

PERCEIVED OVERQUALIFICATION AND JOB EMBEDDEDNESS: RELATIONSHIPS WITH JOB SATISFACTION, ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT AND TURNOVER INTENTIONS

JOANA LEAL¹ & MARINA CARVALHO^{1, 2, 3 *}

¹Department of Psychology and Physical Education/ISMAT, Portimão, 8500-656, Portugal

²ISAMB/Faculty of Medicine, University of Lisbon, 1649-026, Portugal

³Equipa Aventura Social, Lisbon, 1675-184, Portugal

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Perceived overqualification has become, in recent years, an increasingly relevant topic due to its negative effects on job satisfaction, motivation and organizational commitment. The present study intended to contribute to a more comprehensive approach to these factors and had the main goal analyzing the relationship between perceived overqualification and job embeddedness with job satisfaction, organizational commitment and turnover intentions. **Methods:** A convenience sample composed of 404 employees, 70.8% female, aged between 21 and 67 years old, participated by completing, after their informed consent, an online protocol, composed of a demographic and work-related variables section and five self-reports. **Results:** Overqualified participants reported higher levels of work alternatives and turnover intentions; participants with perceived adequate qualifications reported higher job embeddedness, satisfaction, commitment and intentions to remain in the organization. Correlations results were in the expected direction and organizational sacrifices, work alternatives, person-organization fit, job satisfaction and cognitive incompatibility predicted turnover intentions. Furthermore, job embeddedness mediated the relationship between cognitive stagnation and turnover intentions. **Conclusions:** The results pointed to the need of identifying individual and contextual factors when assessing turnover intentions and, in particular, the role of job embeddedness which, when promoted, may contribute to improve, ultimately, employees' performance and organizational productivity.

Keywords: Perceived Overqualification; Job Embeddedness; Job Satisfaction, Organizational Commitment; Turnover Intentions

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Currently, with the continuous development and changes in organizations, increasingly relying on their employees to ensure their maintenance in increasingly competitive markets, there is a great need for employees to perform at their full potential and demonstrate high levels of creativity and adaptability. On the other hand, organizations have not been the only ones to feel the need to stand out in the labor market. Over the years, persons increased their investment in education and training, presenting increasingly higher academic qualifications. However, this has not been, unless in specific markets, necessarily accompanied by the creation of skilled jobs in organizations, resulting in a significant increase of overqualification (Green & Zhu, 2010; Liu & Wang, 2012; Larsen et al., 2018).

1.1 Relationships between perceived overqualification and job embeddedness with job satisfaction, organizational commitment and turnover intentions

Situations such as a lack of employment opportunities, high unemployment rates, and the need to meet needs contribute to the emergence of overqualification (Liu, & Wang, 2012). According to Tomás e Colaboradores (2023), the discrepancy between personal skills and work functions can have repercussions at an individual and organizational level, being related to higher levels of job dissatisfaction (Erdogan & Bauer, 2009; Erdogan et al., 2018; Arvan et al., 2019; Lu et al., 2023) and lower levels of organizational commitment (Belete, 2018; Erdogan & Bauer, 2009; Piotrowska, 2022; Reig-Botella et al., 2022) which may ultimately lead to turnover or, at least, turnover intentions (Alfes et al., 2016; Arvan et al., 2019; Chen et al., 2021; Erdogan et al., 2018; Erdogan & Bauer, 2009; Liu & Wang, 2012; Lu, et al., 2023; Reig-Botella et al., 2022).

Thus, in many cases, overqualified people remain in jobs that are below their qualifications due to the fear of being in a more uncertain situation or not finding a better job offer (Yoon et al., 2022).

1.2 Perceived Overqualification and Job Embeddedness: Conceptual framework

Overqualification can be understood as a consequence of the mismatch between an employee's qualifications and a given job. In other words, a person is considered overqualified when their qualifications (e.g., formal education, skills, or professional experience) are superior to those required for the role they perform (Liu & Wang, 2012; Larsen et al., 2018; Zhou et al., 2023).

According to Johnson, Morrow e Johnson (2002), overqualification can be assessed from an objective perspective, which refers to the real incompatibility between an employee's qualifications and the qualifications required for the work they perform, and from a subjective or perceived perspective, which is characterized by two dimensions: mismatch, or perceived incompatibility, and no-growth, or perceived stagnation (Johnson, Morrow & Johnson, 2002; Hsing-Ming & Mei-Ju, 2016). Mismatch refers to employees' perception of their qualifications, above those required for their role, and results from each employee's assessment of themselves and their skills, qualifications (i.e., education) and professional experience, as opposed to the challenges and level of demand of the roles they perform (Hsing-Ming & Mei-Ju, 2016). No-Growth arises from restrictions imposed by the organization and concerns employees' perception of the limited opportunities at work to acquire new skills and put them into practice, compromising their professional growth and the development of new skills (Johnson, Morrow & Johnson, 2002; Hsing-Ming & Mei-Ju, 2016).

