



## **10 Multi-level factors influencing job embeddedness among migrant employees: A systematic literature review**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Job embeddedness has demonstrated impressive power in predicting various work outcomes of migrant employees such as retention, performance, and knowledge sharing. However, the means by which migrant employees become embedded in the host country remains under-researched. In this chapter, we conduct a systematic literature review using 42 empirical studies, thereby revealing the factors contributing to job embeddedness of working migrants at the situational, individual, organizational, and institutional levels. These insights aid employers in receiving countries to facilitate their migrant workers' job embeddedness in a more effective way, hence optimizing the deployment of this talent group.

### **INTRODUCTION**

According to the United Nations, the number of international migrants has increased by 2.5 percent annually since 2015 (United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, 2019). In 2020, there were 281 million international migrants worldwide, of whom 73% were of working age (United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, 2020). Some regions and industries have been highly dependent on foreign workers to sustain their economy and businesses (Guellec & Cervantes, 2002; ILO, 2018). For instance, migrants made up to 40.8% of the total labour force in Arab States and 20.6% of the total number of workers in Northern America (ILO, 2018). Thirty-five percent of the labour force in IT, communication, and financial sectors in Australia and Canada were foreigners (OECD, 2020). Organizations operating in the above mentioned countries and sectors thus would benefit from an effective tool to manage and optimize their foreign workers' capacity, performance, and retention in order to sustain and grow their businesses.

Job embeddedness is a powerful construct that can explain various work outcomes of working migrants. Mitchell et al. (2001) originally developed job embeddedness theory to explain the forces keeping employees in their jobs rather than promoting their turnover. In line with their theory, research proves that job embeddedness has consistently predicted employee retention in both domestic (Jiang et al., 2012) and international mobility contexts (Meuer et al., 2019; Ren et al., 2014; Tharenou & Caulfield, 2010; Yunlu et al., 2018). The impact of job embeddedness, however, has gone far beyond employee retention. For instance, job embeddedness has been shown to significantly promote innovative

behaviours (Ng & Feldman, 2010), organizational citizenship behaviours (OCBs) (Lee et al., 2004), and task and contextual performance (Lee et al., 2004; Lev & Koslowsky, 2012) among domestic employees. Similarly, it influences job performance, OCBs (Andresen, 2015), knowledge sharing (Froese et al., 2018; Stoermer et al., 2020), knowledge acquisition (Reiche et al., 2011; Yin & Bao, 2006), and the career prospects (Reiche et al., 2011) of internationally mobile workers. These results illustrate the impressive potential of job embeddedness to predict a wide range behaviours and outcomes among internationally mobile employees.

While outcomes of job embeddedness have been validated in migration contexts, there is far less systematic evidence of the factors contributing to migrant workers' enmeshment. Migrants arguably undergo different embedding processes from that of the domestic population. Specifically, the natives' embeddedness in the country of residence occurs in a more natural way thanks to their being rooted in the society, having established networks and being familiar with local culture (Pawlak & Goździak, 2020). Migrant employees, on the contrary, move across borders (Andresen et al., 2014) and confront profound and distinct barriers in their embedding process. They include, for instance, the cultural novelty and distance between home and host nation (Ren et al., 2014), host country language deficiency (Ren et al., 2014), immigration policies (Humphries et al., 2009), and discrimination (Brunton et al., 2018). Migrants' enmeshment further requires extra effort compared to that of the natives (Pawlak & Goździak, 2020; Ryan & Mulholland, 2014b), and has been linked to cultural intelligence (Stoermer et al., 2020). Hence, current literature suggests that the interplay of multiple levels (e.g., national, societal, organizational, and individual) could also impact migrants' embeddedness abroad (cf. Al Ariss & Crowley-Henry, 2013). However, until now we have not had an overview of these multi-level factors. Thus, we lack a comprehensive view on migrants' enmeshment in the host country.

The lack of a systematic overview stems from two research gaps that currently exist in the literature. First, insights into factors contributing to job embeddedness abroad are scattered across disciplines. Management research primarily focuses on elements associated with the working environment (cf. Linder, 2016) while omitting factors related to private life. Social sciences, by contrast, view embeddedness from the socioeconomic perspective, thus they primarily explain the role of various factors existing outside the work environment (cf. Ryan & Mulholland, 2014a). In short, a lack of interdisciplinary research obstructs a holistic view of job embeddedness in the international mobility context.

