location, or size of the community (Mitchell et al, 2001b).

*Fit* - “Fit is defined as an employee's perceived compatibility with the job, organization, and community” (Mitchell et al., 2001a, p.102). An individual's values and both present and future goals must coincide with the organization's values and goals (Mitchell et al., 2001a, b). Thus, it is also important that the individual has a fit with the community and surrounding environment. The individual with a stronger perceived sense of fit will experience stronger personal and professional attachments to the organization (Mitchell et al., 2001a, b).

The research<sup>9</sup> into organizational fit, which can be seen as organizational commitment, has been thorough and has shown the greater perception of fit, the lower the turnover (Mitchell et al., 2001a, b). An individual's community fit is also salient whether the individual stays or leaves the organization (2001a, b). The individual's fit to the community can be determined by the availability of recreational activities in the community or surrounding area that the individual pursues or adequate schools for their children or employment opportunities for their spouse or community organizations in which they wish to participate (2001a, b).

*Sacrifice* - “Sacrifice reflects what an individual has to forgo if they leave a job. Many of the sacrifices involve forgoing financial incentives tied to longevity” (Mitchell et al., 2001a, p.102). The perceived sacrifice may be psychological benefits or material/financial benefits that are presently available or available at a later date (Mitchell

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<sup>9</sup> E.g. - Hom and Griffeth, 1995, researched organizational climate and personal values; O'Reilly et al., 1989, look into group heterogeneity regarding various aspects including tenure; Chan, 1996, studied problem solving style; Westaby, 1999 studied training opportunities and experiences; and Cable and Parsons, 1999, researched socialization of new employees.

& Lee, 2001). Organizational sacrifices can be pensions or health care plans; however, they may also include other items such as bonuses or stock options or a larger office or an advancement (Mitchell et al., 2001a, b). Community sacrifices would include a home one is comfortable with, friends, family or relatives, and community status, etc. (2001a, b).

Job embeddedness has been measured through a survey developed by Mitchell et al. and tested in three separate studies<sup>10</sup> (2001a). In all three studies job embeddedness related negatively to intention to leave and voluntary turnover (Mitchell et al., 2001a). “People who reported being more embedded in their jobs were less likely to leave their organizations” (Mitchell et al., 2001a, p.106). Researchers have reported that individual's who demonstrate a lack of fit are more likely to leave an organization; thus, researchers state that the lack of job compatibility, fit, is a predictor of turnover (Griffeth, Hom, & Gaertner, 2000; Maertz & Campion, 1998).

There are many other constructs that overlap with the dimensions of job embeddedness (Mitchell et al, 2001b). Mobley's model (1982) and later work by Hom, Griffeth, and Sellaro (1984), and Hom and Hulin (1981) on the costs of quitting is similar to the organization-related sacrifice dimension (Mitchell et al, 2001b). Organizational commitment, which the job embeddedness model captures in the fit-organization and links-organization, has been researched by numerous authors, e.g. the Allen and Meyer 1990 study (2001b). The fit-to-organization dimension has similarities with person-organization fit or the person-and job fit which have been researched by several authors: Schneider, 1987; Chatman, 1989; Kristof, 1996; Saks and Ashforth, 1997; Werbel and

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<sup>10</sup> The studies involved three different organizations; a retail grocers retrain, N = 177; hospital, N = 208; and a banking center, N = 841. The studies tested both job embeddedness and the unfolding model of voluntary turnover (Mitchell et al., 2001a).

Gilliland, 1999 (2001b). Rikers constituency commitment construct, 1985, has similarities to the concept of links-to-organization (2001b). The links-to-community is reflected in several constructs and measures for example, Price and Mueller work on kinship responsibilities and ease of movement or Miller's 1976 work on relocation or Spitz, 1986, Turban and co-authors, 1992 and Shaffer and Harrison 1998 work on family entanglements and relocation (2001b).

The salient difference between job embeddedness and other constructs is the broadness of the job embeddedness construct and that it is less affective than many of the dominant constructs (Mitchell et al, 2001b). Job embeddedness was also found to be a tool to predict the variances in voluntary absences, organizational citizenship and job performance and did so with a greater degree than that of a job satisfaction and job commitment (Lee, Mitchell, Sablinski, Burton, & Holtom, 2003). However, by including nonwork aspects (community) as an important, if not equal, aspect of the model, Mitchell and co-authors have created an attachment/retention model that is holistic and unique.

Job embeddedness also affects the turnover process (Mitchell et al, 2001b). The more embedded an individual is within the organization and community then the less that individual is likely to have plans regarding leaving if a shock occurs (2001a, b). The authors have discovered that individuals who are more embedded experienced less shocks than those are not embedded (2001b). Thus, job embeddedness may actually decrease the overall effect of a shock to the point that it becomes a non-shock (2001b). In

their studies<sup>11</sup> they found that “the more one has to give up, the less they think about leaving” (Mitchell & Lee, 2001, p. 228).

The unfolding model and the job embeddedness model present researchers with two related and connected models of two phenomena. To summarize there are seven salient characteristics of each model are presented. First, the unfolding model:

1. People leave the jobs in very different but distinct ways; Lee and Mitchell and co-authors describe four different paths that people may take;
2. Most people leave via paths 3 and 4 B, which are the more “traditional” paths;
3. Many people leave because a shock initiates the process;
4. Many people leave without searching for alternatives;
5. Many people leave who are satisfied with their jobs;
6. Decisions about leaving do not always reflect an expected value of like process;
7. Leaving takes different amounts of time (Mitchell & Lee, 2001, pp 229-230).

The job embeddedness model:

1. People stay on their jobs partly because of a web of attachments that cause a feeling of embeddedness;
2. This sense of embeddedness is significantly related to intent to leave and actual turnover;

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<sup>11</sup> “Fit and sacrifice were highly related to satisfaction and commitment (e.g. the four correlation coefficients ranged from 0.64 to 0.70)” (Mitchell & Lee, 2001, p.228). “Sacrifice was highly related to thoughts about leaving in the intention to leave (i.e.  $r = -0.52$  and  $-0.58$ , respectively) (Mitchell & Lee, 2001, p.228).

3. Off-the-job factors make an important contribution to understanding of why people stay on their jobs;
4. People often stay simply because of the number of links (or attachments) they have to other people, projects or organizations;
5. One's fit with their job and organization as well as their fit with their community will encourage staying on the job;
6. Leaving involves sacrifice and sacrifice is much more than just the money or financial or professional benefit that one forgoes;
7. Many of the reasons people give for not wanting to leave are non-affective in nature (Mitchell & Lee, 2001, pp. 231 - 232).

The focus of the seven salient point of job embeddedness appears to be on organizational influences and turnover. This focus has been reflected in the research done to date.

Although the job embeddedness model does provide an avenue to assess the intention to leave an organization, the model should be assessed on its own merits of exploring the reasons why individuals remain with an organization.

The job embeddedness model places community on an equal level with organizational influences but to date the affect of community influences have not been thoroughly explored. This paper will fill that void by focusing on community as a primary issue of concern in the research. Due to the stature that community has in the embeddedness model, the embeddedness model is used as an analytical tool to assess the role of community in the attachment/retention process. The properties of the model are used as guidelines to develop interview questions and orient the interview process. The next chapter will outline the methodological approach that was used to gather the data.

Through their holistic approach to the turnover and attachment/retention processes Lee, Mitchell, Holtom and co-authors have provided researchers and practitioners with valuable insights. However, more importantly, the authors have opened an avenue for future research and a better understanding of voluntary employee turnover and why people stay with organizations.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### *Methodology*

There are a multitude of interacting factors that lead to decisions related to why an individual chooses to remain with an organization (Lee & Mitchell, 2001). The job embeddedness model provides a holistic model that attempts to encompass all the factors that can be found in an individual's environment that affect their decision paths. To understand this environment and the effect that it exerts on the individual it is prudent to seek a method that would gather data that reflects the complexity of the environment as perceived by the individual (Maertz & Campion, 1998). Such data needs to be rich and deep in detail or of finer grained nature. Qualitative methods provide such thick, rich, and detailed data (Creswell, 1998; Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

There has been a call for researchers to use of qualitative methods in turnover and retention/attachment research (Maertz & Campion, 1998; Lee & Mitchell, 1994).

Lee et al (1996) departed from traditional methodologies by studying the quitting process using qualitative methods. We need to use more creative methods like these to investigate the many nuances and complexities of the decision (*to leave an organization*). Qualitative methods should certainly be among them (Maertz & Campion, 1998, p. 77).

Although Maertz and Campion were discussing the turnover process, the same 'creative methods' should be applied to the retention/attachment process.

The qualitative approach used for this research project is based on Glaser and Strauss's grounded theory<sup>12</sup>. Grounded theory is a methodology predominately used for

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<sup>12</sup> Grounded theory - "In this type of study, the researcher generates an abstract analytical schema of phenomena, a theory that explains some action, interaction, or process. This is accomplished primarily through collecting interview data, making multiple visits to the field (theoretical sampling), attempting to develop and interrelate categories (constant comparison) of information, and writing a substantive or context-specific theory" (Creswell, 1998, p. 241).

the discovery and development of theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Grounded theory provides the researcher with a methodology that elicits a theory from the data gathered through interviews (1967). This research project uses two existing theories, the unfolding model and to a larger extent the job embeddedness model, as its theoretical underpinnings. Within this theoretical framework, grounded theory will be used as a tool to explore the community-organization relationship postulated by the embeddedness theory. Strauss and Corbin (1998) state that an individual utilizing the same theoretical perspective as the original researcher, “should be able to come up with either the same or very similar theoretical explanation about the phenomenon under investigation” (p. 267). The conceptualizations of the embeddedness model of the community-organization influences or attachments can be more thoroughly explored through the collection and analysis of qualitative data.

### *Sample selection*

The resort industry was chosen for several reasons. Turnover rates in hotel/resort areas are normally much higher than that of hotels in other areas. Thus it might be implied that those that stay with organizations in resort areas represent individuals whom possess the core characteristics that form the reasons for an individual to stay with an organization. From this point of view, resort areas offer a unique opportunity to further develop the embeddedness theory.

Hotels in resort areas were chosen as the target population because of contacts within the industry that the author of this research project possessed. The author also had previous experience within the area and with the industry. This previous experience not only offered access and provided contacts, but also presented an insider's view of the



industry. This insider's view allowed the author to focus on the research project at hand and understand the context and jargon that was found in some of the research.

The initial planning of the research project called for interviews with fifteen to twenty individuals from a three different hotels/resorts within the same quality of service classification (e.g. three-star or four-star hotels/resorts). Fourteen interviews were conducted with individuals from two separate hotels/resorts (only two of the three hotels/resorts responded in a timely manner that allowed their inclusion in the project). As a selection criterion, each individual was required to have a minimum of three years tenure with the organization. This eliminated individuals that were on short term contract or seasonal and ensured that the participants were 'stayers'. It was theorized that as stayers these individuals would have developed their own reasons as to why they stayed with the organization.

A selection of twenty employees were randomly chosen in each hotel/resort and sent a communication (either by e-mail or letter) explaining the purpose of the research and requesting their participation. In each hotel the Human Resources Director and six randomly chosen employees of the employees that responded from the original twenty were interviewed. All chosen participants were sent a covering letter explaining, the nature of the research, a guarantee of confidentiality, and the necessary information to contact the researcher at anytime.

In one hotel/resort the schedule of the six participant interviews was set up by the Human Resources Director. The interviews took place in a one week period and participants were scheduled for the interviews during a scheduled workday. Participants at the other hotel/resort were informed to contact the researcher directly to arrange an

interview time. Seven individuals contacted the researcher and six interviews were arranged.

The interviews with the Human Resources Directors were the last two interviews to take place. These individuals provided organizational history, policies and procedures, and statistics regarding turnover in their respective organizations. Both individuals were very forthcoming with information, assistance and exhibited enthusiasm for this research project.

The number of interviews was based on the number of individuals willing to participate and the saturation<sup>13</sup> of categories. McCracken (1988) proposes the participation of eight individuals is a sufficient sample size. Strauss and Corbin stress that saturation of categories is the key to a number of required interviews (1998). In this research project saturation occurred after the tenth interview and thus, the final four interviews were used to clarify and verify the categories.

### *Interview design*

The interview method was based on McCracken's long interview technique (1988). This technique requires the researcher to undertake an extensive literature review so that this researcher has an understanding of the phenomena involved in the research. For this project the researcher's familiarity with the hotel/resort industry provided insights into the organizational culture and societal culture of the industry and the area, thus facilitating the creation of the interview instrument. Semi-structured interviews were used with 'grand tour' open ended questions that prompted explanation (McCracken,

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<sup>13</sup> Saturation – the point at which one can no longer find new information that adds to the understanding of the category (Glaser & Straus, 1967).

1988). Semi-structured interview questions are also a recommended procedure by the lead authors of the theory, Lee and Mitchell (1994). “Given the empirical confirmation for many of this study's predictions, it seems timely and prudent for theorist and researchers to move toward finer grained studies” (Lee & Maurer, 1999, p. 508).

Questions for the interviews were based on review of literature and the personal experience of the researcher in the industry. Questions were also included from a study done by Lee et al., 2003. The questions were reviewed and edited by two Management Professors of the Faculty of Management of the University of Lethbridge. The result was an interview guide instrument consisting thirty-one questions. Ten questions were demographic questions (e.g., gender, year of birth), five questions dealt with the individual's relationship with the community, five questions dealt with activities that the individual would pursue within the community and eleven questions dealt with the individual's relationship with the organization (see Appendix B.).

The interview questions were pretested with three graduate students of the Master of Science program in order to ensure that the questions were clear and understandable. Over the first three interviews with subjects, a review was done to assess the interview guide instrument. Based on this assessment no changes were made. It is however important to note that because of the semi-structured, open ended nature of the interviews it was not necessary to ask all the questions in all of the interviews. Interviewees often answered questions more than one question in response to some questions that were asked.

At the time of the interview the interviewees were asked to sign a consent form for the purpose of using the data for publication and for consent for the interview to be

audio taped. Confidentiality and anonymity was guaranteed to all participants. This was reiterated on the consent form. After signing the document interviewees were asked if they understood the consent form and if they agreed to be audio taped. This provided a double form of consent, written and verbal. Participants were also informed that their participation was purely voluntary and that at any time they could withdraw from the research project. Participants were also given the opportunity to request a copy of the final report.

Thirteen of fourteen of the interviews were taped and for the one interviewee that declined to be taped, notes were taken during the interview process. Notes were also taken during the other thirteen interviews to augment the audio recording. Six of the fourteen interviews transcribed by the researcher and rest of the interviews were transcribed by an outside transcription service.

### *Analysis of results*

Analyses of the interviews were based on the grounded theory approach (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1995). For the first six interviews each previous interview was listened to carefully and all notes reviewed before the next interview took place. This allowed for the constant comparative technique to be used. Activities, events, and incidents were identified from each interview and then compared to the emerging categories to assess development and saturation (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1995). The final eight interviews followed the same procedure except that the transcriptions of the first six interviews were available for more detailed comparison.

The analysis of the transcribed interviews started with open coding using ‘in vivo’ codes<sup>14</sup> and ATLAS.ti was used as a tool to verify and expand coding. Fifty-four initial codes were developed (see Appendix C, Figure C1). Axial coding was used next to define the categories and the causes, contacts, and consequences of the category. This procedure resulted in the code list being refined to a list of thirty-one codes (see Appendix C, Figure C1). The data was reviewed for emergence of major categories and the result was a further reduction of the code list to twenty-eight. Community safety was collapsed into a part of community benefits; emotion-person was collapsed into community connection; and emotion-organization was collapsed into organization connection (see Appendix C, Figure C2).