Thus, it is understood that perceived overqualification arises mainly from personal factors (experiences, education, professional development and demographic characteristics of the individual) and organizational aspects and/or factors with impact on the development of new skills (Brynin, 2002; Erdogan, et al., 2011; Feldman, & Maynard, 2011; Gkorezis, et al., 2019) and from the experience of feelings of deprivation and changes in their attitudes and behaviors towards their work (Erdogan & Bauer, 2009; Erdogan et al., 2018; Mishra & Novakowski, 2016).

However, despite the primary consequences of overqualification, other factors contribute to employee retention, regardless of perceived overqualification, job satisfaction, or organizational commitment. These factors, which can be contextual and present individual differences, are known as job embeddedness (Yang et al., 2011, Yoon et al., 2022).

Job embeddedness assumes that people have different reasons for staying or leaving work, which may include affective (e.g., connections with teams, managers, and other people), calculative (e.g., expectations of achievement), alternative (e.g., the likelihood of finding another job), and normative reasons (e.g., the desire to meet the needs and expectations of family or friends). (Maertz & Campion, 2004).

Yoon and colleagues (2022) also propose that job embeddedness encompasses three main dimensions: the bonds or ties that the person develops and maintains with other individuals and groups inside and outside the organization (in the community), adjustments to work (related to the perceived compatibility between the employee and the organization/community to which they belong) and the sacrifices associated with leaving work (material costs, loss of salary and benefits, among others, or psychological costs, related to the loss of security, stability, status and increased uncertainty that the employee may suffer when leaving the organization).

Thus, job embeddedness is directly related to organizational commitment and the intentions to remain in the organization, through the strength of the employee's bonds, the balance between individual and organizational factors (Ampofo et al., 2017; Mitchell & Lee, 2001; Yoon et al., 2022) and the perception of costs vs. benefits associated leaving the current job (Lazzari et al., 2022).

1.3 Theory of Career Mobility

Another reason why overqualified individuals accept and occupy positions that require lower qualifications and skills than they possess involves career mobility theory (Sicherman & Galor, 1990). This theory posits that overqualified individuals may apply for and accept jobs for which they are overqualified in order to gain experience and skills and expand their network of contacts in the business world (Tomás et al., 2023). According to this model, mobility is seen as a good opportunity to prevent employees from leaving the organization, as long as employees believe there are internal opportunities for promotion and growth.

1.4 Relevance and main goals of the study

Despite its relevance, given that overqualification represents a significant problem, particularly among young people, studies in this area are scarce. Furthermore, studies that seek to understand the relationship between perceived overqualification and job embeddedness with job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intentions are even scarcer. Therefore, this study focuses on this gap in the literature to more comprehensively understand the role of these factors in job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intentions, seeking to contribute to a more comprehensive approach to the main factors that can, directly or indirectly, have an impact on performance.

Thus, the present study aimed to analyze the relationship between perceived overqualification and job embeddedness with job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover

intentions. Specifically, we aimed to analyze the the differences between overqualified and underqualified employees, analyze the specifica factors related to turnover intentions and the mediating role of job embeddedness in the relationship between perceived overqualification and turnover intentions. Based on the literature review, it was expected that the perceived overqualification would be negatively related to job satisfaction and organizational commitment and positively related to turnover intentions. Job embeddedness was also expected to be negatively related to turnover intentions. It was also expected that age, number of dependents, marital status, organizational commitment, job embeddedness and job satisfaction would negatively predict turnover intentions, and that perceived overqualification would be a positive predictor of turnover intentions. Finally, job embeddedness was expected to have a mediating effect on the relationship between perceived overqualification and turnover intentions.

2.0 MATERIALS AND METHODS

2.1 Participants

The convenience sample consisted of 419 participants, of which 15 were excluded due unemployment at the moment of the research.

Of the 404 participants included, 70.8% were female and aged between 21 and 67 years old ($M = 44.02$, $SD = 10.4$, range from 21 to 67). More than half (61.1%) were married or living in common law, and 61.4% reported having higher education. Participants also reported an mean length of work in their profession of 12.2 years ($SD = 10.7$, range between 0, less than 1 year, to 45) and an mean length of work in the current organization of 11.9 years ($SD = 10.7$, range between 0, less than 1 year, to 45), with more than half (62.9%) reporting working less than 40 hours per week.

When asked about workplace growth opportunities and their level of qualifications in performing their duties, 55.2% of participants reported having opportunities for growth, and 74% stated they were adequately qualified. Other demographic and work-related factors can be seen in Table 1 (see Table 1).

