

# Links, fit or sacrifice: job embeddedness and intention to quit among Generation Y

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## Abstract

**Purpose** – The study aims to determine how the relationship among links, fit and sacrifice (dimensions of job embeddedness) influence employees' intention to quit in the case of professionals belonging to Generation Y.

**Design/methodology/approach** – A quantitative correlational study was conducted with a cross-sectional dimension of time. The survey technique was applied through a certified online panel. The sample consisted of 211 members of Generation Y.

**Findings** – It has been verified that the only significant dimension for Generation Y is sacrifice.

**Research limitations/implications** – It is necessary to extend the study of the dimensions of job embeddedness and their influence on employees' intention to quit in different demographic groups. It would be advisable to conduct longitudinal studies to observe the dynamics of job embeddedness throughout the years.

**Practical implications** – Organizations concerned with retaining the talent of young professionals can focus on the development of policies and benefits that encourage sacrifice.

**Social implications** – The finding that the sacrifice dimension is the one that would reduce the intention to leave for Generation Y will help to ensure that organizations retain the workforce that they value.

**Originality/value** – The study is important to gain a better understanding of Generation Y behavior. In addition, in response to the demand from the literature, the sample considered only Generation Y with work experience.

**Keywords** Job embeddedness, Intention to quit, Generation Y, Retention

**Paper type** Research paper

## Introduction

Retaining employees has become a major challenge today (Dhanpat *et al.*, 2018). According to the Society for Human Resource Management, retention has remained at the top of the list of management challenges for five years (Society for Human Resource Management, 2018). In this context, specialists have encouraged organizations to maintain their productivity, quality, profitability and competitive advantage by ensuring the retention of their employees (Redondo *et al.*, 2019).

It has been observed that Generation Y is keen on acquiring new knowledge and upgrade existing skills (Kultalahti and Viitala, 2015). This helps them to gain a sustained competitive advantage in the job market and seek new opportunities (Ode and Ayavoo, 2020; Al-Omouh *et al.*, 2020). It is estimated that one-third of Generation Y is looking for new jobs (Naim and Lenka, 2018). Such trends appear to indicate that the members of this generation are more likely to change jobs due to which retaining talent has become a major challenge for organizations.

Young individuals belonging to the age cohort of 1982–1999, known as Generation Y or millennials, comprise a significant proportion of the workforce in the contemporary job arena.

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As stated by [Joshi \*et al.\* \(2010\)](#), generations are usually conceptualized according to age. This is observed in the case of baby boomers, Generation X and Generation Y. This classification assumes that growing up in a certain period of time affects the values and attitudes of the individuals who were born during that period. It should be noted that the years pertaining to the start and end of each generation vary according to the academic source ([Myers and Sadaghiani, 2010](#); [Twenge, 2010](#); [De Hauw and De Vos, 2010](#); [Levenson, 2010](#)).

Studying different generation groups in the workplace creates the opportunities to design policies that can effectively manage generational differences in the work environment ([Joshi \*et al.\*, 2010](#)).

According to [Twenge \(2010\)](#), although the stereotypes of different generations are regularly discussed, the differences between them have not been empirically verified. [Hershatler and Epstein \(2010\)](#), [Myers and Sadaghiani \(2010\)](#), [Kowske \*et al.\* \(2010\)](#) and [Cennamo and Gardner \(2008\)](#) have also commented on this topic. Some of the unverified differences attributed to Generation Y are an altruistic spirit and the value of free time ([Twenge, 2010](#)). In the opinion of [Myers and Sadaghiani \(2010\)](#), speculations attribute positive and negative characteristics to young professionals. Attraction toward diverse environments, advanced communication skills, knowledge of information technologies and being comfortable with teamwork are among the positive characteristics. The negative characteristics include impatience, disloyalty and vanity.

According to [Valenti \(2014\)](#), Generation Y seeks meaningful work and opportunities to advance in an organization. However, he points out that economic rewards are equally important to this generation, which is contrary to what is usually indicated ([García \*et al.\*, 2019](#)).

Generation Y is educated, speaks different languages and manages new technologies. At work, they manage multicultural environments, cooperate and work as a team and seek close contact and feedback from their superiors ([Gong \*et al.\*, 2018](#); [Robak, 2017](#)).