The second gap can be found in the literature focusing on migrants' *levels* of embeddedness that generally overlooks the *ways* migrants become embedded abroad. Research emphasizes the importance of investigating the ways in which

job embeddedness forms. For instance, literature reviews propose that mere embeddedness levels are not sufficient to predict associated outcomes (Feldman et al., 2012; Holtom & Darabi, 2018; Zhang et al., 2012). Especially in the mobility context, employees show an ability to adopt various ways of immersing themselves in the host country and maintaining their enmeshment (Agha-Alikhani, 2016; Halvorsen et al., 2015). For instance, characters of the network – instead of mere size – seem to be different between migrants who are sent to work abroad by their employers (i.e., assigned migrants) and those who initiate their relocation themselves (i.e. self-initiated migrants) (Agha-Alikhani, 2016; Shen & Kram, 2011). In other words, migrants who have the same level of embeddedness (e.g., number of links) might undertake distinctive embedding ways (e.g., characters of these links) to reach that level. This distinction appears to matter for various behaviours and outcomes. For instance, the ethnicity of the connections – representing the quality rather than quantity of the links – was shown to impact career satisfaction and retention of foreign employees (Cao et al., 2014). Thus, it is important to investigate not only embeddedness levels, but also the ways in which migrant employees become embedded abroad.

To summarize, current research gaps include a lack of an overview that reveals multi-level factors involved in the embedding process of migrant employees and a focus on the mere embeddedness levels while overlooking the factors leading to that state (i.e., the embedding ways). This systematic literature review (SLR) aims to fill these current research gaps. We ask the following research question: “Which factors contribute to the embeddedness of migrant employees in the host country?” And we follow a three-step method to identify these factors. First, we provide the theoretical background of “job embeddedness” and “international migrant employees” concepts. Second, we systematically review relevant literature by putting these two terms together and synthesizing the results to construct a comprehensive framework. Lastly, we discuss the findings by both outlining research gaps and providing several implications for theory, research, and practices.

Thereby, the contribution of our SLR is threefold. First, we contribute an overview of factors involved in the embedding process of migrant employees. These factors are categorized into four levels: situational, individual, organizational, and institutional. This overview identifies various ways in which job embeddedness takes place and evolves in the international migration contexts. These findings improve our overall knowledge about migrant workers’ embeddedness, hence providing a groundwork to adapt job embeddedness measurement in the international migration context. Second, we discuss uncertainty and under-researched topics remaining in the literature and outline directions for future research. Lastly, based on knowledge about factors contributing to migrants’ job

embeddedness abroad, we derive several practical recommendations for organizations and practitioners to optimize the embeddedness of their foreign employees. The interdisciplinary insights are particularly beneficial for efficiency of HRM practices specialized for migrant employees (Al Ariss & Sidani, 2016) as they reveal the impacts of both work and non-work factors that contemporary HRM practices might have omitted until now.

## **THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

### **International migrant employees**

International migrant employees relocate across national borders, change their dominant place of residence, and legally execute their employment abroad (Andresen et al., 2014). These employees are identified as working migrants in the social sciences (ILO, 1999; United Nations, 1990; Usher, 2004) and as expatriates in business and management literature (Andresen et al., 2014). We use both terms interchangeably. The group of migrant employees shows some diversity resulting from various features, such as the original motives for migration (e.g., career-related or personal), expatriation mode (e.g., self-initiated or employer-assigned), personal differences (e.g. culture, human capital level), and institutional characteristics (e.g. work and residence permits) (Al Ariss & Crowley-Henry, 2013; Andresen et al., 2018). On the individual level, the original motives for migration and personal differences have a likely impact on the ways migrants become embedded (Al Ariss & Crowley-Henry, 2013; Andresen et al., 2018). Situational factors include the cultural distance between home and host nations (Ren et al., 2014) while institutional factors can be residence, work permits (Al Ariss & Crowley-Henry, 2013) and immigrant policies (Stoermer et al., 2020). On the organizational level, assigned migrants are sponsored by their employers and usually receive attractive relocation packages (Dickmann et al., 2018). They typically obtain greater access to organizational resources (Jokinen et al., 2008) and depend strongly on their employers during relocation (Dickmann et al., 2018). By contrast, self-initiated migrants who relocate abroad without organizational support usually commence their employment in new localities without relocation packages and are typically more organizationally mobile than assignees (Biemann & Andresen, 2010). This diversity means that migrants' embedding processes in their host contexts may differ in terms of motivation, speed, and mechanisms depending on their multi-level features.

### **Job embeddedness**

Job embeddedness combines three dimensions and three domains. The three dimensions are links, fit, and sacrifice that apply in three domains including

organizational, community, and occupational, or career pathway (i.e. the professional environment existing in a specific location) (Mitchell et al., 2001; Ng & Feldman, 2007; Tharenou & Caulfield, 2010). Links describe social, psychological, and financial connections that employees possess in three domains such as family members, colleagues, friends, social associations, and properties. Fit captures employees' affinity with the characteristics of relevant domains. For instance, there can be compatibility between personal values and corporate cultures, between career capital and job demands or between individual preferences and host country weather, lifestyles, and leisure activities. Finally, sacrifice represents the tangible or intangible benefits that employees forfeit when leaving the embedded web. Benefits may be a secured neighbourhood, job prospects in a specific host nation, or pension plan offered by the employed companies. Job embeddedness exists in not only on-the-job (i.e. organizational, career pathway) but also off-the-job domains (i.e. community embeddedness) (Mitchell et al., 2001; Ng & Feldman, 2007; Tharenou & Caulfield, 2010).