Table 1: Sociodemographic and work-related variables

	N	%
Gender		
Male	118	29.2%
Female	286	70.8%
Nationality		
Portuguese	401	99.3%
Brasilian	2	0.5%
German	1	0.2%
Marital Status		
Single	111	27.5%
Married/Common Law	247	61.1%
Divorced/Separated	44	10.9%
Widow	2	0.5%
Academic Qualifications		

6 th grade	5	1.2%
9 th grade	25	6.2%
12 th grade	126	31.2%
Graduation degree	176	43.6%
Master's degree	64	15.8%
Doctorate	8	2.0%
Working hours		
Less than 40h/week	254	62.9%
40h/week	103	25.5%
More than 40h/week	47	11.6%
Employment Contract		
Permanent	141	35.2%
Fixed-term	41	10.2%
Indefinite-term	14	3.5%
Open-ended	199	49.6%
Self-employed	6	1.5%
Work Model		
On-site	378	93.6%
Hybrid	24	5.9%
Remote	2	0.5%
Work Schedule		
Fixed	206	51.2%
Shifts	54	13.4%
Concentrated	1	0.2%
Flexible	133	33.1%
Adaptability	8	2.0%
Opportunities for growth		
Yes	223	55.2%
No	181	44.8%
Balance between tasks and level of qualification		
Yes	299	74.0%
No, I don't have sufficient qualifications	11	2.7%
No, my qualifications exceed what is required	94	23.3%

2.2 Measures

Perceived Overqualification. Assessed by the Perceived Cognitive Overqualification Questionnaire (QSCP, Fine & Nevo, 2008; Nascimento, Roberto & Santos, 2022), a self-report which assesses perceived cognitive overqualification through 9 items in a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = Strongly Disagree; 5 = Strongly Agree) in two dimensions: cognitive incompatibility and cognitive stagnation. Higher scores point to a higher perception of overqualification in both dimensions. The QSCP presented adequate to low psychometric properties, with Cronbach's alpha values equal to .86 for the total score (Fine & Nevo, 2008) and equal to .60 (cognitive stagnation) and .69 (cognitive incompatibility) (Nascimento et al., 2022).

Job Embeddedness. Assessed by the Job Embeddedness Scale (JES; Ramesh, 2007; Gonçalves, 2014), a self-report composed of 47 items in a 6-point Likert-type response scale, (1 = Strongly Disagree/Not a question; 6 = Strongly Agree/ Definitely). Results can be scored in 10 dimensions, respectively: Organizational Ties; Organizational Sacrifices; Community Adjustments; Community Ties; Community Sacrifices; Person-Organization Fit; Person-Job Fit; Turnover Intentions; Job Alternatives; and Job Satisfaction. Higher scores reflect higher

job embeddedness and lower turnover intentions. In the original instrument, internal consistency values, Cronbach's alpha, varied between .46 and .94 (Ramesh, 2007) and in the adapted version, Cronbach's alpha varied between .43 and .96, with an total internal consistency value of .90 (Gonçalves, 2014).

Job Satisfaction. Assessed by the Job Satisfaction Scale (JSS, Warr, Cook & Wall, 1979; Santos, Sousa & Gonçalves, 2022), a self-report that assesses employee satisfaction with their work on 16 items in a 7-point Likert scale (1 = Extremely Dissatisfied; 7 = Extremely Satisfied) and is composed of three dimensions: intrinsic satisfaction, extrinsic satisfaction, and satisfaction with professional relationships. Higher scores reflect higher job satisfaction (Santos, Sousa & Gonçalves, 2022). The original version had showed good internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha for the total score equal to .89 (Warr et al., 1979); an internal consistency value of .93 was obtained in the adapted version (Santos, Sousa & Gonçalves, 2022).

Organizational Commitment. Assessed using the Organizational Commitment Scale (OCS, Mowday, Steers & Porter, 1979; Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982; Gomes, 2007), also a self-report that assesses employees' positive attitudes, feelings, and values toward their work in 9 items (Gomes, 2007) using a 5-point Likert-type response scale (1 = Strongly Disagree"; 5 = Strongly Agree). Higher scores reflect higher organizational commitment (Gomes, 2007). In the original version, OCS presented good internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha ranging from .82 to .93 in different samples (Mowday, et al., 1979).

Turnover intentions. Assessed by the Turnover Intention Scale (TIS, Lima & Mendes, 2014), a self-report that consists of 8 items in a 5-point Likert-type response format (1 = Strongly Disagree; 5 = Strongly Agree that can be grouped two dimensions: Intention to Remain in the Organization and Intention to Leave the Organization. Higher scores reflect a higher intention to remain or leave the organization (Lima & Mendes, 2014). The TIS had showed good internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha for the total score equal to .92 (Lima & Mendes, 2014).

2.3 Procedure

After the authors authorizations for the use of the measures to operationalize the study variables, the research protocol was created based on the study objectives and the hypotheses to be tested. The research protocol contained a first section with the informed consent request, including the ethical questions underlying the study, a section with sociodemographic and work-related questions, and the sections related to the instruments. The protocol was then submitted for review by the Institutional Board and after its approval (CCPTSO-3, 6th February 2024), a pilot study was conducted with nine individuals who met the same characteristics as the study sample to identify potential errors, comprehension difficulties, and average completion time. The protocol was subsequently widely disseminated, and data were collected online between February and June 2024.

2.4 Statistical procedures

Data were analyzed using SPSS 25.0 (SPSS, Chicago, IL, USA). The internal consistency of the dimensions of the measures used was analyzed through Cronbach's alpha coefficients. Pearson's correlation coefficients were used to analyze the correlations between the variables

under study. A multiple regression analysis was performed to analyze the predictors of turnover intentions. Last, a conditional mediation analysis was tested using Process running under JASP 0.19.3 (JASP Team, 2025) to understand the mediator role of job embeddedness on the relationship between perceived overqualification and turnover intentions. A confidence level of 95% was considered for all analyses.