This study focuses on the individuals born between 1982 and 1999, who are commonly classified as millennials or Generation Y ([Twenge \*et al.\*, 2010](#)). The professional world has a keen interest in this generation ([De Hauw and De Vos, 2010](#)); this is because of the presence of possible conflicts among the different generations that interact within the same organization. Managers must deal with generational differences that can cause conflicts in terms of employee relationships and productivity ([Myers and Sadaghiani, 2010](#)). Similarly, there is a growing academic interest in examining how this generation influences contemporary work culture ([De Hauw and De Vos, 2010](#)). Accordingly, guiding and motivating this generation is considered as a challenge, opportunity and skill that must be learned ([Hershatler and Epstein, 2010](#)).

It would be possible to analyze varied business management topics focusing on the peculiarities of Generation Y; however, in this study, we focus on analyzing the relationship between young individuals' job embeddedness and their intention to quit the job, which is turnover. Turnover creates serious organizational problems. When an employee quits, the organization's investment in the employee's training is lost. Similarly, when the turnover is high, the morale of the employees who continue to work in the organization is also negatively affected ([Ertas, 2015](#)).

The turnover analysis of Generation Y shows important contradictions in the literature. On the one hand, some studies report a weaker intention to quit or varied results ([Twenge, 2010](#)). On the other hand, it is argued that the intention to quit is higher among young individuals if their expectations are not met ([Cennamo and Gardner, 2008](#); [Hershatler and Epstein, 2010](#)). Moreover, one of the causes of premature turnover is attributed to the feeling of boredom that employees experience in the workplace ([Myers and Sadaghiani, 2010](#)).

It is estimated that, by 2025, three-quarters of the global workforce may comprise Generation Y ([Catalyst, 2019](#)). In the USA, it already represents more than one-third of the

workers (Fry, 2018). Further, according to Phutura Ejecutivo, 25% of Generation Y changed jobs in the last four years (*El Comercio, Aptitus* 9 April 2017, p. 1); this is a worrisome figure. Therefore, it is in the companies' interest to understand the work expectations of this generation, such that they can achieve employee retention (Hershatter and Epstein, 2010; D'Amato and Herzfeldt, 2008; Deal *et al.*, 2010).

The current studies on turnover are analyzing the reasons behind employees' decision to continue working in a company as opposed to the traditional studies examining the reasons behind their quitting (Peltokorpi *et al.*, 2015).

The concept of job embeddedness has been developed to understand more about employee retention (Mitchell *et al.*, 2001; Ng and Feldman, 2007). This construct considers the reasons for staying in an organization. Its proposal is relatively new; hence, it is necessary to study its background (Allen and Rhoades, 2013; Yang *et al.*, 2011; Karatepe, 2013). It is important to study job embeddedness among young professionals because they are assumed to have little loyalty to the companies in which they work; this can contribute significantly toward understanding the need to retain them. In addition, it can provide insights into their intention to quit better than what can be understood from assessing job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Clinton *et al.*, 2012; Jiang *et al.*, 2012).

Ertas (2015) has conducted a study to analyze the motivations and intentions to resign in the case of millennials and employees belonging to older generations. Generation Y was found to be more likely to report the intention to quit than any other generation.

However, there exist contradictory results regarding young professionals' intentions to quit; hence, further analyses need to be conducted in this regard (Kowske *et al.*, 2010; Twenge, 2010). According to some studies, work occupies a less central place in the lives of young professionals; they prefer to work in positions that may not pay them well, but it allows them to achieve a work–life balance and gain satisfaction (Manuti *et al.*, 2018). Further analyses are needed to examine the work values of Generation Y and clearly understand the individual differences that can impact their behaviors in the workplace (Chan *et al.*, 2019). In this study, we address this challenge using job embeddedness as a predictor of employee turnover.