Three colleagues were given a list of the third set of codes and randomly selected sections of four interviews. They were then asked to code the sections as they interpreted the data. When they had accomplished their coding, they gathered together along with the researcher and compared their coding with that of the researcher. As a result of this two codes were renamed, codes were collapsed into other codes, and agreement was reached on the other codes (see Appendix C, Figure C3). In the end, unanimous agreement was reached regarding the code list.

Finally selective coding was used to identify the major categories, properties, and subcategories. This resulted in seven major categories, some of which were divided into properties, and three subcategories (see Appendix C, Figure C4).

It should be noted that although steps were taken to reduce the amount of researcher bias, one cannot escape imparting one's own bias into the research (Strauss &

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<sup>14</sup> In vivo codes - “Codes or categories in grounded theory research or the investigator uses the exact words of the interviewee to form the names for the codes or categories” (Creswell, 1998, p. 241).

Corbin, 1998). The aim of this project was to investigate the importance of community in the attachment process and the job embeddedness model was identified as the theoretical tool to achieve that goal. Interview questions were designed to reflect the concepts found in the job embeddedness model and analysis was done with an amount of bias towards the job embeddedness model. However, this bias was noted and an open mind was kept throughout the interview process and analysis. For example, during the interview process participants were encouraged to provide honest and candid answers, and were not encourage to model their answers to fit the job embeddedness concepts.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### *Results*

This chapter presents results of twelve interviews conducted for this research project. The categories that emerged from the interviews will be presented and explained along with quotes from the interviews to illustrate the category. In the next chapter, the emerging categories will be compared to the concepts put forward by Mitchell and Lee (2001) in the job embeddedness theory.

The purpose of this research project was to explore the importance of community within the job embeddedness theory and to add to the development of the theory. By investigating the same conceptual categories that Mitchell and Lee (2001) have studied, this research project is a step forward in the further development of the job embeddedness model.

The two interviews conducted with the two Directors of Human Resources are not included in the results. This decision was taken after considering the amount of information given to these two individuals prior to the interviews. Therefore, to avoid any potential bias that this knowledge may have given these individuals their interviews have been removed from the results. Their interviews were used as background information that would provide an organizational context for the information provided by the subjects.

#### *Demographic results*

The sample consisted of five women and seven men. Six of the individuals were married and six were single; two of the women were married as were four of the men. Of

the married individuals, three of their spouses also worked in the hotel/restaurant industry. The average age of the sample was 38.2 years and the range was 28 years to 63 years of age. Four individuals had places of origin outside of Canada (Ethiopia, Japan and Lebanon), seven individuals were from provinces east of Alberta and one individual was from Alberta. There were three homeowners, all of which were married, and nine renters in the sample group. The average length of tenure within the community was 8.8 years; the range was from four years to twenty years.

The sample included three individuals in management positions, six individuals who were in supervisory positions and three individuals in frontline staff positions. The average number of years in their current position was 4.8 years; the range was from half a year to fifteen years. The average number of years with the organization was 8.3 years with a range of four years to twenty years. The number of years that the individual was in the hotel resort industry ranged from four years to twenty years with a mean of 9.7 years.

### *Coding results*

Seven main categories emerged from the data through the process of axial 'in vivo' coding to selective coding. Those categories were; community benefits (activities available, amenities, etc.), community organizations (formal groups, family and friends), community leaving (perceptions of leaving), organization benefits (wages, pensions, psychological factors), organizational connection (friends, relationships, fit), organization leaving (perceptions of leaving), and embedded (a sense of inertia). Each category displayed specific 'properties' that characterized the attributes of that category (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Some properties displayed a dimensional attribute, in that it would be possible to place individuals in a continuum or range (1998). Considering, for example,



activities (property found within community benefits) individuals could be placed in a continuum as to the number of activities they participate in or they could be placed according to their level of participation within the activity. The concept of the dimensional characteristics of a property and what it means to the theory will be discussed in the next chapter.

### *Community*

Community benefits was by far the strongest category that emerged from the data. This category reflected the perceived benefits that the individual derived from the community. These benefits could mean sporting and leisure activities, the location, organizations within the community or the lifestyle of the community. To some of the participants the benefits of the community defined what community meant to them.

I guess a kind of support system. Involves your friends, it involves work, it involves leisure activities, it's kind of all encompassing of what surrounds your life. Everyone that's involved in it. (CPIN2; lines 222-225)

The category contained seven properties; cost, activities, lifestyle, location, serenity, adventure, and challenge. The cost property related to the financial cost of living in the community. This is often associated by the interview participants as a negative benefit of the community.

You can get really good jobs. I think it's all in relation to play (*activities*) because companies don't pay a lot. Rent is extremely expensive. Food is really expensive. Everything is expensive and you make no money so you spend all your money to try to live or eat. And then living here requires expensive toys, so everything is expensive about it. (CPIN4; lines 387-384)

Activities referred to the leisure pursuits of the participants. This involved a broad spectrum from skiing to knitting or hiking to sitting around with friends and talking.

I read books, I watched TV and I play soccer. (CPIN10; line 114)

In winter I go skating, I cross-country ski. And all year long basketball, ping-pong, tennis, walking, climbing, swimming, gym, or walking around. (CPIN8; lines 64-69)

The sporting activities of the area appeared to be one of the incentives for individuals to move to the area.

Question- So what do you do in your free time? Answer- That's one of the reasons for being here, we like to play outside, mountain biking, cross-country ski, downhill ski, like the back country, camp that kind of stuff, fly fish. (CPIN7)

I went because I snowboard and that's always been a great attraction for me. (CPIN5)

I wanted to do some golfing and had never been out here. Get away from home, on my own I worked the summer and stayed. (CPIN2)

The lifestyle or way of life defined how the individual perceived the routine or standard of living in the community. Lifestyle often involved their leisure activities and how their job interacted with the activity.

I have three personalities (laughs). And it fits all three of mine perfectly. Perfectly! I am a workaholic. I love work. I enjoy my job. I am very, very personal, by, I want to move ahead professionally in my career. But I also want to be off, to leave work at a reasonable hour and go mountain biking after work. In a city environment I would probably work until 7:00 at night, go home and have dinner, go to bed, wake up in the morning and go to the gym. Same thing every day. Now it's almost the same thing every day. I come in at 7 and work until 4:30, or five, go mountain biking. Then go to town have a barbecue with my friends, have a beer and do it the next day. So it is much more different, it's more appealing to me than living in the city environment. I can hit all my activities and when I want to take off and go camping and go be alone, not social, I can get away and do that as well. (CPIN4)

The location property captured the unique characteristics of the area and general geographic features of the community. For example:

This is certainly one of the most beautiful spots in the world. It's nice to get up in the morning and open the drapes and have this view. ...I just really enjoyed living here. Yeah, when my family and all my friends from the (name of city) area come out here they just love it out here. They come out here as much as they can because everybody wants to be in the mountains. It's fun. I have lots of friends up here, its fun. It's hard to be in a bad mood out here (laughs). Tourists will say you must get tired of looking at this and I say, no! I really don't get tired of looking at this. ...My guess the biggest thing is that were small enough but close enough, we're only an hour away from the big city. So being an hour from (name of city) is really nice because I don't want to belong in a city but I want to get to one. (CPIN2)

The individual's state of mind or as one interviewee termed it, peace of mind, is reflected in the property of serenity. This property evokes the emotion that the individual feels about the community and living within the community. The participants often mentioned the quiet and solitude or the lack of stress and often compared it to 'city living'.

There's also the solitude of it. When you can ride out you can be in the middle of nowhere. Like, I can get on my bike after work today, pedal for 15 minute and not bump into anybody. And that is great. ... Yeah, you're gone. And like, you don't bump into anybody. And hear the sounds, you just hear the sounds. You don't hear the highway. You don't hear the trains. All you hear is like the river or the wind blowing through the trees or the trees cracking. You don't hear the fire engines or the police, people chattering or the hum of electricity. It's, I know when I go back home to visit my family. "God it's so noisy here!" I don't sleep. Awake for five days because it's so noisy. It drives me nuts. So the solitude of being in an overly populated small town is really nice (laughs). (CPIN4)

Adventure or the sense adventure referred to the individual's desire or willingness to take chances, discover something new or do something different. This commonly manifests itself in the form of traveling, which is often seen as a motivator of turnover.

Umm, a lot of people go traveling because you meet so many different people from around the world that took place to go and visit. So they take off. A lot of them keep coming back. They go off and travel for a few months, come back. (CPIN3)

Although the challenge property is most directly associated with one's job, there are also occasions in the community benefits concept that it applies.

And hiking is just; I love hiking because if you want to, like especially right, you have to hike up a three hours to see that waterfall. And that is just so like, like, you have to go there with your feet if you don't you won't see it. It makes me feel like I did something and it may be really tough to get there but once you get there its like, yeah I did it! Kind of, just the achievement. (CPIN5)

This concept of proving one self or overcoming an obstacle within community benefits was not limited to the individuals sporting activities. Several individuals spoke about the challenges of the living with in the resort area and overcoming the restrictions that were associated with living near or in a national park (e.g., handling of waste, availability of land for housing).

The next major category was community organizations which dealt with formally or loosely organized groups in the community such as, Girl Guides, Boy Scouts, religious organizations, political organizations, clubs, friends and family. This category was comprised of three properties, community organizations, friends, and family. Community organizations represented the formal organizations within the community and the relationship that the participants had with these organizations.

My son plays hockey in the wintertime, so we're pretty active in minor hockey and stuff like that. So that takes all of our time in the wintertime. (CPIN1)

Question- Do you have memberships in any local organizations? Answer- No (CPIN 3)

I might be a bit atypical. I think other people my age, they might get more involved in the community than I have because I knew from the start this probably wasn't a place I thought I would be now, to be perfectly honest. So I didn't go out and do community things that I may have done at home. I was more involved in volunteer activities, taught fire and safety and hunter education at home, things like that; we're involved in the outdoors. I haven't really done that here but seeing I've been here a little bit longer I changed that a bit this year, and got involved in the (local naturalist society). Will probably do a little bit more with them this summer. There's an education camp teaching people about wildlife and bears, I'm doing a little bit of that now. I got a bit of a slow start in it which will certainly excuse my perspective. I didn't go into those streams of activities which I had at home and that's where I met a lot of people that I did become friends with because we share a common interest. I might be here ten years from now; you might come back and say hey! (CPIN7)

The next two properties of this category, friends and family, represented the less formal organized groups with which the individual interacts. The first of the two, friends, was divided between two categories, friends within the community and friends within the organization, which is found under the category organizational connection. Friends play an important role in the individual's life. Friends introduced individuals to a new leisure activity, help them get their job, were the initiative to move to the area or were an integral part of their lifestyle.

I had a buddy who is a pretty avid fly fisherman, so I've been doing that for a good 15 years now. (CPIN1)

Question- What brought you here? Answer- Friends. They were here so I came here and joined them. (CPIN11)

It is all intertwined because my sport activities are my social life. So, the people that I hang out with and go to the bar with on Saturday night are the same people that I'm going to go mountain biking with or canoeing down the (name of a local river) with. They are all the same people. (CPIN4)

As seen from the quote from CPIN4 this property also dealt with the relationship of the friendships to the community and how it intertwined with participants' lives and meaning of community.

The final category dealing with community captured the individual's perception of what it would be like to leave the community or what it would take for the individual to leave the community.

It's weird, you know, then you start heading back from a city, you see the mountains getting closer, you start relaxing. It's weird. Weird. So I think I would be giving up my sanity. (CPIN1)

I would probably leave to have a family. (CPIN6)

The first quote deals with the individual's perception of the psychological cost of leaving the community. The second quote deals with an individual's perception of what it would take to induce them to leave.

### *Organization*

The next three categories all dealt with the participant's interaction with the organization for whom they work. The first of three categories dealt with the perceived benefits that individual receives from the organization. This category was divided into three properties. The first property, entitled organizational benefits, dealt specifically with tangible financial benefits (e.g., wages or pension plan) and intangible benefits (e.g., pride of working for the hotel or level of stress) available to the individual.

The job I have is low stress, they pay me outrageously well for it, which is a bonus. (CPIN7)

The conditions of working improved a lot, the salary improved and also the benefits, pension plan, health care, and vision. So people definitely like a place that offers that and work hard. (CPIN10)

The hotel is also very stunning. Is the most beautiful property in the valley and I know that because I've gone to all the other properties and I've looked at them. And I have extremely high standards when it comes to a company that I want to work for. (CPIN4)

The next property under organization benefits was career advancement. This property illuminated how individuals perceived the opportunity of advancements and the importance of career advancements to the individual.

Question- What are the five advantages to live here in the community? Answer- Career advancement because you definitely not going to advance in your career the same way you would if you were in the city. (CPIN3)

I started out as a dishwasher and they found I was good at what I was doing and they promoted me to supervisor and again it was an asset to see that and the next up was department head that that was not where I was going, so I had to reflect upon the whole thing because it is not something I want to pursue. I'm not sure right now, but I don't want to go into higher management and find myself in political situations. (CPIN11)

The last property of organizational benefits is challenges and holds the same meaning as challenges under community, but these challenges are the challenges an individual perceives within the organizational setting.

It's just, but you know there are a lot of things that I was hired to do, one job. You know, I'm not complaining and doing it now. It's just that you get things thrown at you and all this sudden. ..., you know, and I don't really mind it. It (laughs) it would be boring if there wasn't anything to it. New people, new people all the time. The job is a lot reactive. You can't just go on. You gotta deal with it as it comes, right. Some days it all comes at once so (laughs). (CPIN1)

So it's a bit of a mental challenge. What I do at work is not particularly mentally challenging so that is the challenge for me. Standing there all night and not having a lot to do, and being bored. (CPIN7)

The category organizational connection summarized the overall perceived relationship or fit that the individual perceives they have with the organization. This category broke down into three properties, organizational fit, organizational support of community, and friends. The property of organizational fit outlines how the individual perceives the organization. The individual judges their own values and goals, and how those values and goals interact with the values and goals of the organization.

The (name of organization), this is a very friendly environment. ... It's a very relaxed place to work for as an employee. ... It's a fun place to work, you enjoy coming to work. You know you're gonna have a few laughs. There is a lot to get done but there's no tension. If you get that the workplace is a match. (CPIN3)

People should be lucky enough to just go to a job they love and if you love where you live as well as where you work; how much better can it get. (CPIN12)

Organizational support of the community demonstrates how the individual perceives to organization's support or fit to the community.

The hotel has a strong community and corporate community standpoint so it will have an environmental committee and if you work on the committee and have projects there is generally time allowed during your work to do certain aspects of it, and they encourage it absolutely. Not so much things like ski passes, you're on your own for leisure time. You'll find that the hotel can be like any big business, they don't consider themselves in the equation. So looking after me, a lot of that volunteer stuff, community and goodwill. Skiing doesn't really carry that with it so much so those kinds of things are really promoted. So a very big aspect is 'what's in it for them'. Mind you having said that I don't really participate in it, but they sponsor hockey club, ball club. The hotel sponsors them financially so they certainly do that as well. (CPIN7)



But I think we (referring to the hotel and the town) have a lot to offer each other. The hotel is certainly here to stay just like the town is. For the town I would say instead of looking at the hotel as the big bad corporation, which is sometimes the perception, they should look at it how it can be a positive, and to the hotel I say take a look at what the community has to offer and how can we make it all work. We're all business partners together, we're all people that often work and live in the same community. (CPIN12)

The final property of friends characterized the connection to the organization that individual's made through friendships established with in the organization.