3.0 RESULTS

3.1 Internal consistency of the instruments

In order to verify the psychometric properties of the used instruments, a reliability analysis was carried out (see Table 2). All variables, with the exception of the cognitive stagnation dimension of perceived cognitive overqualification ($\alpha = .51$) presented adequate psychometric qualities with Cronbach's alpha values above .70 (Nunnally, 1978).

Table 2: Descriptive statistics of the variables and internal consistency of the instruments

	Items	M	SD	Cronbach's alpha
Cognitive incompatibility	4	3.03	0.80	0.76
Cognitive stagnation	5	2.94	0.65	0.51
Person-organization fit	11	3.73	0.99	0.91
Person-job fit	3	4.21	1.09	0.84
Organizational bonds	6	3.80	1.25	0.91
Organizational sacrifices	8	3.33	1.06	0.88
Community adjustments	4	4.53	1.00	0.83
Community bonds	3	3.97	1.14	0.81
Community sacrifices	3	3.69	1.43	0.93
Turnover intent	4	3.03	1.45	0.92
Work alternatives	2	3.73	1.22	0.84
Job satisfaction	3	4.31	1.23	0.93
Intrinsic Satisfaction	4	4.75	1.28	0.84
Extrinsic Satisfaction	5	5.07	1.04	0.70
Satisfaction with Professional Relationships	5	3.92	1.38	0.88
Organizational Commitment	9	3.38	0.84	0.93
Intentions to remain in the organization	4	2.41	0.99	0.78
Intentions to leave the organization	4	2.43	1.21	0.89

3.2. Comparisons between Adequately Qualified and Overqualified Participants

To understand the differences between individuals who reported being adequately qualified for their functions and those who considered themselves overqualified, an independent-samples t-test were performed. Table 3 shows the descriptive statistics and Student's t-test values (see Table 3).

Table 3: Comparisons between perceived adequately and overqualified participants

	Adequately Qualified Participants	Overqualified Participants	t	n ² (cohen)

	M	DP	M	DP		
Cognitive incompatibility	11.43	2.85	14.43	3.23	-8.59***	-1.02
Cognitive stagnation	14.02	3.00	16.76	3.22	-7.59***	-0.90
Person-job fit	13.35	2.86	10.72	3.45	7.39***	0.87
Organizational sacrifices	28.41	8.11	21.41	7.17	7.48***	0.89
Community adjustments	18.51	3.49	17.11	5.07	3.03**	0.36
Community bonds	12.17	3.09	11.28	4.03	2.25*	0.27
Community sacrifices	11.42	4.09	10.31	4.61	2.23*	0.26
Turnover intent	11.12	5.39	14.91	6.05	-5.78***	-0.68
Work alternatives	7.30	2.43	7.97	2.45	-2.33*	-0.28
Person-organization fit	42.63	10.31	36.74	11.46	4.70***	0.56
Organizational bonds	24.18	7.08	19.20	7.44	5.88***	0.70
Job satisfaction	13.64	3.23	10.99	4.11	6.48***	0.77
Extrinsic satisfaction	26.01	5.07	23.68	5.19	3.87***	0.46
Satisfaction with professional relationships	21.14	6.61	15.40	5.78	7.55***	0.89
Intrinsic satisfaction	20.22	4.67	15.68	4.82	8.15***	0.96
Organizational commitment	31.51	7.05	27.26	8.30	4.88***	0.58
Intentions to remain in the organization	13.81	2.84	12.10	3.03	5.03***	0.60
Turnover Intentions	8.79	4.53	12.24	4.84	-6.34***	-0.75

Note. * $<.05$; ** $<.01$; *** $<.001$. Higher mean values are presented in bold.

Results revealed statistically significant differences, in the expected direction, between the two groups in all studied variables (see Table 3).

3.3 Correlations between the studied variables

The relationships between the variables under study were analyzed using Pearson correlation coefficients (see Table 4).

Results have shown significant correlations, in the expected direction with perceived overqualification with most of the dimensions of job embeddedness, varying from $-.10$ (CE and community sacrifices, $p < .05$) to $-.35$ (CE with person-job fit and IS, $p < .001$). All the dimensions of work satisfaction correlated significantly and in the expected direction with all the dimensions of job embeddedness, except for work alternatives, with correlation coefficients varying from $-.10$ (ES and work alternatives, $p < .05$) to $.75$ (SPR and organizational sacrifices,

p < .001). Organizational commitment presented also significant correlations, in the expected direction, with job embeddedness (again expect for work alternatives), work satisfaction and remain and turnover intentions, varying from -.55 (TI, p < .001) to .78 (person-organization fit, p < .001). Finally, intentions to remain in the organization and turnover intentions significantly correlated in the expected direction with other all variables, with correlation coefficients varying from -.58 (IRO, p < .001) to .77 (job embeddedness turnover dimension).