Additionally, existing literature finds that job embeddedness has been studied globally but without differentiating among the dimensions that it consists of (Tian *et al.*, 2016). It is necessary to develop a study on job embeddedness, considering that each of its dimensions is related to young professionals' intention to quit (Halvorsen *et al.*, 2015). Limited studies have analyzed the relationship between job embeddedness and turnover and have primarily focused on the USA market. Upon reviewing the literature, we could understand the need to study the impact of job embeddedness on countries other than the USA (Harris *et al.*, 2011; Nguyen, 2010; Peltokorpi, 2013). In particular, it is necessary for developing countries to be able to analyze whether there exist cultural differences between them and the developed countries, where job embeddedness has been studied more frequently, in order to better understand the behavior of job embeddedness (Karatepe, 2016; Khorakian *et al.*, 2018; To *et al.*, 2020). In this study, we analyze the Latin American country, Peru.

This study attempts to identify the means to achieve employee retention among Generation Y through the framework of job embeddedness, thus complementing the information that has been explored for regions other than Latin America. As Generation Y is an important part of the global workforce, identifying the ways to retain them in the workplace is of global interest.

Thus, the aims of this study are to (1) determine the relationship between the dimensions of job embeddedness and the intention to quit among young professionals in Peru and (2) identify the dimensions of job embeddedness that have the most significant impact on the intention to quit among young professionals.

To achieve these objectives, we propose a model that studies the dimensions of job embeddedness and the intention to leave the company in the context of Generation Y.

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To validate the model, a cross-sectional quantitative research is proposed using the technique of surveying the young residents of Lima, Peru with work experience.

## Theoretical framework

### *Job embeddedness*

Job embeddedness is an alternative proposal to explain voluntary turnover. Staff turnover is one of the most important issues for organizations (Batt and Colvin, 2011). The costs of turnover are high, particularly when they refer to technical, professional and managerial employees because their skills and knowledge are difficult to replace (Batt and Valcour, 2003). Allen *et al.* (2010) have pointed out that the cost of turnover can vary from 90 to 200% of the annual salary.

According to Hainess *et al.* (2010) and Allen *et al.* (2010), it is necessary to distinguish between voluntary and involuntary turnover, since their determinants are different; hence, not recognizing the difference can lead to errors. Voluntary turnover is initiated by employees, while involuntary turnover is initiated by the organization.

Most theories on turnover are based on the premise that individuals resign primarily due to dissatisfaction with work and the availability of new job offers (Lee *et al.*, 2004). According to these studies, focusing on dissatisfaction, poor commitment and work alternatives has been common in the study of voluntary turnover, but it has been only able to explain approximately 10% of the variance. Bergiel *et al.* (2009) have argued that in addition to job satisfaction and organizational commitment, other factors should be studied with regard to turnover. Accordingly, new approaches to the study of voluntary turnover are suggested. Mitchell *et al.* (2001) have focused more on analyzing why employees stay in a company through the construct of job embeddedness (Holtom *et al.*, 2008).

Mitchell *et al.* (2001) have put forward the concept of job embeddedness. Job embeddedness is a construct that considers employees to be connected to a social network. This network “traps” the employee at their job (Felps *et al.*, 2009). Therefore, job embeddedness is defined as the combined forces that prevent the employees from quitting their job (Yao *et al.*, 2004). This interconnection is explained via three dimensions.

*Links.* These are formal or informal connections between a person and their organization or individuals who are not a part of the organization (Mitchell *et al.*, 2001). Examples of links in an organization are colleagues and clients. Examples of non-work links are family and friends in the community (Adams *et al.*, 2010).

*Fit.* It represents the employee's perception of compatibility or comfort within the organization and its environment (Mitchell *et al.*, 2001). Adams *et al.* (2010) have explained that organizational fit refers to the compatibility associated with knowledge, required skills, work styles and organizational culture. Non-work or external fit refers to the compatibility associated with the values of the community or with the lifestyle offered by it.

*Sacrifice.* It represents the perceived costs of tangible and intangible benefits that employees lose if they quit an organization (Mitchell *et al.*, 2001). According to Adams *et al.* (2010), the internal factors of an organization that could be lost are status, prestige, payments and benefits. External factors may include community clubs, hobbies, a change of schools, among others.