There are actually very few people here at the hotel that I associate with after work. Ummn, I don't know the reason for that... (CPIN2)

The circle of friends I have at work, or the circle of colleagues that I have, has remained pretty consistent. (CPIN12)

The final category, organization leaving, dealt with the same concepts as community leaving but dealt with the individual's perception of what it would be like to leave or what it would take to leave the organization.

Once I stop learning, that's when I'm going to look elsewhere. (CPIN3)

I would have to take a look at how things are being managed. If I got to the point where I just completely disagreed not so much with the style of management, but this is the style and philosophy and the direction we're going and it ended up completely at odds with what I picture it to be and also there's my family to think about. As much as he hates to think it, money is involved. If I had an opportunity go someplace else that was more aligned with how I thought hospitality business should be managed I would consider that (CPIN12)

### *Subcategories*

Through the analysis of the data there were three subcategories that emerged. The subcategory of 'starting' was used to identify how the participants started with the

organization or how they came to be in the community. The other two categories were difficult to pinpoint just what category they were subcategories of.

After reviewing the data it was decided that these two subcategories were subcategories of two general overall categories, organizations and community. The first subcategory dealt with the transient nature of both the organization and the community and how it affected individuals within their job, within their social life, and within the community.

Staffing is a problem, staff always coming and going. Some managers work a lot more often, you know, because in my case I can't, I got a cover weekends. I'm usually off weekends, so until I get somebody trained good enough to be by themselves on weekends I gotta do it. So working six day weeks... (CPIN1)

People come and go though. People I knew when I first got here are all gone and you just get to know different ones, you hang out, meet friends, they leave, I stay. I find the town very transient. (CPIN6)

The second subcategory, life stage, was once again a subcategory of the overall categories of organizations and community. Life stage dealt with the characteristics and perceptions of the individuals stage of life whether this was in terms of age, maturity or family.

There are a lot of people, you know, between the age of 28 and 38. People that are starting to have families and so forth. And again that is kind of my age group... (CPIN2)

I'm still young at heart so I can deal with the twenties and thirties. I can go out with them and talk about life and that's the thing I'm quite open about talking about everything. At some point you have to stop but I been through my nineteen and my twenties and thirties so I can relate a lot, more sometimes with a different aspect of life. (CPIN10)

Once all the results were coded and analyzed, they were reviewed, reread, and in some cases revised. Although the job embeddedness model was used as theoretical underpinning and questions were developed from a job embeddedness survey, an attempt was made to keep an open mind throughout the analysis. After the analysis was done, the unfolding model of voluntary turnover and job embeddedness model was reviewed. The following chapter will make comparison between the concepts that emerged from the data from the interviews and the job embeddedness model.

## CHAPTER SIX

### *Analysis*

In the introduction to this project several questions were posed. The answer to those questions emerged from the analysis of the data and the categories derived from the data. The data from the interviews demonstrated the role that community played in the life of the employee, whether the ties or attachments to the community that are developed by the employee assisted in binding them to the organization, whether organizational support of an employee's lifestyle assisted in retention and whether membership in community organizations played a major role in the retention/attachment process.

Some salient concepts are drawn from the interviews. These salient concepts are illustrated by quotes from the participants of the research project. These concepts are then considered in the light of the constructs found in the job embeddedness model.

### *Data Analysis*

The first salient concept that emerged from the data was the presence of two overriding spheres of influence, namely, nonwork influences- the community, and work influences - the organization. The separation of nonwork and work influences has been part of turnover models since 1979 when Mobley and co-authors postulated that individual factors would moderate job satisfaction (Mobley, 1982). Nonwork influences or the social interaction individual has with their family, friends, recreational activities or community organizations has been accepted as an important aspect in the turnover and retention/attachment literature (Griffeth et al., 2000)

Within the sphere of work/nonwork influences it was evident from the interviews that the participants had a clear perception of the distinction between the organization and

the community. Although at times the areas of both overlapped (e.g., friends), they still maintained the separation of the two areas.

I think it's just our culture that you work so closely with these people it's hard not to form friendships outside of the workplace as well. I know in a lot of places when (pause), my friend who originally got me to come to the (name of organization) now lives in (large Canadian city) and she had a difficult time making friends when she got there because of the fact that their culture doesn't support it. You know, when they leave at the end of the day, they leave. They all go their separate ways. Whereas here its, hey do you want to come walk tonight. You want to do this. You want to do that. Umm, it's more of a small community. I don't know, it's hard to describe. Because I think that it is such a friendly, happy environment that you are more prone to actually make friends with these people. Because if not at work than you know you're gonna have fun with them elsewhere. (CPIN 3 lines 208-219)

The data from the participants supports the research of others (Cohen, 1995, Lee & Mitchell, 2001) that the community (nonwork influences) plays a major role in the attachment/retention process.

### *Community influences*

To understand the role that community plays in the life of the participants it is necessary to understand their definition of community. One of the important aspects of community to the participants involved was the amenities and activities the area offered.

*Question* - When you think about the term community what comes into your head? *Answer* - Ahh (pause) just what of the community has to offer. What it does for people and stuff like that. (CPIN1, lines 150-151)

*Question* - What are you looking for it in a community? *Answer* - Probably what I am looking for and certainly is a consideration, is a community that matches me in age. I find that the longer I am here the more day-to-day it comes into focus and kind of wears on me, that I only have a small group of people to talk to. A group of 22 year olds may not have the interest to talk about it or may not have the experience to comment on it. So I think it's that and more. Then again recreational opportunities, and I am not moving to the (different resort area of Canada) to take up career opportunities. The lakes and the beaches are a big

attraction to me. I miss that here, not having water around. There is still skiing there. The wineries, which are a big attraction for me. I am very interested in it. Yeah, a beautiful area and the climate is very agreeable. Here we have two months of summer and ten months of winter. There it's more like two months of winter and ten months of summer. I've always liked the warm weather and heat and sun. (CPIN7, lines 212-213; 368-381)

By defining community with the addition of activities and amenities, communities play a large role for the participants. It will be noted that all but one of the participants were drawn to the area because of the leisure activities or friendships. Hence, it may be assumed that the leisure activities that the area has to offer play a large role in the social life of the participants.

The participants describe two lifestyles the community makes available to individuals who choose to live in the resort area. The first is dominated by younger individuals who are drawn to the area for work and to party.

Some people come out and go to the bars. Party, go to work, party, go to work and that's their time here. They spend six months here and that's all they do. They're not going to stay and you're not going to convince them to stay. And it is the people that get out there and explore the park that really fall in love with that. ... if you spend your time in the bar you're not probably not going to stick around. If you spend your time out exploring it you probably will. (CPIN 3, lines 401-406, 414-415)

These individuals are seen by the participants as transient workers and would correspond to Johnson's "social network of interacting individuals" (Johnson, 1994, p. 80). The second is the lifestyle of the participants and provides the reasons why the individual has chosen to remain in the community.

At the beginning of this research project it was believed that community organizations would play a significant role in the retention/attachment process, however, this was not the case. Of the twelve participants, only one individual was a member of a

community organization other than the public library. Two of the six participants, that were married and had children, did participate in school-based organizations. One was involved through their children in community-based sporting activities.

My son plays hockey in the wintertime, so we're pretty active in minor hockey and stuff like that. So that takes all of our time in the wintertime. (CPIN1, lines 115-116)

I am involved in the playschool and the public school because my children go there so I'm involved that way. (CPIN12, lines 181-182)

Both of these individuals stated that it would be difficult to leave either their job or the community.

I like the community, I fit in the community... I think I am a permanent fixture here right now. (CPIN1 lines 382 & 392)

*Question* - Would it be more difficult to quit your job or to leave the community?  
*Answer* - That's a tough question. It would probably be harder to quit my job. ... But leaving (name of community) would be hard too. (CPIN12, lines 154-156, 168-169)

*Question* - So what do you do in your free time? *Answer* - That's one of the reasons for being here, we like to play outside. Mountain biking, cross-country skiing, downhill skiing, hiking the back country, camping, that kind of stuff. (CPIN7, lines 66-70)

The indication from the twelve participants is that the leisure/sporting activities that are available to them in the community and surrounding area have far more importance than do community organizations (e.g., Boy Scouts, Girl Guides, church affiliations or political groups, etc.).

In the case of the two married participants that have children, their comments that it would be difficult to leave the community and their job supports the findings of Cohen

(1995, 1997), and the study of Lee and Mauer (1999). Both these studies found empirical evidence that having children decreased the intention to leave the organization (Cohen, 1995, 1997; Lee & Mauer, 1999).

The Cohen (1995 & 1997) studies specifically included nonwork domains in three distinct areas: a) the parenting or family domain; b) charities, political affiliations and religious affiliations or the community domain; and c) the recreation and domain which included leisure activities such as sport teams or hobby groups. The argument presented by Cohen (1997) was that these nonwork domains affected an individual's attitude and behaviour at work which, therefore, could affect their level of job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Research has shown the job satisfaction and organizational commitment are direct antecedents of turnover intention (Hom & Griffeth, 1995). Cohen found empirical support for his arguments regarding the importance of nonwork domains on turnover intentions (1997).

This research project also found support for Cohen's position on nonwork domains. Recreational activities and family played important roles in the lives of the participants. The strength of these nonwork domains formed attachments that bound nine of the participants to the community.

All twelve participants voiced a reluctance to leave their particular organization. The participants' satisfaction with the community and their lifestyle within the community created spillover effects that enhanced their level of job satisfaction (Kirchmeyer, 1992).

I have a hard job, the long hours, dealing with people; it's been a nightmare on earth. I go home with a headache and with bad moods most of the time. Sports is used to clear my head and refresh my body and you forget your anger and your stress. (CPIN8, lines 81-85)



I think once you get into nature or just the relaxing style of living and now (large international city) is too big for me. I can't see myself living there anymore. It is just, but to visit is fun but I don't want to live there. There's too many people and too much hassle, too much pollution. (CPIN 5, lines a 78-81)

When the participants were asked if it would be easy or hard for them to leave the community, nine of twelve replied that it would be hard for them to leave the community. Although the other three participants had formed some attachments within the community, they perceived that they had stronger attachments to their organization. Participants perceived that jobs were available in the community and thus job availability was not considered as an issue.

In (name of community) I have more opportunity to find a job. ... A lot of places that would love to hire me. (CPIN5, lines 290 & 292)

I've always been able to work; I'm not worried about work. (CPIN7, lines 320-321)

Jobs come and go, like hotels and its history there. (CPIN8, lines 290-291)

The issue, for some, was that of familiarity and comfort within their environment. The individuals believed they had found a lifestyle within the community that fitted their desired lifestyle.

I think either you fall in love with the place and know that this is the place where you need to be or you kind of come here and go, "This is cool" but you're always leaving... The community, the lifestyle. I wouldn't say it's the job. (CPIN3, lines 399-401, 433-434)

The strength of an individual's community attachments do not necessarily help bind the participant to the organization. If one is satisfied in their job and have strong

attachments to the community they are more likely to stay with the organization. If the individual is not satisfied with the job and have strong attachments to the community they are likely to leave the organization for another organization within the community.

### *Organizational influences*

However, another factor besides job satisfaction that may play a role in whether or not the individual will stay with the organization is organizational benefits. Six of the participants addressed the issue of inertia or being stuck in their present situation.

At some point I'm kind of, not scared, but kind of scared to leave the (name of organization) like a luxury. All this beautiful wine, trying this and that. (CPIN10, lines 277-278)

Two of the individuals referred to community based concepts as reasons for the inertia.

One participant spoke of the expensive toys that one requires to take full advantage of the activities and the other participant referred to having solid roots in the community.

A few people kind of get stuck in a rut. The toys we can buy because staff accommodations are so cheap. So we can get our new vehicles, or play stations, the huge screen TV we can afford it and then we can't leave for a while. If people are going to be honest with you that is part of the reason why they stay. (CPIN6, lines 245-250)

Why I don't want to move around because I love it here. I like, like to have solid roots in the ground. (CPIN4, lines 398-399)

However, the common ground for this group of six participants was money. Financial obligations or benefits were perceived to be the major reason for this feeling of inertia.

I feel kind of (pause) stuck here right now. I mean I wouldn't get a job anywhere else in the valley making what I make right now. They treat you pretty good here for what I think I know and what I'm doing. I'm making pretty good money. The benefit package is just awesome. ... if I leave here and try and get the same plan

through Blue Cross, my God, I'd be paying through the roof for stuff like this.  
(CPIN 1, lines 352-357, 363-365)

For me, my age is a question. I don't have to go here or there now. Finish my,  
what ever it is, when my pension comes and I am leaving. That's what I'm saying.  
(CPIN 9

The participants were unwilling to give up organizational benefits such as medical, wages, or pension plans.

One of the major categories that came from the data was organizational fit. Flowers and Hughes (1973) postulated that organizational fit or as he defined it, “the degree of comfort an individual feels within it (*the organization*)” (p. 50). Organizational fit along with job satisfaction were the two major factors that influenced whether an individual stayed with an organization or not (1973). The degree of comfort of the individual is weakened or strengthened by the compatibility with his or her own values and beliefs to those of the organization for whom the individual works (1973). The degree of comfort can now be recognized as a part of the definition of organizational commitment (Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979). Organizational commitment is a well-established predictor in the turnover process (Griffeth, Hom & Gaertner, 2000). The findings of this research project support Flowers and Hughes, and the role of organizational commitment in the retention/attachment process. All the participants perceived that they fit in the organization that they worked for (8.3 years average length of tenure).

### *Summary*

In summary the data supported the concept of two overriding spheres of influence, namely, nonwork and work influences. The participants of the research project

added to the accepted definition of community the activities and amenities available to the individual. The addition of activities and amenities to the definition relegated community organizational membership to a minor factor in the retention/attachment process instead placing a greater emphasis on recreational or leisure activities. The greater emphasis on recreational or leisure activities led to the next concept which the emerged from the data and that was the support of Cohen's theory of nonwork influences on employees.

The concept of inertia was an important concept that was introduced by Flowers and Hughes (1973) and found support in the data from this research project. An interesting point that was raised from the analysis of the data was that community attachment did not necessarily bind an individual to the organization. And the last salient concept from the data was support for organizational commitment as a determinant of an individual's intention to stay or leave.

### *Job Embeddedness*

Job embeddedness recognizes the separation of work and nonwork influences (Mitchell et al., 2001a, b). Mitchell and co-authors elevate the importance of nonwork influences to equal the status of work influences (2001a, b). As stated earlier, nine of twelve participants perceived a fit with the organization and all twelve of participants were drawn to their current jobs due to friends in the community or recreational activities available in the area. Thus, one can postulate that community plays a significant role at least equal to or greater than the role of the organization to the participants. Thus, the participants of this research project provide data that support Mitchell and co-authors belief in the importance of community.

The job embeddedness model involved three separate areas, namely, links, fit, and sacrifice. In turn each one of the three was broken-down into community considerations and organizational considerations. Hence there were a total of six areas and analysis of the data shows support for all six. Appendix D illustrates the perceived embeddedness of the twelve individuals.

### *Links*

Links represent the contacts that are developed between the individual and other individuals, groups, or organizations (Mitchell et al., 2001a, b). In the organizational setting this could be friendships or relationships for networking purposes.