Table 4: Correlations between perceived overqualification, work satisfaction and intentions to remain and leave the organization with job embeddedness and organizational commitment

	CI	CE	IS	ES	SPR	OC	IRO	TI
Person-job fit	-.25***	-.35***	.61***	.39***	.47***	.51***	.41***	-.39***
Organizational sacrifices	-.19***	-.23***	.61***	.55***	.75***	.70***	.63***	-.54***
Community adjustments	-.07	-.07	.26***	.33***	.22***	.40***	.27***	-.20***
Community bonds	-.07	-.02	.26***	.33***	.27***	.43***	.29***	-.17***
Community sacrifices	-.14**	-.10*	.22***	.25***	.24***	.38***	.30***	-.21***
Turnover intent	.31***	.23***	-.54***	-.47***	-.54***	-.55***	-.59***	.77***
Work alternatives	.20***	-.02	-.09	-.10*	-.11*	-.05	-.14**	.29***
Person-organization fit	-.16***	-.26***	.56***	.53***	.61***	.78***	.54***	-.42***
Organizational bonds	-.13**	-.27***	.59***	.64***	.66***	.71***	.52***	-.44***
Job satisfaction	-.18***	-.28***	.65***	.59***	.61***	.74***	.60***	-.52***
OC	-.15**	-.18***	.58***	.60***	.64***	-	.64***	-.46***
IS	-.30***	-.35***	-	-	-	.59***	.50***	-.49***
ES	-.17**	-.12*	-	-	-	.60***	.47***	-.43***
SPR	-.24***	-.20***	-	-	-	.65***	.52***	-.47***
IRO	-.16**	-.16**	.50***	.47***	.52***	.63***	-	-.58***
TI	-.31***	-.19***	-.48***	-.42***	-.47***	-.46***	-	-

Note. *<.05; **<.01; ***<.001. Legend: CI = Cognitive incompatibility; CE = Cognitive stagnation; IS = Intrinsic satisfaction; ES = Extrinsic satisfaction; SPR = Satisfaction with professional relationships; OC = Organizational commitment; IRO = Intentions to remain in the organization; TI = Turnover Intentions.

3.3 Predictors of turnover intentions

The predictors of turnover intentions were studied through a multiple regression analysis. All variables that significantly correlated with this variable (including psychological variables work-related variables, age and number of dependents), were included in the analysis.

The obtained results evidenced the existence of a statistically significant model, F (21,382) = 14.8, p < .001, which explained about 42% of the total variance of turnover intentions, composed of five independent variables: organizational sacrifices (β = -0.28; t = -3.51; p = <.001), job alternatives (β = 0.17; t = 4.19; p = <.001), ajustamento person-organization fit (β = 0.17; t = 2.20; p = 0.028), job satisfaction (β = -0.28; t = -3.87; p = <.001) and cognitive incompatibility (β = 0.16; t = 3.28; p = .001). Table 5 shows the standardized coefficients for each of five the independent variables.

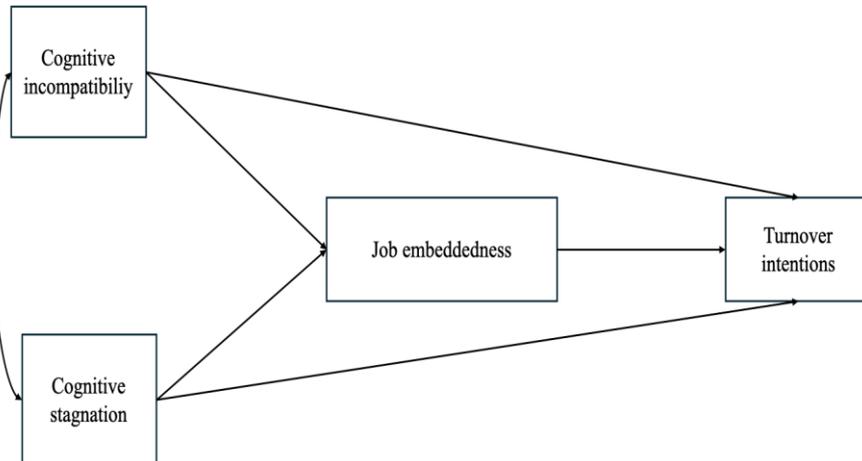
Table 5: Predictors of turnover intentions

Variable	gl	Mean Square	F	p	Standardized Estimates
Organizational sacrifices	1	168.9	12.33***	<.001	-0.28
Work alternatives	1	240.8	17.58***	<.001	0.17
Person-organization fit	1	66.66	4.87*	0.028	0.17
Job satisfaction	1	204.65	14.94***	<.001	-0.28
Cognitive incompatibility	1	147.04	10.74***	0.001	0.16

3.3. Mediator role of job embeddedness

A conditional mediation analysis was performed to study the mediator role of job embeddedness in the relationship between perceived overqualification and turnover intentions. The two dimensions of perceived overqualification were included as independent variables (IV). Turnover intentions was the dependent variable (DV). The total score of job embeddedness (excluding turnover dimension) was included in the model as the mediator variable (MV). The conceptual model can be seen in Figure 1.