Therefore, these three dimensions encompass both work and non-work aspects. This means that job embeddedness is considered to play a role both at work and outside of work. The former refers to the forces that keep an employee “tied” to their position and the latter considers the aspects of personal life and the community that keep them geographically stable (Ng and Feldman, 2010). It is necessary to mention that job embeddedness is a relatively new construct that is still under development (Zhang *et al.*, 2012).

The measurement of job embeddedness is one of the factors under discussion. There exist composite and global scales for measurement. The composite scales reflect the concept under study in detail when considering the three dimensions of work and non-work environments; they are characterized as being extensive (Clinton *et al.*, 2012). The global scale of job embeddedness is based on general and non-invasive questions that seek to measure how settled the employee is in their company (Crossley *et al.*, 2007). However, this scale has received criticism for not dealing with non-work environments explicitly. By focusing only on the scope of the organization, it excludes the non-work aspects, such as the recreational activities in which they engage or their relationship with friends, which “trap” the employee.

Bergiel *et al.* (2009) and Felps *et al.* (2009) have presented job embeddedness as a predictor of intention to quit and voluntary turnover. However, the impact of the perceptions of organizational human resource practices on job embeddedness (especially those that show consideration toward employees) has not yet been studied. It would be expected that when human resources show appreciation to their employees, care about them and invest in them, the employees, in turn, exhibit a greater embeddedness in the organization.

Ng and Feldman (2010) have mentioned that previous studies have, in general, found empirical evidence on the relationship between strong job embeddedness and low voluntary turnover. However, Tanova and Holtom (2008) have compared traditional models to predict high turnover in the presence of job embeddedness. They verified that job embeddedness influence turnover and called for the need to promote the attributes that encourage embeddedness in employees if their retention is desired. Table 1 lists the studies that have linked job embeddedness to voluntary turnover. The articles mentioned in Table 1 are not the only ones that link both constructs, but they have been adopted from prestigious journals, mostly classified as Quartile 1 in their specialties. However, the intention of this table is to show how the relationship between job embeddedness and voluntary turnover has been studied over the years.

| Authors                         | Main findings                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Mitchell <i>et al.</i> (2001)   | Being settled in an organization and a community is associated with the reduction in quitting and actual turnover                                                                                                          |
| Lee <i>et al.</i> (2004)        | They separately analyzed job embeddedness of the work and non-work environments. Non-work embeddedness was a predictor of turnover and absenteeism                                                                         |
| Crossley <i>et al.</i> (2007)   | Job embeddedness (measured on a global scale) predicted the intention of individual turnover and voluntary turnover                                                                                                        |
| Mallol <i>et al.</i> (2007)     | They emphasize the importance of job embeddedness as a predictor of turnover and as a guide for retention policies                                                                                                         |
| Tanova and Holtom (2008)        | Job embeddedness significantly predicts voluntary turnover                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Clinton <i>et al.</i> (2012)    | Job embeddedness within the organization and non-work embeddedness showed a negative relationship with intention to quit. Job embeddedness explained the intention to quit over organizational satisfaction and commitment |
| Karatepe (2013)                 | Employees with strong job embeddedness show lower levels of individual turnover                                                                                                                                            |
| Peltokorpi <i>et al.</i> (2015) | Job embeddedness predicts intention to leave the company and voluntary turnover                                                                                                                                            |
| Coetzer <i>et al.</i> (2017)    | Job embeddedness predicts intentions to leave the company in large companies and not in small companies                                                                                                                    |
| Dechawatanapaisal (2018)        | Workers with less job embeddedness are more likely to indicate intention to leave the company                                                                                                                              |
| Hussain and Deery (2018)        | Job embeddedness has an impact on expatriates' intentions to leave the company                                                                                                                                             |

**Source(s):** Compiled by the author

**Table 1.**  
Studies that link job embeddedness and voluntary turnover

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Job embeddedness suggests that the environment that surrounds an individual and the factors that they perceive significantly explain the degree to which they are embedded in a job, which determines employee retention (Lyu and Zhu, 2019).

### *Intention to quit*

Employees' intention to leave their company could lead to a real turnover (Haque *et al.*, 2019; Rombaut and Guerry, 2018; Yalabik *et al.*, 2017). Abugre (2017) has also considered that employees' intention to leave their company is the closest antecedent to an actual turnover because it reflects what the employee thinks about their organization and suggests an evaluation of future employment possibilities.