After she left, she got a job here in the accounting department. Right, and I used to work with her directly and one position at (in other local organization). So she called me and said were looking for a shipper receiver. (CPIN1, lines 67-69)

I've been here for four years and I feel comfortable because I know people and know what I'm doing. (CPIN5, lines 221-222)

I been here 12 years, leaders we know each other, we work with each other. (CPIN8, lines 338-339)

As the first quote demonstrates, several of the individuals use their links to gain employment. The last two quotes shows how links are used to establish a sense of comfort and familiarity for the participants. This data illustrates support for the job embeddedness concept of organizational links.

Community links are friends, family, relatives or relationships in community organizations which are established through recreational activities or community organizations (e.g. church, schools) (Mitchell et al., 2001a). Although there are not a

large number of links established to community organizations, there is no doubting the importance of community links to the participants.

A lot of my friends that I grew up with from here and (name of community) have stayed here. They have come close, got married, have kids and lived here in the (name of community) so it seemed like the next step to move on and stay, buy a house. (CPIN2, lines 116-120)

It is all intertwined because my sport activities are my social life. So, the people that I hang out with and go to the bar with on Saturday night are the same people that I'm going to go mountain biking with or canoeing down the (name of a local river) with. They're all the same people. (CPIN4, lines 284-288)

This job depends on the area. Give up this job and leave the area, I giving up quite a bit. Giving up this job and staying in the valley, I am not giving up that much. (CPIN2, lines 278-280)

### *Fit*

Fit is how individuals perceive their compatibility with their job, the organization, and community (Mitchell et al., 2001a, b). For a good organizational fit an individual's values and goals must be in agreement with the organization's values and goals (Mitchell et al., 2001b). The concept of organizational fit is borrowed from the concept of organizational commitment and, as discussed earlier, the data from the participants supports this concept.

Mitchell and co-authors postulated that an individual's fit to the community can be determined by the availability of local recreational activities that the individual pursues, adequate schools for their children, employment opportunities for their spouse or community organizations in which they wish to participate (2001a, b). For the participants of this research project community fit was an evaluation of lifestyle.

I made some good friends. Umm and, loved the lifestyle and lack of stress.  
(CPIN3, lines 71-72)

*Question* - Are you a good fit for (name of community)? *Answer* - Yes, yes that's why I stay longer because it fits me here. It's the community and the social life and work. (CPIN 9, lines 151-152)

In the great scheme of things, compared to other jobs that I had, I have very little responsibility. I can ski all day and I can come to work physically tired but as long as I can stand up and smile and talk reasonably to guests, that's all I need to be able to do. So it works well with the lifestyle I want. (CPIN7, lines 132-137)

The participants of this research project place a high value on their perceived fit to the community and therefore, demonstrate strong support for Mitchell and co-authors concept of community fit.

### *Sacrifice*

One of the questions asked of the participants was what would they would give up if they left the community or their organization. This is the definition of the job embeddedness concept of sacrifice. With regard to organizational sacrifices, the data gathered from the participants supported Mitchell and co-authors supposition that many of the organizational sacrifices involve forgoing financial considerations (2001a, b). However, participants also perceived that some of the sacrifices would be psychological in nature.

This hotel and this town is in my heart the rest of my life. (CPIN8, lines 291-292)

One thing that is great about this hotel is it's a beautiful property and I am proud to say that I worked at this sort of a hotel. That is one advantage that this place is so beautiful... it's nice to be in a place where they care that much. It would be tough for me to leave here. (CPIN2, lines 281-286, 288-290)

The participants' unwillingness to give up organizational benefits echoes the concept of organizational sacrifice outlined by Mitchell and co-authors in the job embeddedness model.

When participants were asked about community sacrifices they indicated that sacrifices would include peace of mind, the mountains, lifestyle, and friends. Job embeddedness lists the sacrifices as a home one is comfortable with, friends, family or relatives, and community status (Mitchell et al., 2001a). The participants of this project expanded the job embeddedness community sacrifices by focusing more on psychological sacrifices that may be made; for example peace of mind. A home one is comfortable with could have broad implications and theoretically could include location and lifestyle. Once again the data from this research project supports this part of the job embeddedness model.

#### *Weak attachments*

The data from this research project not only illustrated strong attachments but weak attachments as well. For example, under community sacrifices the following quote demonstrates the participant's weak attachments in this area.

The question-what would you give up if you left (name of community)? Answer-I give up a good job. The benefits are really good as well. That's basically it I, I can't say I'd miss all the trails and that, I'd just be giving up a job (CPIN6, lines 150-153)

If I leave it will be for financial reasons. Because I know what I can buy elsewhere for the same amount that I can buy a one-bedroom condo here. (CPIN3, lines 230-232)

When we got here we looked initially at buying a condo but at 600 to 650 square feet, if it's any kind of good shape, it starts at around \$200,000. I don't see that as value. That will be a deciding factor if we stay here long term. (CPIN 7, lines 112-115)



The last two quotes illustrate that a willing sacrifice for the participants is the cost of living in a resort community. The perception of weakness and strength can be charted and thus the perceived embeddedness of an individual can be illustrated (see Appendix D).

One participant expressed doubt in his organizational fit; thus, exposing a possible weak attachment.

It's really gone quite differently in the last couple of years at the hotel. So, I don't fit as well as I did a couple of years ago. I don't know how to really explain it; it's just that it's a different environment than it was a couple years ago. (CPIN2, lines 269-274)

However, for this participant the attachments they had created in other areas compensated for the weakness in organizational fit.

#### *Review of salient points*

In the review of the job embeddedness model in Chapter 3, seven salient points regarding the job embeddedness model were listed. The first point was that individuals stay on their jobs partly because of a web of attachments that cause a feeling of embeddedness or inertia (Lee & Mitchell, 2001). The point was well documented in the data from the interviews of the participants of this research project. Six of the participants actually addressed the feeling of inertia with two of the participants using the word 'stuck'.

The second point was that the sense of embeddedness was significantly related to intent to leave and actual turnover (Lee & Mitchell, 2001). One would have to declare that it was significant that all twelve individuals displayed characteristics of being embedded in the community and/or organization and displayed no intent to leave.

Therefore, one can state emphatically that the data from the participants supports that job embeddedness is significantly related to the intent to leave and voluntary turnover.

Numerous researchers support the third point, as does the data from this research project, that off-the-job factors make an important contribution to understanding of why people stay or leave their jobs (Griffeth et al., 2000, Lee & Mitchell, 2001).

The fourth point stated that individuals often stay simply because of the number of attachments they have to other people, projects or organizations (Lee & Mitchell, 2001). Participants in this research project demonstrated the importance of friends and recreational activities to the retention/attachment process.

The fifth point was that one's fit with their job and organization as well as their fit with their community will encourage staying on the job (Lee & Mitchell, 2001). Data gathered from this research project stressed the importance of the perceived fit with the community.

The importance that the participants placed on the benefits of the community demonstrates Lee and Mitchell's sixth salient point that sacrifice is more than just the money or financial or professional benefit that one forgoes (2001). Participants perceived psychological sacrifices such as peace of mind for their love of the mountains or the joy that they received from participating in leisure activities. In regards to organizational sacrifices, participants expressed that they would give up the joy and prestige of working in a resort complex.

The last and seventh salient point of job embeddedness was that many of the reasons individuals give for not wanting to leave are non-affective in nature (Lee & Mitchell, 2001). Participants in this research project stated that some of the reasons for

not leaving were their spouse's career, familiarity with the job or they had found their niche. Participants also voiced a reluctance to leave because of the quality of the facilities that were available for leisure activities.

The analysis of the data derived from this research project has demonstrated a resounding support for the job embeddedness model. However, questions, limitations and implications for practitioners and researchers have arisen from this research project. The next chapter will provide a forum for these issues.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### *Discussion, Implications and Concluding Remarks*

#### *Discussion*

This research project increased the understanding of the role that community has within the retention/attachment process. The data collected from this research project support several existing theories (e.g., Flowers & Hughes, 1973-theory of why employees stay; Mowday et al., 1979-organizational commitment). The data support Mitchell and co-authors model of job embeddedness. In using of qualitative methodology, a second purpose was to refine and/or expand the job embeddedness model. The dimensions of the job embeddedness theory were strongly supported by data gathered through a qualitative analysis of the interviews with twelve participants.

The focus of this research project was the community aspect of the embeddedness model. The results demonstrated support for all three of the community dimensions and also all three of the organization dimensions of the job embeddedness theory. Community links were well supported by the network of friends, family and through association with formal and informal groups. Community fit was amply supported by the participant's perceived compatibility with the lifestyle offered by the community. The support for community sacrifice was manifested in a largely psychological manner as participants were unwilling to give up their sense of security, the joy that they received from living in a physically beautiful environment and the joy they received from participating in their recreational and leisure activities.

Concerning organizational dimensions, organizational links were supported by the associations established with friends and colleagues in the organizational setting. The

participants perceived agreement with the organization's objectives, goals and values visibly illustrated the dimension of organization fit. Finally, organizational sacrifice was clearly demonstrated by the participant's reluctance to forgo their accrued financial benefits. It is also important to note that, as with community sacrifices, the participants also spoke of psychological organizational benefits that they would forgo (e.g., pride of working at the hotel or the perceived possibility of career advancement).

An initial question was whether or not membership in community organizations played a major role in the attachment process. This research project suggests community organizational membership performs a minor role. The job embeddedness model appears to consider only formal organizations in the community links dimension. However, leisure or recreational activities played a major role for the participants in their decision to stay. If one considers informal organizations, an individual's affiliation with recreational or leisure activities and other individuals that share those pursuits may constitute informal organizations. If this is the case then community organization membership does play a large role for the participants. It is recommended that to assist future researchers, the definition of community links should be expanded to include informal organizations.

In a 2001 review of the job embeddedness model, Mitchell and Lee discuss organizational versus community embeddedness and they postulate that organizational embeddedness factors appear to be slightly stronger than community factors. However, the data gathered from this research project would indicate the community embeddedness factors appear to be slightly stronger than organizational factors. The explanation for the

discrepancy in findings may be found in the type of industry in which the participants are involved.

The hotel/resort industry is known for its high turnover rates and this could affect an individual's level of organizational embeddedness. If the individual is aware that there are multiple job opportunities available within different communities then perhaps the benefits of the community will outweigh the benefits of the organization when the individual is making an initial choice of what job to take. Individuals could be seen as using the organization as a vehicle to remain in the community. Therefore, under those circumstances individuals may display a greater sense of community embeddedness as demonstrated in this study.

A factor that did arise during analysis was the life stage or age of the participant. The job embeddedness model does take into consideration that an individual's life stage or career stage will affect the attachments that the individual forms. As an individual progresses in a career the more benefits accrue, therefore, the stronger the bonds will be to the organization or the greater the amount of 'sacrifice'. This concept also applies to the community in that the connections (organizational memberships and status within the organizations) and commitments (family and friends) that the individual makes within the community will accrue benefits over time. However, does age or maturity level have an affect on the level of sacrifice one is willing to make?

### *Practical Implications*

According to data gathered by Simons and Hinkin (2001) a 1 or 2 percent reduction in turnover would justify expenditure<sup>15</sup> by a hotel/resort on employee retention. By understanding the reasons why individuals stay, an organization will be able to target the expenditure more efficiently to reduce cost and increase profit. Through increased understanding that this research project has provided, there are a few practical implications for practitioners to consider.

For practical implication of job embeddedness, this research recommends that organizations turn their attention to the ways their employees interact with the community. In the case of this research project, organizations would be well advised to support and encourage participation in leisure and recreational activities. This could be accomplished through arranging activities (a day hike, snowboarding expedition or fly fishing excursions) or providing discounts at local recreational venues or partnering with local leisure or recreational businesses to offer discounts for employees. Employers should ensure that employees are kept up-to-date regarding the available community or recreational activities (e.g., through a notice board or newsletter). By creating incentives or support for employees to become involved in the community the organization can create a scenario which can result in a positive impact on organizational commitment and job satisfaction (Kirchmeyer, 1982; Cohen, 1995).

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<sup>15</sup> Based on \$10,000 US per employee as replacement costs (Simons & Hinkin, 2001) in an organization that employs 300 people, with a turnover rate of 35% (based on lowest figures given by HR Directors of the participating hotels) a turnover rate of 35% would mean 105 employees voluntarily leave yearly. A 2% reduction would mean that 6 employees would stay thus saving \$60,000 US in replacement costs. This would warrant an expenditure of \$50,000 US. A hotel employing 750 people would save \$150,000 US, which would warrant an expenditure of over \$100,000 US.

In the area of recruitment, the data from this research project suggests that organizations in resort areas might be able to recruit more long-term employees by focusing recruitment campaigns on the recreational and leisure activities, and amenities that are available in the area. Campaigns stressing the benefits of a healthy, fun lifestyle in a beautiful, natural setting along with an exciting career would attract individuals that may become embedded in the community and, thus, more likely to remain with the organization.

### *Research Implications*

A Human Resources Director involved in the research project suggested that people often don't quit the organization they quit their immediate supervisor. The role of the immediate supervisor is not dealt with in the job embeddedness model; however, it could be considered part of organization fit and organization links. The role of the immediate supervisor could be a part of organization fit in that an employee may agree with the management philosophies of their superior. Organization link may be that the employee may feel an attachment to their supervisor. These are separate entities because an employee may agree with the management philosophies (fit) but dislike the immediate superior (link). Future research could delve into the role of immediate supervisors and whether or not they are factor in organization fit or organization links within the job embeddedness model.

An area that requires further research concerns the job embeddedness model is the type of organization, industry and employment type. The model may not work for all organizations, industries or employment types. The organization, industry or employment type may play a role in the reliability of the model. To date the model has been tested



using grocery store employees, hospital employees and employees from a regional service (telemarketing, data processing, customer service, human-resources) of a large international financial institution. This research project has taken a step towards demonstrating the reliability of the model in hotel/resort industry. Further research should expand the sample of organizations, industries and employment types.

Another area of research that could be addressed is the cultural aspect. To date all the studies have taken place on the North American continent in large urban centers. Does the cultural orientation of the individual or the size of the community affect the attachment/retention process? As noted earlier, this research project did find a different result in the community embeddedness versus organizational embeddedness. This could possibly be explained by the fact the sample group was in a different industry than previous studies. However, it may also be a case that location or community size was a determining factor. Further research into community size, location (urban and rural), and cultural factors (e.g., studies need to be done outside of the North American continent) should be considered.

The final research implication that arose from the process of this research dealt with inertia and the community. Do individuals feel themselves stuck within the community? This research project supported Flowers and Hughes (1973), and Mitchell and co-authors (2001, a, b) concepts regarding inertia within the organization. However, there appears to be a lack of research on whether or not an individual's feeling of inertia within the community affects the retention/attachment or turnover process. This may be a worthwhile avenue of research to gain further understanding of the retention/attachment process from the individual's psychological perspective.

### *Limitations*

In today's work force organizations, managers, and supervisors struggle with the problems brought about by the ever increasing multicultural work force. An increasing number of the workforce have English as a second language. During the interview process there was concern of whether or not individuals understood the questions asked of them or could express themselves clearly. Paraphrasing was used to verify the meaning of responses and questions were asked in a different manner if the interviewer perceived that the participant did not understand the initial question. By the use of active listening skills early on in the process the affect of possible language problems was minimized. It is the belief of this researcher that this limitation may be an unrealized limitation of many studies.