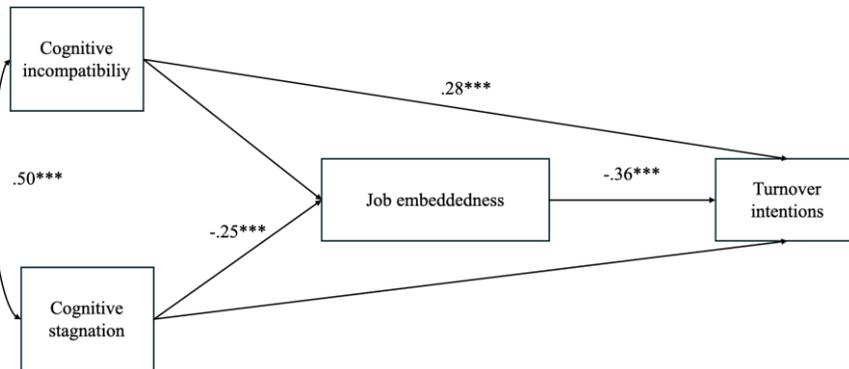
Figure 1: General conceptual model



Results have shown that cognitive incompatibility presented a direct effect on turnover intentions, SE = 0.28; ES = 0.05; Z = 5.62, 95% IC [0.18, 0.38], p = <.001, job embeddedness presented a direct effect on turnover intentions, SE = -0.36; ES = 0.04; Z = -8.23, 95% IC [-0.44, -0.27], p = <.001, and cognitive stagnation presented a direct effect on job embeddedness, SE = -0.25; ES = 0.05; Z = -4.58, 95% IC [-0.36, -0.14], p = <.001. Cognitive stagnation presented also an indirect effect, through job embeddedness, on turnover intentions, SE = 0.09; ES = 0.02; Z = 3.93, 95% IC [0.04, 0.13], p = <.001.

The obtained model explained 7% of job embeddedness and 21.5% of turnover intentions. Figure 2 shows the path coefficients obtained for the empirical model.

Figure 2: General empirical model

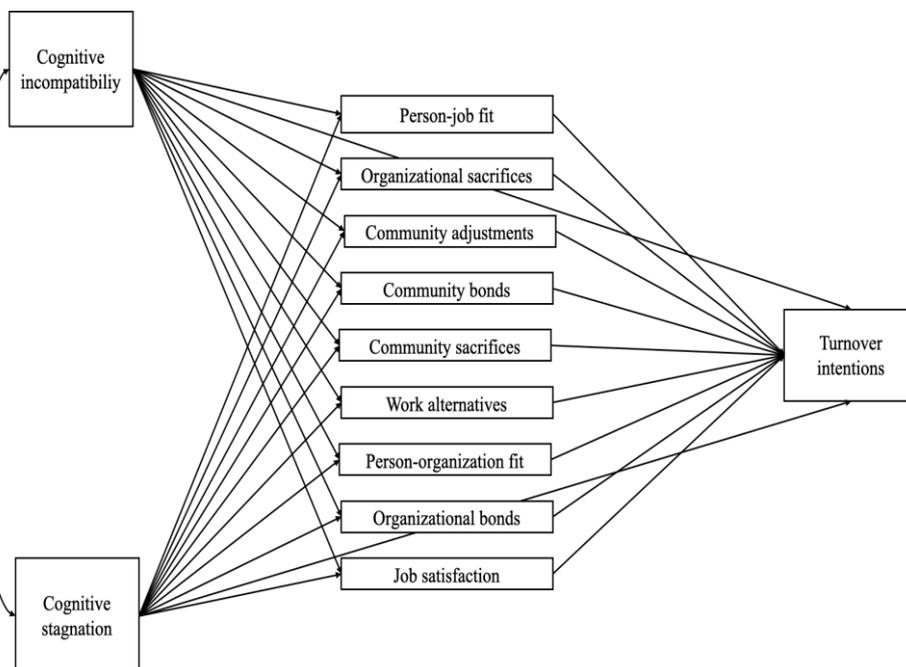


Note. ***<.001

A second conditional mediation analysis was then performed to analyse the mediator role of each of the dimensions of job embeddedness in the relationship between perceived overqualification and turnover intentions. The two dimensions of perceived overqualification were again included as independent variables (IV) and turnover intentions were maintained as the dependent variable (DV). Nine dimensions of job embeddedness were included in the model as the mediator variables (MV); once again, to avoid redundancies, the job embeddedness dimension of turnover was not used.