According to Firth *et al.* (2004), intentions are the immediate determinants of real behavior. Ng and Butts (2009) have pointed out that both turnover and employees' intention to quit are closely related. They mention studies in which the relation is 0.45 and 0.50.

In addition to distinguishing between voluntary and involuntary turnover, Allen *et al.* (2010) have recommended distinguishing between dysfunctional and functional turnover. Dysfunctional turnover negatively affects an organization because it implies the departure of staff whose abilities are difficult to replace.

Several factors have been studied as the antecedents of the intention to quit. As it has been pointed out by Ahuja *et al.* (2007), lack of organizational commitment is a strong predictor of intention to quit, role conflict, work overload and stress increase turnover (Allen *et al.*, 2010). Hausknecht *et al.* (2009) have considered that the factors that explain why people choose to stay in a company are job satisfaction, extrinsic rewards, emotional ties in the organization, organizational commitment, organizational prestige, lack of alternatives, years of work in the company, advancement opportunities, location, good treatment, flexible work and personal influences. The factors associated with the intention to quit are work stress and sources of stress (Firth *et al.*, 2004).

In the last decade, there has been an increasing trend among studies analyzing stress to have both harmful and favorable effects on turnover. The sources of stress mentioned in the previous section increase turnover intention. However, challenging sources of stress can result in fewer turnovers (Holtom *et al.*, 2008). Another trend mentioned by Holtom *et al.* (2008) is to differentiate between the approach of "to stay" in or "to quit" a company, the latter being the traditional approach in research.

Lavoie-Tremblay *et al.* (2010) argue that the intention to quit should be studied for each generation in the workforce. In this way, the necessary strategies to retain these employees can be formulated.

The intention to quit does not necessarily imply that a turnover takes effect, but research on this topic considers that intention and actual behavior are highly correlated. As stated by Nelissen *et al.* (2017), the intention to quit has proven to be the strongest predictor of actual turnover. Ertas (2015) has pointed out that several studies on turnover have examined the effect of human resource practices on the probability of quitting.

### **Hypothesis**

Social exchange theory helps to explain the relationship between an employee and an organization (Eldor and Vigoda-Gadot, 2016; Adeoti *et al.*, 2020). The authors cite Coyle-Shapiro and Shore (2007) to identify three fundamental aspects of social exchange: relationship, reciprocity and exchange. Relationships start when one of the parties grants a benefit to the other; consequently, the beneficiary can show reciprocity and a series of exchanges can occur, thus creating a sense of commitment between them (Coyle-Shapiro and Shore, 2007).

In the previous section, we presented the dimensions of job embeddedness: links, fit and sacrifice. These dimensions have seldom been studied independently, although they can help

organizations facilitate the strengthening of job embeddedness (Halvorsen *et al.*, 2015). This study examines the three dimensions independently.

Links connect employees in social, psychological and financial networks. The more the links in the network, the stronger the relationship with the organization (Mitchell *et al.*, 2001; Tanova and Holtom, 2008). The more the interactions, the more the benefits that can be obtained (Ghahtarani *et al.*, 2020). Members of Generation Y are used to interact with the members of the groups to which they belong. It is their natural way of socializing, which they also do via technology (Lub *et al.*, 2016); hence, it would be expected that although this dimension contributes to decreasing their intention to quit, it is not the determining factor.

Fit alludes to the sense of comfort generated by the compatibility between future plans, values and goals of the employee and of the organization. If an employee does not “fit” properly, voluntary turnover occurs (Mitchell *et al.*, 2001; Tanova and Holtom, 2008). Some aspects that are considered in the fit dimension are clarity and support in career development opportunities and the provision of training to achieve future goals (Holtom *et al.*, 2006). These aspects are valued by Generation Y (De Hauw and De Vos, 2010).