The bias of the researcher was also a possible limitation. Prior to the interview process a lengthy review was undertaken of the literature of both the retention/attachment process and the turnover process. The purpose of the literature review was to acquaint the researcher with progress made in the field and to note possible gaps. It was through this literature review that the lack of understanding of the role of community in the processes was discovered. Grounded theory was then chosen as a methodology to probe the role of community and to verify the findings of the job embeddedness model. Throughout the interview process and the analysis of the data an open mind and holistic viewpoint towards the retention/attachment process was maintained. This along with interrater reliability testing and discussions with an unbiased third-party minimized researcher bias.

The generalization of the findings of this research project to other hotel and resort complexes presents a limitation; however, the findings of this research project and to

increase the overall generalization of the job embeddedness model. Although this research project did verify Mitchell and co-authors findings, the location chosen for the research project may pose a problem for generalization for other hotel/resort complexes. The results would be applicable to similar hotel/resort complexes in similar locations. However, further research should be undertaken to test the applicability of the results to city hotel properties or hotel/resort complexes in other countries.

### *Concluding Remarks*

“Voluntary turnover models do not typically consider the impact of an employee's personal relationships” (Maertz & Campion, 1998, p.59). Maertz and Campion went on to criticize the unfolding model of voluntary turnover for not including the psychological aspect of the phenomena. The job embeddedness model does answer the criticisms of the unfolding model of voluntary turnover and delves into the psychological aspect of the retention attachment process.

The core of the turnover phenomenon is a matter dealing with the human psyche. In other words, to fully understand why people stay with or leave an organization, researchers must gain an understanding of human psyche. One hundred years of research has brought us little closer to understanding the complexity of the human mind. Unlocking the mysteries of the human mind has been an academic search for the ‘philosopher's stone’. No one theory has yet to find a full accountability when dealing with a human element. Predictive models of voluntary turnover only accounted for 25% of the variance in explaining voluntary employee turnover (Griffeth et al., 2000). Researchers have a long way to go before they can explain why people leave organizations. It is therefore important that all avenues of possible research be explored.

The sum total of these avenues of research can increase the percentage of explained variance.

“Although researchers tend to emphasize prediction as a criterion in judging models, we should not lose sight of the importance of understanding as a goal of scientific inquiry” (Lee & Mowday, 1987, p. 738). This statement underscores the importance of qualitative inquiry. One of the benefits of qualitative research is that interview techniques allow for the exploration of factors that may be represented as a discrete yes/no variable in a quantitative survey. Through qualitative inquiry researchers can reach a deeper understanding of the phenomenon through the richer and thicker data that is collected (Corbin & Strauss, 1998). It is only through genuinely understanding phenomena that researchers can develop accurate models of prediction.

There is considerably more research required before the academic world grasps the true nature of the turnover phenomenon or discovered why individuals stay with an organization. Models such as job embeddedness provide researchers with guidelines to pursue their research. Both quantitative and qualitative research streams provide the methods to expand, refine, or validate models. However, as researchers, we should never lose sight of our goal, which is to gain a better understanding of the world around us.

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## **Appendix A: Cost and Benefits of Turnover**



## **Possible Cost, Consequences and Benefits of Employee Turnover.**

### ***Negative Consequences***

#### Selection and recruitment costs

- moderators
  - tightness of labour market;
  - level and complexity of the job;
  - whether inside or outside succession is followed.

#### Training and development costs

- can involve
  - expenses of formalized instruction programs;
  - cost of having other employees informally help the new organization member;
  - time period in which role performance is below that of the veteran employee.
- moderators
  - same as found in 'selection and recruitment'.

#### Operational disruption

- may affect the ability of others to produce their work because of the interdependence of work roles within the organization.
- moderators.
- centrality of the particular role to the organization's functioning. (e.g. higher level of position the greater potential for disruption).

#### Demoralization of organization membership

- may trigger additional turnover by prompting a deterioration in attitudes toward the organization.
- moderators
  - perceived reason for leaving (e.g. perceived to leave for non-organization. reasons, family problems, location, or economic conditions it will produce less of a demoralization effect. (Staw, 1980 Figure 3. p 266)

### ***Negative Indirect costs –***

#### Disruption of Performance

- loss of efficiency;
- position vacant;
- loss of unique skills; occupied a pivotal position, thus having a ripple effect on the quality or efficiency on the organization;
- ripple effect may continue until replacement is up to speed (Mobley, 1982 p 20).

#### Disruption of Social and Communication Patterns

- negative effect on group interaction and cohesiveness e.g. the individual was a group leader or had used effective communication skills to increase group efficiency (Mobley, 1982 p 20-21).

#### Decline in Morale

- may cause others to evaluate their position and seek alternatives.

- production/efficiency may suffer as remaining employees may become upset at the departure (Mobley, 1982 p 21).

#### Undifferentiated Control Strategies

- policies that are implemented to decrease turnover but are inappropriate. E.g. across the board pay increases, human relations training for supervisors or organization-wide turnover goals of X percent (Mobley, 1982 p 21).

#### Strategic Opportunity Costs

- organization. may have to postpone or cancel potentially profitable ventures due to turnover of key technical and managerial personnel (Mobley, 1982 p 22).

#### ***Positive Consequences***

Reduction of entrenched conflict;

Increased mobility and morale;

Innovation and adaptation:

- driver of change;
- easier to institute change;
- affect varies according level of position.
- moderators
  - level of position in hierarchy;
  - whether inside or outside succession is followed. New employee brings new ideas. (Staw, 1980 Figure 3. p267).

#### ***Potential Positive Organization Consequences***

These are difficult to assess because they are less obvious and quantifiable and take longer to be evident (Mobley, 1982 p 20).

#### Displacement of Poor Performers

- most obvious consequence and most visible;
- organizations often fail to incorporate the performance of leavers in their turnover analysis.

#### Innovation, Flexibility, Adaptability

- replacements may bring new knowledge, ideas, approaches, technology and styles;
- this is moderated by the nature of the business; its level of technology; the quality of the replacement relative to the leavers; the position of the levels involved; opportunities for innovation and organization change; and the amount of turnover;
- may present opportunities for cost reduction by eliminating or merging vacant positions, redefining jobs, and/or introducing new automation;
- may be vehicle for overcoming resistance to organization change;
- increased internal mobility; creates flexibility in terms of career development and cross training;
- may serve to increase morale of stayers. (Mobley, 1982 p 24-25)

#### Decrease in Other Withdrawal Behaviours

- those wishing to leave but cannot do so because of the lack of viable alternatives may engage in other forms of withdrawal. E.g. absenteeism, apathy, sabotage, and poor quality work (Mobley, 1982 p 25).

#### Reduction of Conflict

- may be ultimate solution to conflict;
- many personal or task conflicts are not easily resolved, especially if they stem from differences in fundamental values or beliefs (Mobley, 1982 p 26).

### ***Potential Positive Individual Consequences***

#### **Leavers**

Expected consequences are most relevant in the individual turnover decision process.

- an escape from a stressful work situation;
- an escape from a work situation that is not rewarding personal-organization fit;
- escape may well be a psychologically healthy step for the individual;
- successfully testing oneself in the job market can be reinforcing; may experience greater self confidence and efficacy;
- Schein 1978 career development process has three interrelated components; self, job and family. E.g. a desire to pursue nonwork values, to accommodate a spouse's career, or to move to an area where the children can get better public education;
- we must consider the 'whole person,' it is clear that attempts to map the individual consequences of turnover must assess the self and family dimensions;
- Non-job consequences may well be crucial to the expected positive consequences for the individual (Mobley, 1982 p 26-27).

#### **Stayers**

- can create internal mobility opportunities;
- upward mobility may be enhanced;
- induction of high-quality replacements may serve to stimulate, cross-fertilize, and/or revitalise those who remain (Mobley, 1982 p 27).

### ***Potential Negative Individual Consequences***

#### **Leavers**

- unrealistic expectations, the encounter with the reality of the new organization. may lead to disillusionment;
- the attitudinal and behavioural consequences of unfulfilled expectations related to the job itself or not, would be a function of the extent to which important values were involved;
- may involve loss of non-vested benefits, seniority, and associated prerequisites;
- moving and changing jobs can be stressful; disruption of social relationships for both the individual and the family can have negative consequences;
- movement of one spouse may have a disruptive effect on the other spouse's career development (Mobley, 1982 p 28-29).

**Stayers**

- loss of coworkers who were valued either for instrumental job-related and/or social-interpersonal reasons;
- increased personal workload;
- having to learn to deal with the replacement;
- loss of a boss on whose 'coattails' one was riding (Mobley, 1982 p 29).

***Societal Consequences*****Positive**

- migration to newer or expanding industries is necessary for continued economic development;
- migration to higher paying industries can increase per-capita income;
- workers leaving jobs they find stressful may reduce the societal costs associated with psychological and physical manifestations of stress (Mobley, 1982 p 30).

**Negative**

- inability to attract and retain a competent work force is the one reason for the loss of industry or the inability to attract new industry;
- high levels of turnover can increase the cost of production;
- can result in idle productive capacity due to the lack of trained operators (Mobley, 1982 p 30).

***Final Comments***

Organizations cannot ignore the impact of the organization on the societal human resource environment; to do so is to invite even more government intervention (Mobley, 1982 p 30).

It is a truism that nearly every transfer or promotion creates behind it a chain reaction of job openings requiring several further personnel replacements to be made (Gustafson 1980, p141).

## **Appendix B: Interview Questions**

## ***Interview questions***

### ***Demographic questions***

1. Gender
2. Year of birth
3. Are you married?
4. Do you have children?
5. Does your husband/wife work?
6. Do you own your residence or rent?
7. Place of origin
8. When did you start living in the current community?
9. When did you start working for the current organization?
10. What is your current job title?
11. \*\*How long have you been in that position?
12. \*\*How long have you worked in the hotel/resort industry?

### ***Activity questions***

1. What do you do in your free time?
2. Does the community offer the leisure activities that you like?
3. How would you describe yourself in the activity? I.e. novice, expert.
4. What do you like about the activity?
5. How long do you see yourself participating in the activity?

### ***Community questions***

1. Why did you come to the community?
2. Do you belong to any community organizations? Why or why not?
3. What holds you in the community?
4. \*\*Is the community a good match for you? Why?
5. \*\*You think of the community as your home? Why or why not?
6. \*\*What would you give up if you left the community?

### ***Organization questions***

1. \*\*How many of your co-workers do you interact with? On or off the job?
2. Do many of your co-workers participate with you in your activities?
3. Does your work schedule affect your participation in the activity?
4. Do you feel that you fit of the organization's culture? Why or why not?
5. Do you feel there's a good match between yourself and the organization? Why or why not?
6. Do you feel that management supports your involvement in activities (leisure)?
7. How do they support or not support you?
8. \*\*How long you plan on working for the organization?
9. What are your reasons for these plans?
10. \*\*What would you give up if you left the organization?

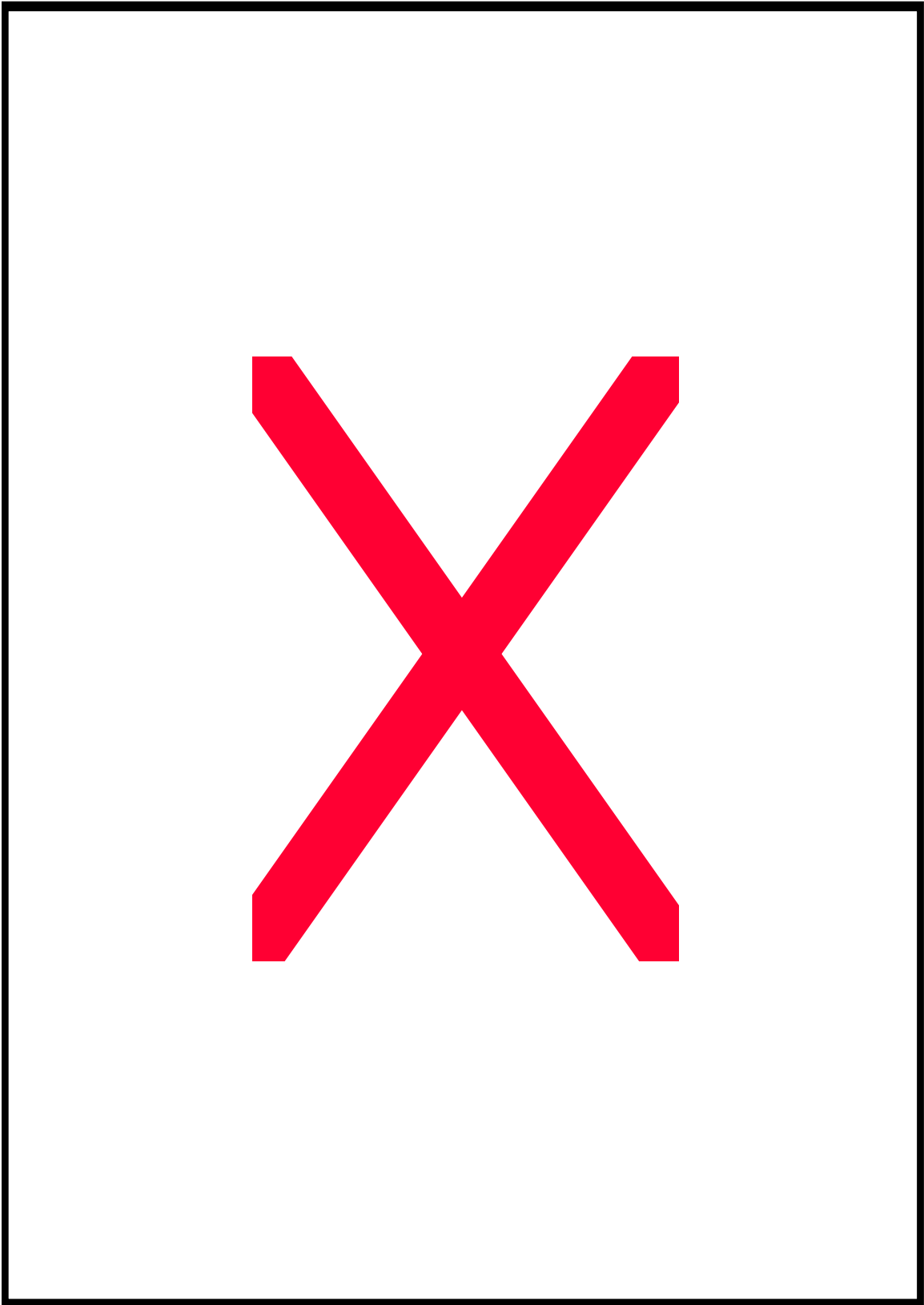
\*\*Questions adapted from embeddedness survey instrument (Lee et al., 2003).