The conceptual model can be seen in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Specific conceptual model

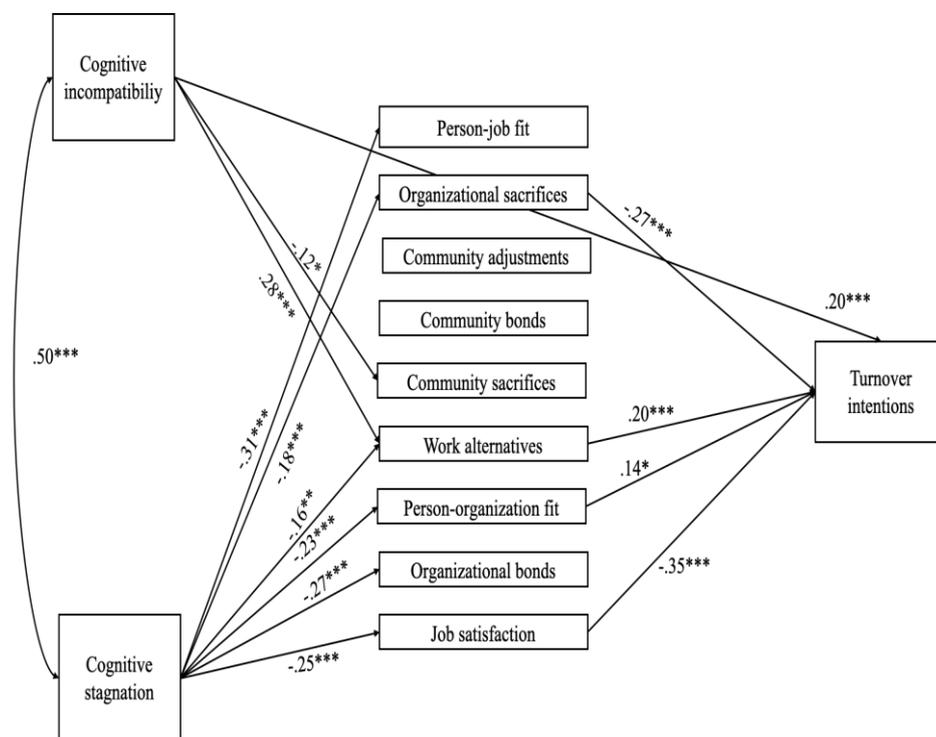


In this second mediation analysis, results have shown, once again, that cognitive incompatibility presented a direct effect on turnover intentions, SE = 0.20; ES = 0.05; Z = 4.28, 95% IC [0.11, 0.28], p = <.05. Four significant indirect effects were also found, between

cognitive incompatibility and turnover intentions through work alternatives, SE = 0.06; ES = 0.02; Z = 3.62, 95% IC [0.03, 0.08], p = <.001, and between cognitive stagnation and turnover intentions through organizational sacrifices, SE = 0.05; ES = 0.02; Z = 2.53, 95% IC [0.01, 0.09], p = <.05, work alternatives, SE = -0.03; ES = 0.01; Z = 2.53, 95% IC [0.06, 0.01], p = <.51, and job satisfaction, SE = 0.09; ES = 0.03; Z = 3.45, 95% IC [0.04, 0.14], p = <.001.

This second model explained 42% of turnover intentions. Figure 4 shows the path coefficients obtained for the empirical model.

Figure 4: Specific empirical model



Note. *<.05; **<.01; ***<.001.

4.0 DISCUSSION

As previously mentioned, the present study aimed to analyze the relationship between perceived overqualification, job embeddedness, job satisfaction, organizational commitment and turnover intentions, seeking, more specifically, to understand the differences between overqualified and adequately qualified participants, to identify the predictors of turnover intentions and to analyze the mediating role of job embeddedness in the relationship between perceived overqualification and turnover intentions. Based on literature, it was expected that the perceived overqualification would be negatively related to job satisfaction and organizational commitment and positively related to turnover intentions. Job embeddedness was also expected to be negatively related to turnover intentions. It was also expected that some of the sociodemographic and individual variables would predict turnover intention. Finally, job embeddedness was expected to mediate the relationship between perceived overqualification and turnover intentions.

All instruments, except for one of the dimensions of perceived overqualification (cognitive stagnation) revealed adequate to excellent internal consistency, and were in line with previous obtained results (Fine & Nevo, 2008; Gomes, 2007; Gonçalves, 2014; Lima & Mendes, 2014; Mowday, et al., 1979; Nascimento, Roberto & Santos, 2022; Ramesh, 2007; Warr, et al., 1979; Santos, et al., 2022).

Comparisons between groups showed that participants with perceived overqualifications reported higher levels of cognitive mismatch and stagnation, work alternatives and turnover intentions whereas participants with perceived adequate qualifications reported higher job embeddedness, work satisfaction, organizational commitment and intentions to remain in the organization. These results were according the literature and, in particular, the results obtained by Erdogan and Bauer (2009), Belete (2018), Pitrowska (2022) and Andrade et al. (2024).

Participants who reported perceiving themselves as overqualified reported, in general, less job embeddedness, less job satisfaction, less intentions to remain in the organization but also less turnover intentions. Participants with higher levels of job satisfaction reported higher levels of job embeddedness and organizational commitment, more intentions to remain in the organization and less turnover intentions. Finally, participants with more intentions to remain in the organization reported higher levels of job embeddedness and job satisfaction and participants who reported more turnover intentions reported also less job embeddedness and less job satisfaction. The obtained results were according to the results obtained by Wassermann et al. (2017), Guo et al. (2022) and Hur & Abner (2024), pointing out to the relevance of overqualification on job satisfaction and organizational commitment, which may explain job dissatisfaction and turnover intentions (Wasserman et al, 2017).