Sacrifice refers to the perceived cost of benefits that would be lost when an employee changes job. If an employee believes that they have more to lose, it will be harder for them to cut their link with the organization (Mitchell *et al.*, 2001; Tanova and Holtom, 2008). When employees feel that their company values the complexity of their lives and tries to offer options that contribute to a work–life balance, they tend to be more productive and stay in their organizations for a longer time (Holtom *et al.*, 2006). These studies propose that a good salary, the ability to design the workspace and support of work–life balance initiatives, among others, are considered in the dimension of sacrifice. These are attractive benefits for Generation Y (Lub *et al.*, 2016).

Further, Clinton *et al.* (2012) pointed out that a negative relationship could be expected among the dimensions of job embeddedness and employees’ intention to quit. In this sense, Peltokorpi *et al.* (2015) have mentioned that the stronger the job embeddedness, the less likely the employees are to quit their organization.

Therefore, the hypothesis is proposed as follows:

- H1. Each dimension of job embeddedness (links, fit and sacrifice) has a negative relationship with the intention to quit among Generation Y employees.

## Method

The aim of this research is to determine the relationship between the dimensions of job embeddedness and young professionals’ intention to quit. A quantitative correlational study was conducted considering the cross-sectional dimension of time. The survey technique was conducted through a certified online panel. Self-administered questionnaires were given to the working professionals belonging to Generation Y.

A company dedicated to market research was hired to conduct the surveys on the members of a certified panel. These members were part of a group of previously selected people who share the main characteristics and socio-demographic traits of the universe studied and who, on a voluntary basis, collaborate periodically by answering questionnaires. The process included the identification and validation of the socio-demographic traits and the main characteristics of the sample.

The survey was conducted online; therefore, to collect the information, a request for collaboration was sent to the emails of the panel members. In this email, the panel members found a link that redirected them to the questionnaire using the responsive technique (adaptive design), which is a web design technique that seeks the correct visualization of the same page in different devices such as desktops, tablets and mobiles.

The characteristics of the sample are shown in Table 2.

| Issue                     | Description                                                             |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Questionnaire             | Virtual                                                                 |
| Location                  | Lima, Peru                                                              |
| Responses                 | 211                                                                     |
| Effective response rate   | 21%                                                                     |
| Sampling error            | ±6.75%                                                                  |
| <i>Sample composition</i> |                                                                         |
| Age                       | 25–35                                                                   |
| Sex                       | 55% men and 45% women                                                   |
| Marital status            | 52% married, 46% single and 2% divorced                                 |
| Children                  | 59% have children                                                       |
| Work experience           | 3 or more years                                                         |
| Work position             | 55% entry level, 39% middle management and 6% upper management position |
| Background                | University graduates                                                    |
| Company size              | Medium and large                                                        |
| Sector of the economy     | Business, industrial, communications, educational, financial and health |

**Source(s):** Compiled by the author

**Table 2.**  
Sampling information

### Measurement

The questionnaire was translated from English into Spanish and included 60 questions since the fieldwork covered the gathering of information for 5 constructs. Two of these were the subjects of this research.

#### *Variable: job embeddedness*

Job embeddedness is a construct developed to explain why people stay at work. It was originally defined as consisting of three dimensions: links, fit and sacrifice (Mitchell *et al.*, 2001). In order to measure job embeddedness, the scale developed by Holtom *et al.* in 2006 was used, which was obtained from Felps *et al.* (2009).

This scale was chosen because (1) it represents the three dimensions of the job embeddedness construct (links, fit and sacrifice); (2) it is presented as a short scale with theoretical foundations, countering the criticisms of the global scale proposed by Crossley *et al.* (2007) and (3) it shows a moderate extension compared to the 48 items proposed in the original scale. An example of an item is “At work, I frequently interact with my work group.” We used a Likert scale of five points ranging from 5 (totally agree) to 1 (totally disagree). Given the characteristics of the working environment of the city of Lima, we decided to work only with the questions that are related to the workplace. The Cronbach’s alpha for the link dimension was 0.78, for the fit dimension was 0.81 and for the sacrifice dimension was 0.78.

#### *Variable: intention to quit*

The scale developed by Mitchell *et al.* (2001) was used in this study and it consisted of three items. An example of an item is “I intend to quit this organization in the next 12 months.” Cronbach’s alpha for the scale was 0.92. A Likert scale of five points was used, ranging from 5 (totally agree) to 1 (totally disagree).