## **Appendix C Coding Development**

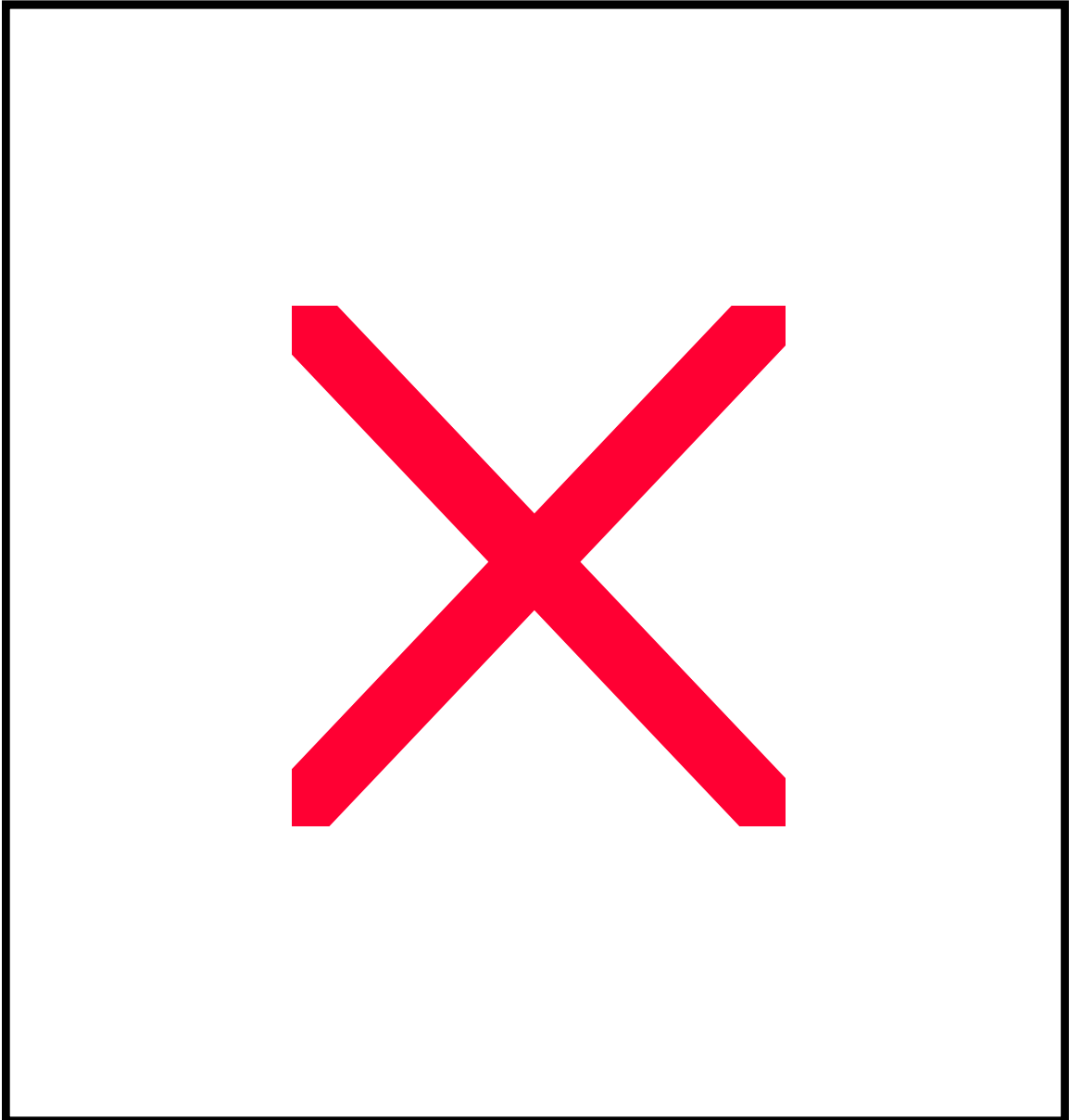
## **Final Categories, Properties, and Sub-categories**

- A. Community Benefits
  - Cost
  - Activities
  - Lifestyle
  - Location
  - Serenity
  - Adventure
  - Challenge
- B. Community Organizations
  - Friends
  - Family
- C. Community Leaving
- D. Organization Benefits
  - Career advancement
  - Challenge
- E. Organizational Connection
  - Organizational fit
  - Community support
  - Friends
- F. Organization Leaving
- G. Embedded
- H. Life stage
- I. Starting
- J. Transient Nature
  - Organization
  - Community
- K. Community Definition

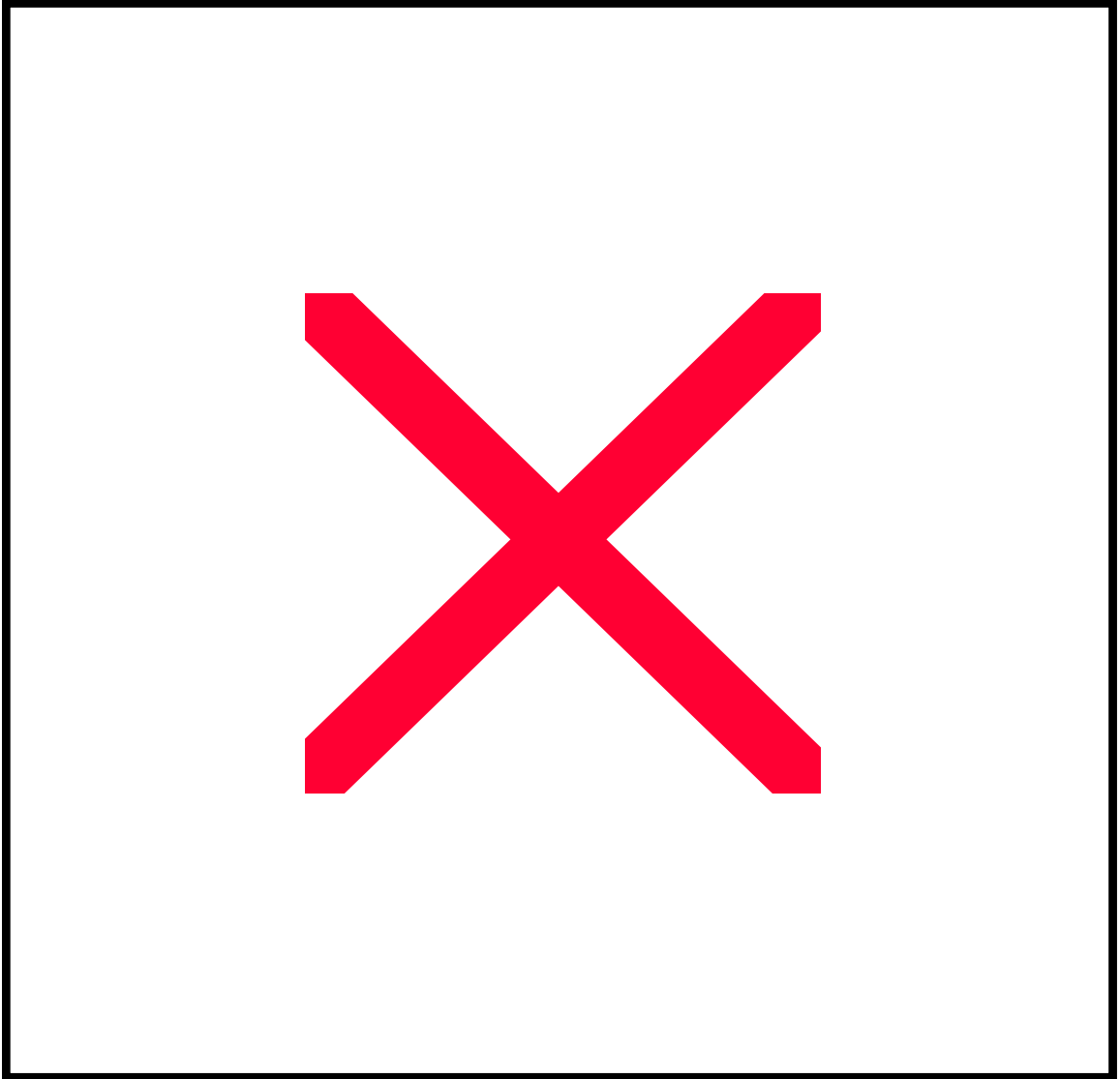




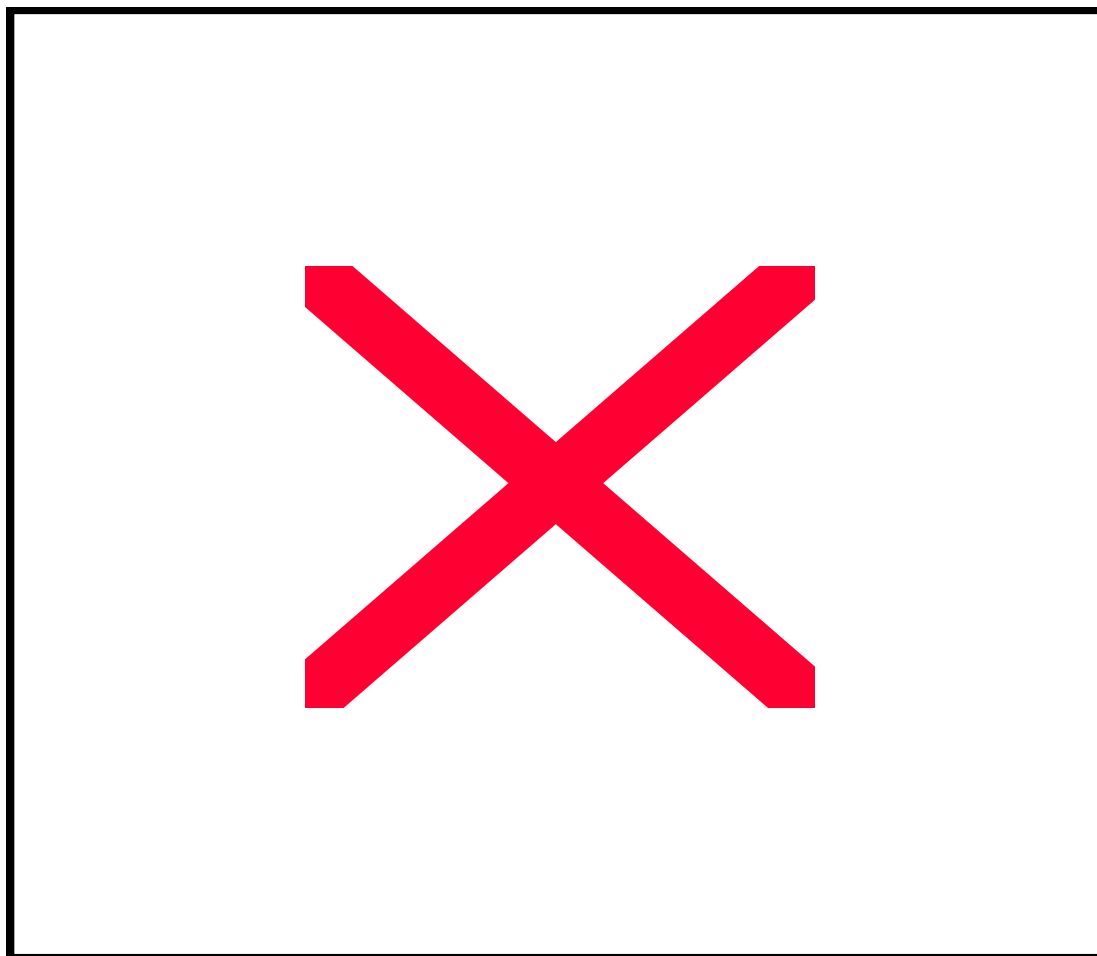
*Figure C1* Coding transition: Open coding to axial coding



*Figure C2* Transition 2: Axial code clarification



*Figure C3* Transition 3: Axial coding to selective codes



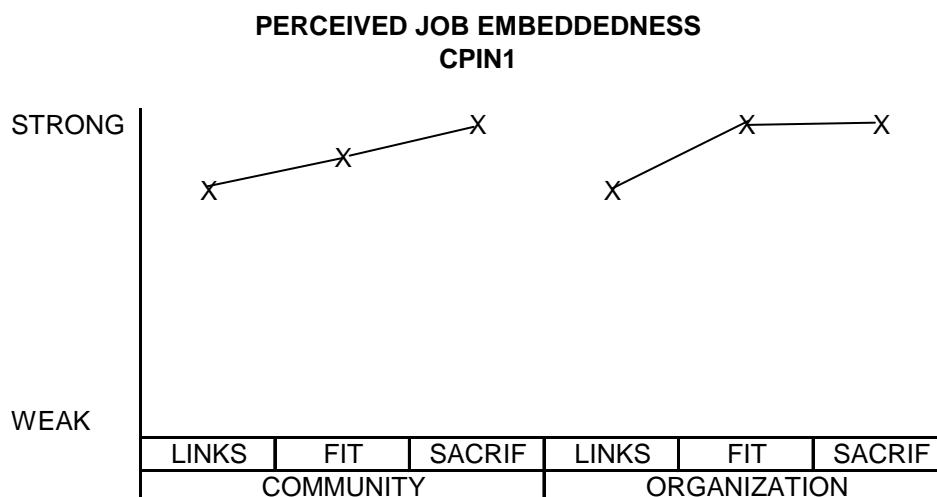
*Figure C4* Transition 4: Final major categories/themes

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Note - The property of friends had influences with the organization as well as the community and therefore is found in the categories of community organizations and organization connection.

## Appendix D Perceived Embeddedness Charts

**Table D1** CPIN 1 Perceived Embeddedness



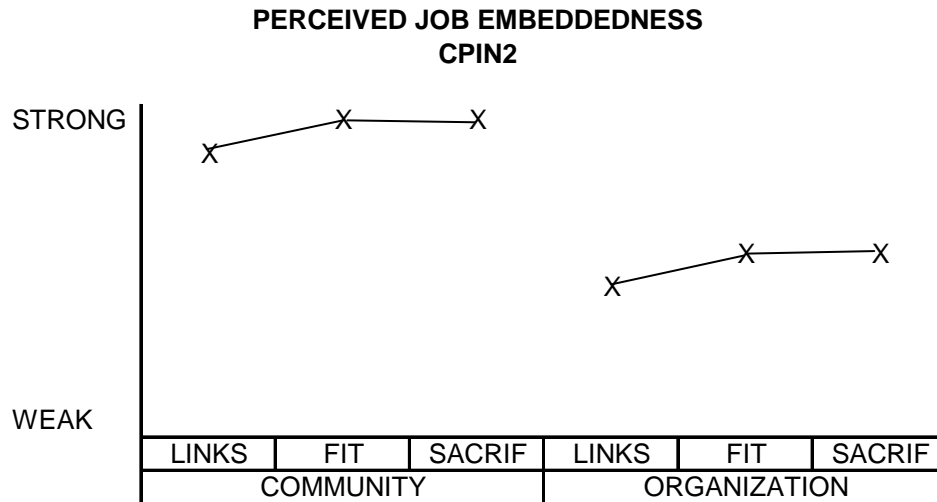
**Community**

- Links* - “My son plays hockey in the wintertime, so we're pretty active in minor hockey and stuff like that.” “Actually one of our friends, they have a son in hockey too, he coached too.” “I like the area, I'd just rather raise a kid in a small community.”
- Fit* - “A small community is safe.” “It's just the lakes and the scenery. I just can't get enough of it! We love camping too, we're always camping, you know, the family.” “I just feel really good out here.” “I like the community, fit in the community I think, you know obviously I like it here.”
- Sacrifice* - “It's weird. You know, then you start heading back from the city, you see the mountains getting closer, you start relaxing. It's weird, weird. So I think I would be giving up my sanity.” “Living in the mountains, the trails, just to know the area better, you know.... other than that, school, ride bikes and stuff, you know like through the bush close to home.”

**Organization**

- Links* - “So (a friend) called me said we're looking for a (current position).... got the call, came back, got the interview, got the job and started working here.” “I met a lot of people through this job too.” “Well the long-term employees here obviously. I don't do things with them but I deal with them every day so we know each other, right. And you know, they are good people.”
- Fit* - “I like furthering myself and its best for the hotel.” “I think I am a permanent fixture here right now.” “I'm being here this long obviously the job, I know the job really good, right. So maybe I know a short cut. I do the job good, right.”
- Sacrifice* - “I feel kind of stuck here right now. I mean I wouldn't get a job anywhere else in the valley making what I make right now. They treat you pretty good here for what I think I know and what I'm doing. I'm making pretty good money. The benefit package is just awesome, you know.”