These results obtained by multiple regression analysis showed that participants who reported less organizational sacrifices, having more work alternatives, a better person-organization fit, less job satisfaction and higher cognitive incompatibility reported having more turnover intentions and were confirmed by the ones obtained by Ampofo et al. (2017), Chen et al. (2021) and Liu et al. (2024). According to these results, individuals who perceive an imbalance between their characteristics and their work functions can present more turnover intentions. This can be due to the imbalance between the individuals expectations for recognition and the organizational goals and values, which do not allow employees' to accomplish their optimal functioning level, and looking for other opportunities outside their workplace (Chen et al., 2021). Also, according to Liu et al. (2024), job satisfaction is one of the most relevant predictors of turnover intentions and the imbalance between organizational sacrifices and work alternatives can explain turnover and some of the reasons why individuals do not remain in their workplace.

However, contrary to what was expected, in the present study, gender, age, marital status and the number of dependents did not predict turnover intentions. Yoon et al (2022), Emami & Darabi (2012) and Belete (2018) had found results which showed that older and married males, with dependents living with them presented more intentions to remain in their workplace, contrary to younger females with no relationship and no dependents. These discrepancy in the obtained results can be explained by the type of analysis used in each study and, also, by modifications, in trends, of the main precursors of turnover intentions.

When analysing the mediation of job embeddedness in the relationship between perceived overqualification and turnover intentions, cognitive stagnation presented the main role on turnover intentions. According to Yoon et al. (2022) and Ampofo et al. (2017), overqualified persons can decide to maintain work functions below their qualifications due to fear of uncertainty and due to the assessment of costs and benefits of turnover, deciding to remain in their workplace besides other individual and/or contextual factors. On the other hand, persons with high levels of job embeddedness can present less turnover intentions due to the existence of personal resources in their organization which, in turn, make it more difficult for these employees to leave their current job and act on their intentions to leave even when another opportunity (e.g., a job offer at another organization) presents itself to them.

4.1 Limitations and suggestions for future studies

Despite the relevance and innovative nature of the results obtained, this study has some limitations. The sample, although significant, was not randomly selected, so it is not possible to generalize the results obtained in this study to the general population. Furthermore, the cross-sectional nature of the study only allows for the analysis of unidirectional effects based on their evidences in the literature. In addition to this, the fact that one of the dimensions of the perceived overqualification measure presented low internal consistency may imply caution in the results interpretation.

We suggest that future studies collect a larger, random sample to assess the invariance of the results. The study of different professional groups, in which qualifications often exceed the job functions performed (e.g., call center and supermarket workers), can also contribute to obtain results that allow the identification of potential common and specific factors. Using another measure to assess perceived overqualification can also contribute to greater robustness and external validity in the general working population and in specific contexts. Furthermore, analyzing other factors that can mediate the relationship between perceived overqualification and turnover intentions, such as job satisfaction, organizational climate and work-life balance, can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of this phenomenon.

4.2 Practical implications for individuals and organizations

Nowadays, the values of organizations and employees must be aligned, which contributes, on the one hand, to greater identification with the organization's image and, on the other hand, to job satisfaction, well-being and quality of life of the persons in these same organizations. Both employees and organizations can, and should, contribute for promoting healthy workplaces. This means that overqualifications and job embeddedness are two of the most relevant factors that should be taken into account in the recruitment, selection and retention of human capital. Human resources (HR) services should work along with occupational health services and, in particular, with occupational health psychologists, in order to define systematic strategies to promote job embeddedness and manage perceived and objective overqualifications. Only the implementation of systematic outcome-evaluated programs, that take into account the needs of organizations and employees, that include employees and communities at the center of change, and that are assessed, reassessed and revised at medium and long term, will contribute to diminish turnover and promote well-being and quality of life in workplaces and assist organizations in leveraging and using the skills of their employees

5.0 CONCLUSIONS

In summary, the present study evidences the relevance of perceived overqualifications and job embeddedness on job satisfaction, organizational commitment and, in particular, turnover intentions. Adequately qualified participants demonstrated higher job embeddedness, job satisfaction, organizational commitment and, in particular, intentions of remaining in the organization. Also, job embeddedness evidenced to mediate the relationship between perceived overqualification and turnover intentions. More studies on this topic are of most relevance for organizations to learn how to detect modifications in their employees' attitudes toward their work, so they can take action to increase employee retention and promote job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and diminish turnover intentions.

5.1 Recommendations for public policies

- Organizations should take into account the need of balance between qualifications and functions when recruiting and selecting their human capital.
- In this balance, job embeddedness plays a significant role and can be promoted by systematic actions, based on yearly plans, promoted by organizations and directed to their employees.
- Turnover intentions and turnover can be reduced by developing and implementing occupational health psychology programs, based on objective assessments and real needs, along with HR management strategies.
- Healthy workplaces are of most relevance for both persons and organizations. In a win-win situation, both employees and organizations have the opportunity to improve their performance and productivity with, at the same time, less long term costs for organizations and higher long term well-being and quality of life for employees.

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