## Results

Multiple regression analysis was used to assess the findings. This statistical procedure seeks to establish a direct or inverse relationship between two or more variables. It has the advantage that it allows the researcher to predict the behavior of a variable at a certain point or moment. The analysis was performed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software.



First, it was important to define the constructs considered in the analysis as formative or reflective. Following the recommendations of [Felps et al. \(2009\)](#), the indices were considered to be formative constructs.

The first step was to convert the variables of links, fit and sacrifice into a continuous numerical scale since the type of Likert measurement scale used in the questionnaires was ordinal. A categorical principal component analysis was performed to conduct a confirmatory factor analysis. The results showed three dimensions as per our expectations.

The indices of fit, links, sacrifice and intention to quit were evaluated, evidencing reliability and validity in all the four cases. Cronbach's alpha, as mentioned previously, showed reliability. Validity indicates whether an instrument actually measures what it claims to measure. The aspects necessary to achieve validity were considered in the design of the instrument.

Second, a multiple linear regression analysis was conducted. The control variables considered were the employee's gender, number of children, position and their number of years in the company. Control variables with more than two categories were entered into the model as dummy variables.

Following the regression analysis, further analyses were carried out to verify the corresponding assumptions. The Durbin–Watson test was performed to evaluate the presence of autocorrelation. The Durbin–Watson statistic was 1.937 for this model. Therefore, there exists statistical evidence to affirm that there was no autocorrelation in the model, and this assumption was fulfilled. Similarly, the homoscedasticity assumption was fulfilled, errors were distributed normally and there was no multicollinearity. The variance inflation factor was less than 10 as expected.

The summary of the regression analysis is shown in [Table 3](#).

The  $R^2$  of the model is 0.28; this means that the intention to quit is explained in approximately 28% by the explanatory variables. As evidenced by these results, we can say that the sacrifice index is significant at a confidence level of 99%, that is, there is a negative effect on intention to quit. In this sense, as sacrifice increases by one unit, keeping the other variables constant, the index of the intention to quit the company decreases by 0.370 units on an average.

Since only the sacrifice dimension is significant, [Hypothesis 1](#) cannot be validated. It is not possible to conclude on the relationship between links and fit with the intention to quit.

| Independent variables                                 | Dependent variable intention to quit variable |          |
|-------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|----------|
|                                                       | $\beta$                                       | $t$      |
| Fit                                                   | -0.123                                        | -1.583   |
| Sacrifice                                             | -0.370                                        | -4.406** |
| Links                                                 | -0.072                                        | -1.060   |
| Female gender                                         | 0.105                                         | 1.707*   |
| Not having children                                   | 0.096                                         | 1.576    |
| Position: Middle management                           | -0.057                                        | -0.928   |
| Position: Upper management                            | 0.065                                         | 1.063    |
| Number of years in the company: Less than one year    | -0.103                                        | -1.551   |
| Number of years in the company: More than three years | -0.082                                        | -1.217   |
| $R^2$                                                 | 0.311                                         |          |
| Adjusted $R^2$                                        | 0.280                                         |          |

**Table 3.**  
Summary of the  
regression analysis

**Note(s):** \*  $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*  $p < 0.001$

**Source(s):** Compiled by the author

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## Discussion

It has been verified that only the dimension of sacrifice is negatively related to intention to quit. This means that the dimension of sacrifice contributes toward decreasing employees' intention to quit. The results coincide with the reviewed literature in terms of the relationship between the dimensions of job embeddedness and intention to quit (Clinton *et al.*, 2012; Karatepe, 2013; Dechawatanapaisal, 2018).

The dimensions of job embeddedness have rarely been studied separately. It is interesting to note that in this study the only significant dimension for Generation Y is sacrifice. The sacrifice dimension is more directly linked to material, psychological benefits or conditions that the organization offers (Mitchell *et al.*, 2001). Sacrifice represents the benefits that an individual would lose if they quit their job. It could be highly costly for an individual to sacrifice the accumulated benefits (Khorakian *et al.*, 2018).