**Table D2 CPIN 2 Perceived Embeddedness**



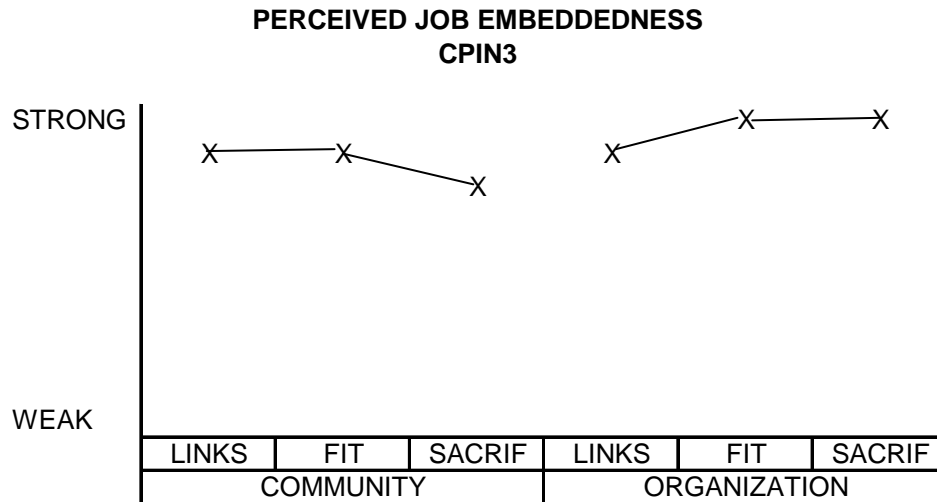
**Community**

- Links* - “Where we go, restaurants, bars or lounges there is always somebody you know or the industry that they're in.” “When I am not at work in the summertime, I am at the golf course. That is how I get to know people in town. I am a member so I get to know people pretty well.”
- Fit* - “Yes I think I fit in here.” “There are a lot of people, you know, a between the age of 28 to 38. People that are starting to have families and so forth. And again that is kind of my age group.” “Majority of people were my age, having fun and they're so much to do about it here.”
- Sacrifice* - “I want to have the same kind of small-town feeling that I have here.” “Gosh leaving here would be hard. Very hard!” “A lot of my friends that I grew up with from here and (name of community) have stayed here. They have come close, got married, have kids and lived here in (name of community).”

**Organization**

- Links* - “They're actually very few people here at the hotel that I associate with after work.” “And in this area as well the staff are from all over the world and they are fun to deal with.”
- Fit* - “One thing that is great about this hotel is it's a beautiful property and I am proud to say that I worked at this sort of a hotel.” “It's nice to be in a place where they care that much. It would be tough for me to leave here.” “I don't think I fit as well as I did a couple of years ago. I don't know how to really explain it, it's just that it's a different environment than it was a couple years ago.”
- Sacrifice* - “I don't think there's another hotel in this community that I could learn more at than here.” “I don't have set things because I don't know how much longer of the in this industry for. Although I very much like it, it burns on you after a while.” “To leave the (name of organization). Well, if a career opportunity came up in a position higher, like director of food and beverage and paying the same, at a hotel that has the same caliber service.”

**Table D3 CPIN 3 Perceived Embeddedness**



**Community**

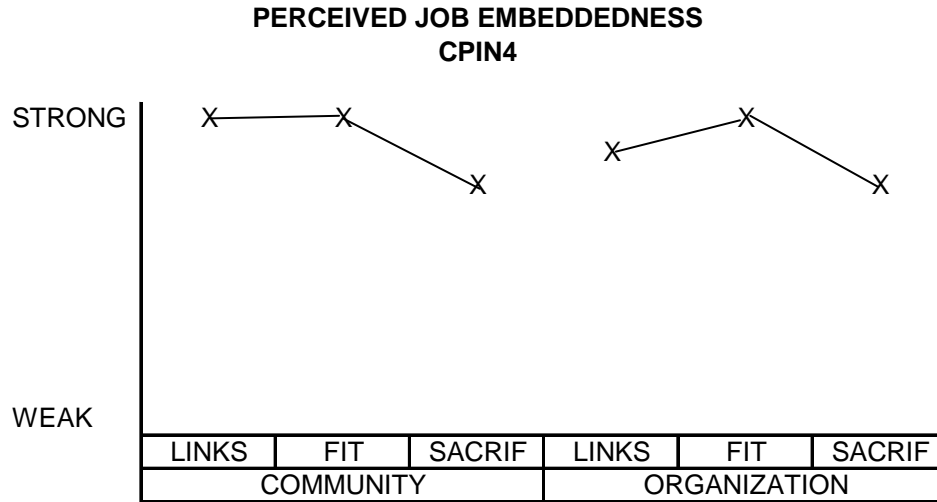
- Links* - “I made some good friends.” “They welcomed me into their home like a member of the family. And took me up on all the activities that they did. Introduced me to people and that's how I made my connections and started first exploring the mountains.”
- Fit* - “I loved the lifestyle and a lack of stress.” “This whole life style out here, you don't run into many stressed the people.” “Advantages? Umm, less see, friendships, lifestyle, activities.” “I think you either fall in love with the place and know this is a place where you need to be or you come here and go this is cool but know you're always leaving.”
- Sacrifice* - “I have friends outside of the (name of organization) as well. This has been my life for eight years and I, I love it here.” “If I leave here it will be for financial reasons. Because I know what I can buy elsewhere for the same amount that I can buy a one-bedroom condo here.”

**Organization**

- Links* - “I originally came up to the (name of organization) because a friend of works up here.” “So I'm pursuing my education at the moment. And I'm getting financial support to the organization, which is great for me.”
- Fit* - “It's a fun place to work, you enjoy coming to work. You know you're going have a few laughs. There's a lot to get done but there's no tension. If you get that the workplace is a match.”
- Sacrifice* - “I'm saving up to buy either a condo or a house.” I think it's such a friendly, happy environment that you are more prone to actually make friends with these people.” “Lot of chances for advancement.” “Career advancement because you definitely not going to advance in your career the same way you would if you were in the city.”



**Table D4 CPIN 4 Perceived Embeddedness**



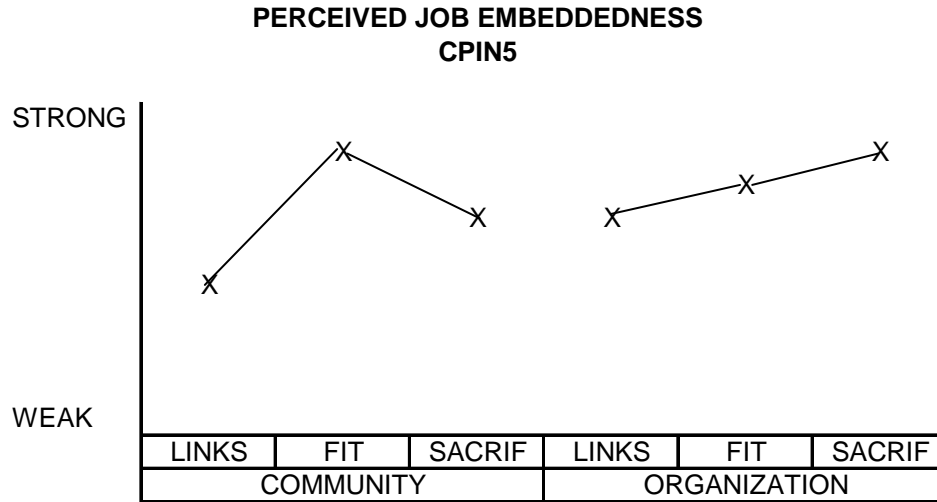
**Community**

- Links* - “I do a lot of volunteering here and there.” “It started with people from the hotel and then people always leave the hotel, but they're usually still in town. So then you just, I've met people that are from town. Now more of a group of people from town.” “
- Fit* - “It is all intertwined because my sport activities are my social life. So, the people that I hang out with and go to the bar with on Saturday night are the same people that I'm going to go mountain biking with or canoeing down the (local river) with. They all are the same people.” “The mountains seemed more, like, it fit my lifestyle.”
- Sacrifice* - “I can get on my bike after work today, pedal for 15 minutes and not bump into anybody. And that is great.” (activities and solitude) “I know when I go back home to visit my family I say, God its noisy here! I'm awake for five days because it's so noisy. It drives me nuts. So the solitude being in an overly populated small town is really nice.” (solitude)

**Organization**

- Links* - “We are all new management and we are trying to build a new management team.” “They are good individuals.” “They know all the staff and the staff feel comfortable with them and I think that's great.”
- Fit* - “I fit this organization because they want very loyal and devoted employees that want to play. That want to live here and enjoy their surroundings.” “I fit right into that because I'm very serious about my job and serious about my career.”
- Sacrifice* - “I think that if I'm leaving my job I'm leaving the community.” “It's a very professional organization. It's a very, the hotel is also very stunning.” “I live in staff accom now. I have a one-bedroom apartment which is huge.... everything included except for my phone. And I pay \$500 a month. So I couldn't get that anywhere else and most other organizations don't even offer that.”

**Table D5 CPIN 5 Perceived Embeddedness**



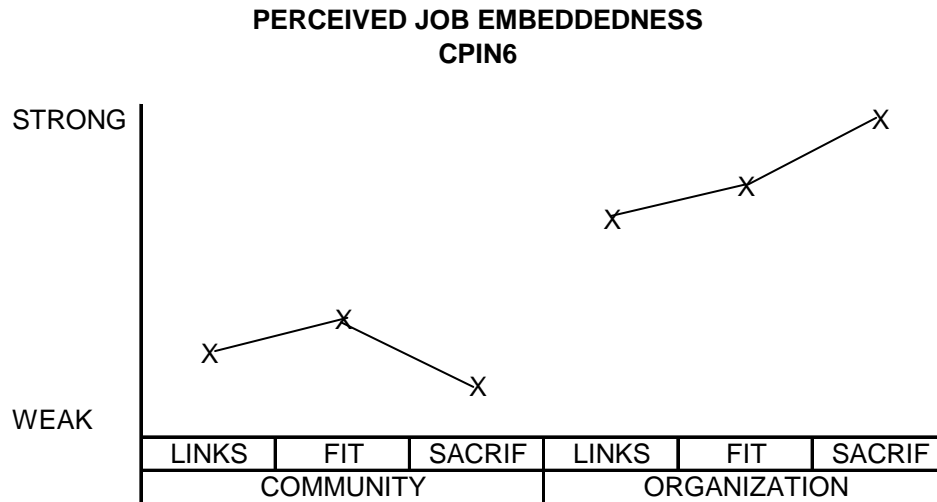
**Community**

- Links* - “This town relies on tourists and (nationality of mother tongue) tourists are a big part of it, so it wouldn't be too hard to find a job that's for sure.” “No (in response to membership in any community organizations)... I guess I never really looked for one or pay attention to what is there and what I can do.”
- Fit* - “It's like living in vacation time, kind of, sometimes. You do have to work but you still have that environment around you. I guess that makes it quite relaxing in a way.” “And now (large Asian city) is too big for me. I can't see myself living there anymore. It's just, to visit is fun but I don't want to live there. There's too many people and too much hassle, too much pollution.” “But this region of Canada. It's very beautiful and I went because I snowboard and that's always been a great attraction for me.”
- Sacrifice* - “So I would miss the mountains, snowboarding, and all that from the environment here.” “Well, a lot places that would love to hire me, I think just because I speak English and (foreign language).” “But, I am really good, how do you say that, getting used to a new environment.”

**Organization**

- Links* - “(spouse) works at the (position in hotel) as well.” (Spouse works in same hotel) “So pretty much all the people I know are from work now.”
- Fit* - “I like the (name of organization).” “I've been here for four years and I feel comfortable because I know people and I know what I'm doing and everything.” “I am happy at the (name of organization) I think it's a good company to work for.”
- Sacrifice* - “A visa only allows me to work for the (name organization), not anywhere else.... That is part of the reason why I stay here for such a long time at the (name of the organization). It is one of the biggest reasons. Not that I don't like to stay.” Friends within hotel.

**Table D6 CPIN 6 Perceived Embeddedness**



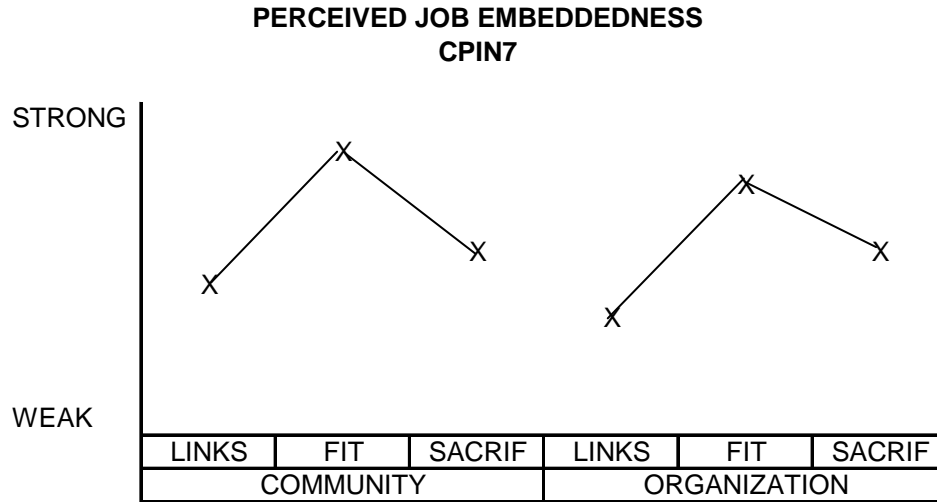
**Community**

- Links* - “It’s hard to explain because most people come here for the scenery or the activities and all that, but for me is just the work. It’s a job.” “My (a sibling) is out here as well, I think that’s another big reason that I stayed too, at least I have someone from home.”
- Fit* - “That’s one thing I like about (name of community) it’s big enough and it’s small enough. (Name of large Canadian city) is too big and nasty, that’s the only way to describe it.” “I’m not into whole hiking, skiing, snowboarding thing. Usually just with friends, or knitting. More of a homebody then anything, I’m just basically here to work.” “Actually this is my second round at (name of community) and it’s pretty good, I think am going to stay for quite awhile.”
- Sacrifice* - “My opinion is that if I were to meet someone and get married and have a family I would move back to (another Canadian province) or where ever they’re from. It’s fine up in (name of community) but who can afford to buy a house there. So I would probably leave to have a family.” “I can’t say I’d miss all the trails and that.”

**Organization**

- Links* - “Through work.” (answer to - where did you meet your friends) “People I knew when I first got here are all gone and you just get to know different ones, you hang out, meet friends a leave, I stay.” “Whereas here you get to know the lifers. Anyone and that makes it over a year, you are lifer.”
- Fit* - “Definitely comfortable working here. The people are good; organization is good.” “It’s the job, I like working here. I like the (name of organization) because they’re good to their employees.” “I’d like to move up in the organization.”
- Sacrifice* - “It (offer from another organization) would have to be really good just because of the benefits.” “Staff accommodations are cheap.” “I’d give up a good job. The benefits are really good as well. That’s basically it.... I’d just be giving up a job.”

**Table D7** CPIN 7 Perceived Embeddedness



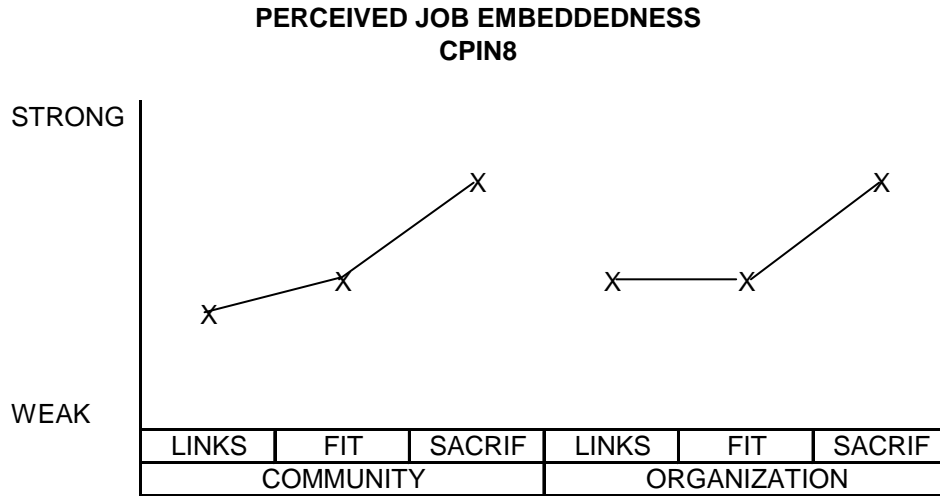
**Community**

- Links* - “I might be a bit atypical, I think other people my age, they might get more involved in the community than I have because I knew from the start this probably was not a place I was going to stay over the long term.” “I changed that a bit this year. I got involved in the (name of local volunteer organization) and will probably do a little bit more with them this summer.”
- Fit* - “That’s one of the reasons for being here. We like to play outside, mountain biking, cross-country skiing, downhill skiing, hike the back country, camp, all of that kind of stuff, fly fish.” “I’ve always been close to nature.” “I like the outdoor opportunities I have here.” “I like (name of community) and I don’t need the city that much.”
- Sacrifice* - “We will move out there at some point in time. But right now I like living here. I enjoy the outdoors, I like skiing. I’m still learning at the hotel.” “We both have a bit of gypsy blood and thus and wherever we are, is home.... we don’t have any trouble just picking up and walking away.”

**Organization**

- Links* - “(spouse) works at the (name of organization) as well.” “One of the groups, (name of department), are more physically oriented then say the (name of department) that I’m working with, very outdoor into a lot of backpacking, fishing so I did a lot more with them.”
- Fit* - “The hotel is an interesting place to work, even though there aspects that I don’t enjoy.” “The job by have is low stress, they pay me outrageously well for it which is a bonus. But in the great scheme of things compared to other jobs that had, I have very little responsibility.” “They’re quite willing to have you in your little world, as long as you doing your job and your reliable and coming to work, not creating issues for them.”
- Sacrifice* - “As long as I’m happy, when I’m not happy anymore, of I go and do something else.” “They pay me outrageously well.” “I’ve always been able to work; I’m not worried about work.” “So I guess I’m a bit of an anomaly especially a job like, this is something to do while I’m here.”

**Table D8 CPIN 8 Perceived Embeddedness**



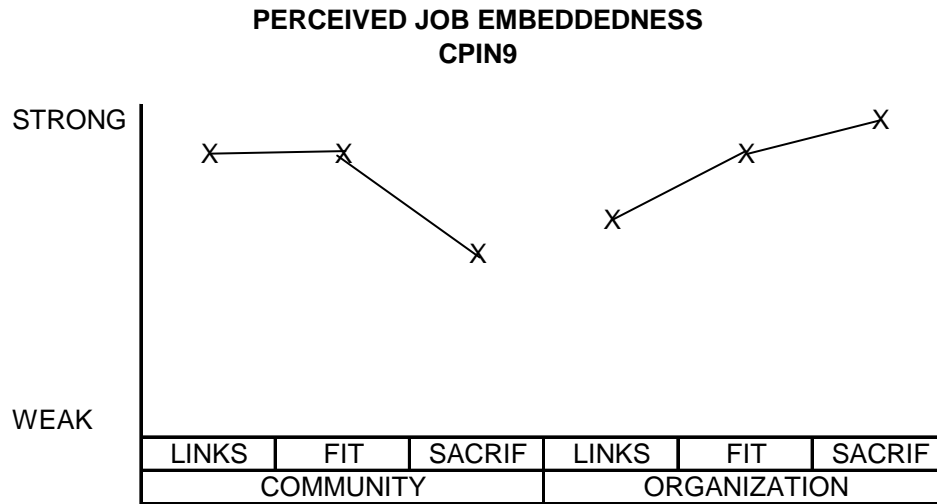
**Community**

- Links* - “No.” (in response to belonging to community organizations) “Well it's good to live, but if I have my family and friends close it would be perfect.” “I go to church”
- Fit* - “It's a great place, for me it's a great place to work and to live.” “I don't have a social life here.” “Not really” (in response to fit into lifestyle).
- Sacrifice* - “It's beautiful, summer or winter. It's a natural park, it's clean streets, it's pure air. It's a healthy environment here if you want to live here.”

**Organization**

- Links* - “To be honest with you, I don't get to know the people around here. It's my style of life, it's different.” “Leaders, we know each other, we work with each other.”
- Fit* - “Well I have a stressful job here. So I have a hard job, long hours dealing with people, it's been a nightmare.” “Well I fit with the management.”
- Sacrifice* - “Here I have worked. I have money.” “This hotel and this town is in my heart the rest of my life.” “I'm trying to transfer over there (international location), you see because it is two hours by road to my town.”

**Table D9** CPIN 9 Perceived Embeddedness



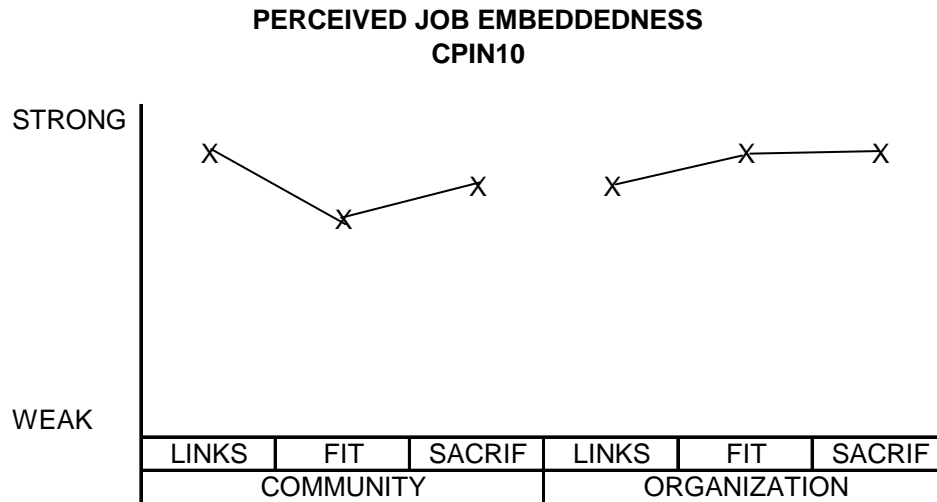
**Community**

- Links* - “No.” (response to belonging to community organizations) “Two of them (referring to immediate family) are here.” “Most of my children are here, my cousins, my (relatives), so it's easy to make a social call every once in awhile at my place or at their place.”
- Fit* - “I am not a stranger to this place. I know everyone in town, I just go walking into a shop and they know me. So I say it's more community, it's easy to communicate, I know where I have to go.” “Probably the best place, that is what I have discovered. Since I stayed more than span more what is happening.” “That's why I stay longer, cus it fits me here.”
- Sacrifice* - “I don't miss a lot of (name of community), I'll be a part of it even if I start a business in (large Canadian city).”

**Organization**

- Links* - “Around here (close relatives) are working here at the (name of organization).” “We have a lot of communication with the staff.” “Yes, we just talk, and explore more, understand more. That's all we do or usually prepare for a get together.” (in response to friends in the organization).
- Fit* - “It's like a big house with your mother and father. We talk free, we eat free, it's just like your mother and father's house.”
- Sacrifice* - “Money is not a big part of staying here.” “It is when my pension comes, that's why I'm staying.”

**Table D10** CPIN 10 Perceived Embeddedness



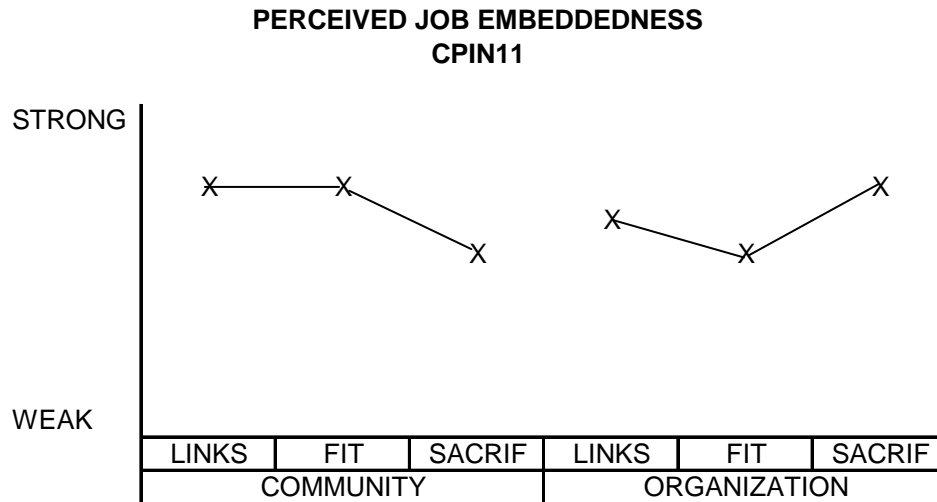
**Community**

- Links* - “I rediscovered the (local community recreational center) this year.” “I am a big fan of the library.” “I know a lot of old persons from (name of community) and I'd like to go to chat with them, that is my sense of community. I am not the person to do volunteer work.”
- Fit* - “I feel it home but my soul is not here.” “I still enjoy hiking and biking.” “Well of course the scenery for the physical scenery. After that it's the open minds, because you have people from all over the world working so you always have that kind of open mind and also the easiness of life.”
- Sacrifice* - “Friends, a lot of friends. The nature.” “And I will miss climbing mountains.”

**Organization**

- Links* - “Yeah, I bring a lot of people from work, I say let's go to the (local community recreational center) Wednesday afternoon at noon and hear a classical concert and they say wow.” “I have some friends here who've been working here for 15 years.”
- Fit* - “And also the reason I stay here for (length of tenure) at some point of course a job is a job. Sometime you don't like it, sometimes you like it. But when you look to the big picture you realize that you learn so much here at the (name of organization). “Relationship with my supervisor, or head of the department is very good. With years you create a personality that you are and then you get respect, we get noticed. I believe that respect.”
- Sacrifice* - “I would give up that life style of working in a luxury hotel, having everything easy. You don't believe how nice it is until you are here every day.” “Oh my God, we have good benefits.” “Happiness is more than a pension plan.”

**Table D11** CPIN 11 Perceived Embeddedness



**Community**

*Links* - “Here people know you and say hi to you so I like it here because everyone knows you.” I tried to do a volunteering job and for the library and a plan to get involved in the community and spend two to three hours a week. That treats you with that special quality to all of life.”

*Fit* - “It's good because it's a small town and community oriented. You meet people everyday so it's easy to maintain social interaction.” “If I were to decide, OK that's it I need to change, I would still see myself in the area working for a different company or driving a cab. This is kind of a shelter for me.”

*Sacrifice* - “Friends”

**Organization**

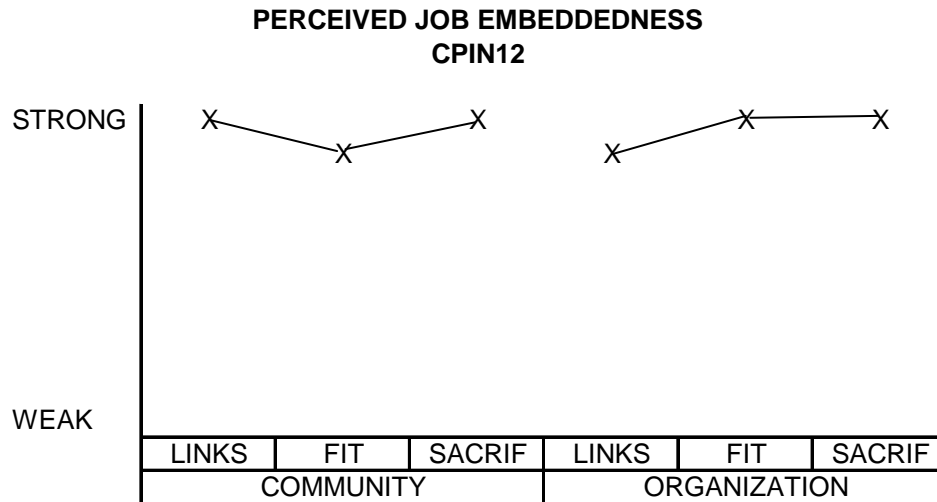
*Links* - “Friends, they were here so I came here and joined them.” “There are some people who've stayed here for 25 for 20 years so there's always that relationship either professional or personal.” “The benefits they are not very important to me what I do want is when I come to work to have a good relationship with my supervisors a good relationship with my employees and all that, if that was not the case chances are I wouldn't have stayed this long.”

*Fit* - “From my experience you're treated as an individual here and I notice that management here tries very hard to create a cultural community.” “The next up was department head that was not where I was going so I had to reflect upon the whole thing because it is not something I want to pursue. I'm not sure right now but I don't want go into higher management and find myself in political situations.” “I mean it's a good hotel, management is good, treats the employees professionally. It gives you the opportunity to prove yourself and for people really want to grow and make something out of themselves this is good.”

*Sacrifice* – “They have good benefits...little things but these are very important.” “The financial security, the benefits.” “The wages are not bad either and the benefits, once you have the financial security than they can concentrate on family.”



**Table D12** CPIN 12 Perceived Embeddedness



**Community**

- Links* - “The people I know in town. Whether or not you have kids it changes who you interact with. All the sudden you have a new circle of friends.” “My (spouse) also works in town so it is interesting because we've got a bit of a balance that way too. I know a bunch of people up here, he knows people in town that sort of means our paths cross that way sometimes.
- Fit* - “Smaller town, smaller community. You know your neighbors, you know the people your children are going to school with, you know the people you see in the playgrounds, that feeling. So it's got a great combination in my mind.”  
“It's a great place to have fun as well as work or as you sort of expand that knowledge you get into the community aspect of it.”
- Sacrifice* - “I don't expect to stay here when I retire.” “Do we want to move to warmer climate? Do we want to move to where there is a university that's accessible?”  
Own property in community. “But leaving (name of community) would be hard too, I mean I have 20 years, 15 even.”

**Organization**

- Links* - “I know, or know of, the greater majority of the people here.” “But the circle of friends I have at work, or the circle colleagues that I have, has remained pretty consistent.”
- Fit* - “It was a bit of a process the think, I know now why I like it. Big hotel, a lot going on, international feel to it, but I like that in my job.” “I like this job because for as long as you think you've been doing something someone always comes up to with that one question that you haven't heard before.” “I like my job; I like the people that I work with.”
- Sacrifice* - “It would probably be harder to quit my job.”

“People should be lucky enough to just go to a job that they love and if you love where you live as well as where you work, how much better can it get.”