As mentioned earlier, Generation Y values meaningful work and opportunities to grow within the organization (Valenti, 2014). They also seem to value the economic aspect (García *et al.*, 2019). The results show that the sacrifice dimension influences their intention to resign; therefore, the monetary and non-monetary benefits observed should be taken into account to achieve the job permanence of these young professionals for a longer time.

The links dimension was not significant. One of the reasons for this could be that for this generation, links represent a common way of interacting or working, that is, working in a team and interacting with coworkers can be considered as natural for them. In the same sense, they can relate to their peers through social networks such that they do not need to be in the workplace to socialize. Gong *et al.* (2018) and Garcia *et al.* (2019) consider that Generation Y interacts very well with coworkers and socializes naturally. Their technological skills allow Generation Y to establish relationships with different groups without being physically present (Lub *et al.*, 2016). These characteristics help explaining why links can be maintained without staying at work.

Similarly, the fit dimension was not significant. Fit represents the compatibility of an individual with their work. Compatibility is determined by factors such as organizational culture or the required skills. The members of Generation Y could pay less attention to this factor when considering what they need for a working development is to gain experience and knowledge, even if they do not feel completely compatible with the organization initially. According to Gong *et al.* (2018) and Robak (2017), Generation Y values close contact with their supervisors and feedback at work. At the beginning of the working life, finding the ideal organization remains a secondary preference while learning is prioritized.

The dimension of sacrifice mostly pertains to material and psychological benefits or conditions that the organization offers. Therefore, it may be valued more when considering resignation. Sacrifice entails losses that come with resignation. For Generation Y, losing participation in major projects or a good income could be relevant if not all companies can offer the same benefits.

## Conclusions, limitations and future research

This study contributes to both academics and practitioners. Regarding the theoretical implications, each dimension of job embeddedness has been studied separately along with their relation to the intention to quit among Generation Y. This allows us to know job embeddedness in greater detail, as suggested by Halvorsen *et al.* (2015). This study shows that not all dimensions of job embeddedness behave in the same way, which is why the idea of studying each dimension of job embeddedness is reinforced and why global measurements in which the behavior of each dimension cannot be distinguished are not used.

By studying the dimensions independently, it has been found that the dimension of sacrifice is relevant with regard to intention to quit among young professionals. The more

resources the employee perceives that they will lose if they change jobs, the less attractive the job change options will appear (Zhang *et al.*, 2019).

Similarly, a sample of Generation Y from a Latin American country has also responded to the research gap found in the literature on the relationship between job embeddedness and intention to quit in countries other than the USA (Coetzer *et al.*, 2018; Ghosh and Gurunathan, 2015; Peltokorpi *et al.*, 2015). The labor reality of Peru in terms of the benefits that organizations can offer differs from those offered by USA companies. The study of Generation Y in the workplace is a recurring request in the literature to avoid references to stereotypes (Naim and Lenka, 2018; Robak, 2017). For this reason, it is especially important that the sample under study has work experience, precisely to know the impression about work values people develop in the work environment based on their experience rather than speculations about work. The sample used in this study only included Generation Y members with work experience, in contrast to the majority of studies that include students without work experience.

Regarding the practical implications of this study, organizations concerned with retaining the talent of young professionals can focus on the development of policies and benefits that encourage sacrifice and offer adequate resources (Agusti-Perez *et al.*, 2020). Holtom *et al.* (2006) propose that in the sacrifice dimension, a good salary, the ability to design the workplace and support for work–life balance initiatives, among others, are considered. For Generation Y, these benefits would be appealing (Lub *et al.*, 2016).

Options for development as well as employee benefits must be competitive so that employees perceive that the cost of leaving one company for another is high. In this sense, there are various options, such as a good salary, benefits designed according to employees' needs and allowing freedom in job design and in the performance of day-to-day activities.

A limitation of this study was the length of the questionnaire used. It would have been better to work with a less extensive questionnaire in order to better hold the respondents' attention.

Regarding future research, it is necessary to deepen the study of the dimensions of job embeddedness and their influence on the intention to quit in different demographic groups. It is also advisable to delve deeper into the study of the benefits valued by Generation Y. Thus, decisions can be made to retain these young professionals. However, it would be advisable to conduct longitudinal studies to observe the dynamics of job embeddedness throughout the years.

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