Research on job embeddedness among domestic employees has systematically revealed various *ways* in which they immerse themselves into multiple domains in their country of residence (Feldman et al., 2012; Kiazad et al., 2015). For instance, Kiazad et al. (2015) pointed out multi-level factors contributing to the embeddedness of employees varying from high-performance work practices to community characteristics, to professional communities, as well as the presence of nearby extended family (Kiazad et al., 2015). Similarly, Feldman et al. (2012) revealed that the ways employees become embedded are associated with numerous individual factors, such as self-regulatory focus, proactive personality, career stage, and situational factors, for examples, like characteristics of the nuclear family. Similar research on migrant populations, however, is in the early stages. For instance, the embeddedness of migrant employees is influenced by peculiar factors stemming from the international relocation context, such as cultural distance and novelty, language proficiency, immigrant policies, and cultural intelligence (Ren et al., 2014; Stoermer et al., 2020). Other studies similarly explored various tactics that migrants employed to immerse themselves into a host community and organization (Halvorsen et al., 2015; Ren et al., 2014; Yunlu et al., 2018). The interaction and combination of a wide range of influencing factors forms the embeddedness of migrant workers.

## **METHODS**

### **Literature search**

Our SLR covers empirical studies on migrant employees' embeddedness. We defined four eligibility criteria. Firstly, both quantitative and qualitative research is eligible. Secondly, the respondents are all legal migrant workers or expatriates. Thirdly, the reported period of the studies ranges from 1980 to 2021. This starting point aligns with the turning point when the topic of employee migration began to be systematically studied (Adler, 1981). Lastly, the reporting language of all the studies is English. We included both published and unpublished sources such as academic journal articles, conference papers, theses, dissertations, as well as working papers (Booth et al., 2016).

Primary data was drawn from the EBSCOHost and Web of Science databases covering studies of migrants and expatriates within business, management, economics, sociology, political science, psychology, and the humanities.

Free-text searches were performed using keywords related to migrant, expatriate and embeddedness. The review concentrates on migrants legally performing dependent work in organizations in their host countries. Research focusing exclusively on illegal migrants, refugees, asylum seekers, or entrepreneurs was ruled out. This led to the following search terms: ((embedd\*) AND (migrant\* OR expatriat\*)) NOT TI (illegal migrant\* OR undocumented migrant\* OR refugee\* OR asylum seeker\* OR entrepreneur\*), yielding 1,157 studies.

We removed duplicate studies. Then, through title and abstract screening, we eliminated papers that were irrelevant to embeddedness, non-empirical, or based on samples that did not fit our research question (e.g., intra-national or rural-urban migrants). In the full-text screening of the 139 studies that remained, we excluded further studies that were non-empirical, irrelevant (i.e., host country job embeddedness was not an identifiable outcome or a correlated variable in the paper), and/or did not meet the sampling criteria. Moreover, studies that did not meet quality standards (due to unclear or inappropriate methods, procedures, data analysis, or research outcomes; see Dixon-Woods et al., 2007) as well as gray articles and conference papers for which full-text versions were unavailable were also excluded. This left us with 42 eligible papers.

### **Data description**

The literature database contains two gray studies (doctoral and master's theses), and 40 peer-reviewed articles published in academic journals. Twenty-one studies were qualitative, nineteen quantitative (of these seven longitudinal), and the remaining studies applied mixed methods using cross-sectional designs.

Two articles sampled low- to middle-skilled populations, three focused on the middle- to highly skilled, 24 looked solely at highly-skilled and three looked at low-skilled; the remainder either included mixed participants (8) or did not specify (2). In terms of expatriation mode, two studies concerned assignees, 20 sampled self-initiated migrants, 7 studied both, and the rest did not indicate.

### **Data synthesis**

We used framework synthesis with the aim of mapping out an extensive framework that would integrate a wide range of variables and their interactions. Starting from a predefined framework (JE), we developed and integrated additional topics inductively into this framework (Barnett-Page & Thomas, 2009). We applied this method for two reasons. Firstly, the included studies are highly heterogeneous in terms of their designs, settings, measurements, and ontologies, and this places limits on the use of quantitative deductive methods such as meta-analysis. Secondly, framework synthesis provides a structure for synthesizing results on the basis of a conceptual framework and allows us to explore related elements further when supportive evidence emerges.

## **RESULTS**

Evidence from reviewed literature demonstrated that the embeddedness of migrant workers establishes and evolves under the influences of various factors at different levels. We summarize these factors based on their levels (situational, individual, organizational, institutional) and impacted domains (organization, community, career) as in Figure 4. We illustrate four levels as four round bubbles where factors at each level are placed inside. Then, factors influencing each community, organization, and career embeddedness are positioned within the respective domains in Figure 4 (square bubbles). Some factors were shown to affect migrants' embeddedness in multiple domains, hence appearing in overlapping areas. In the following sections, we elaborate in more detail about these findings.

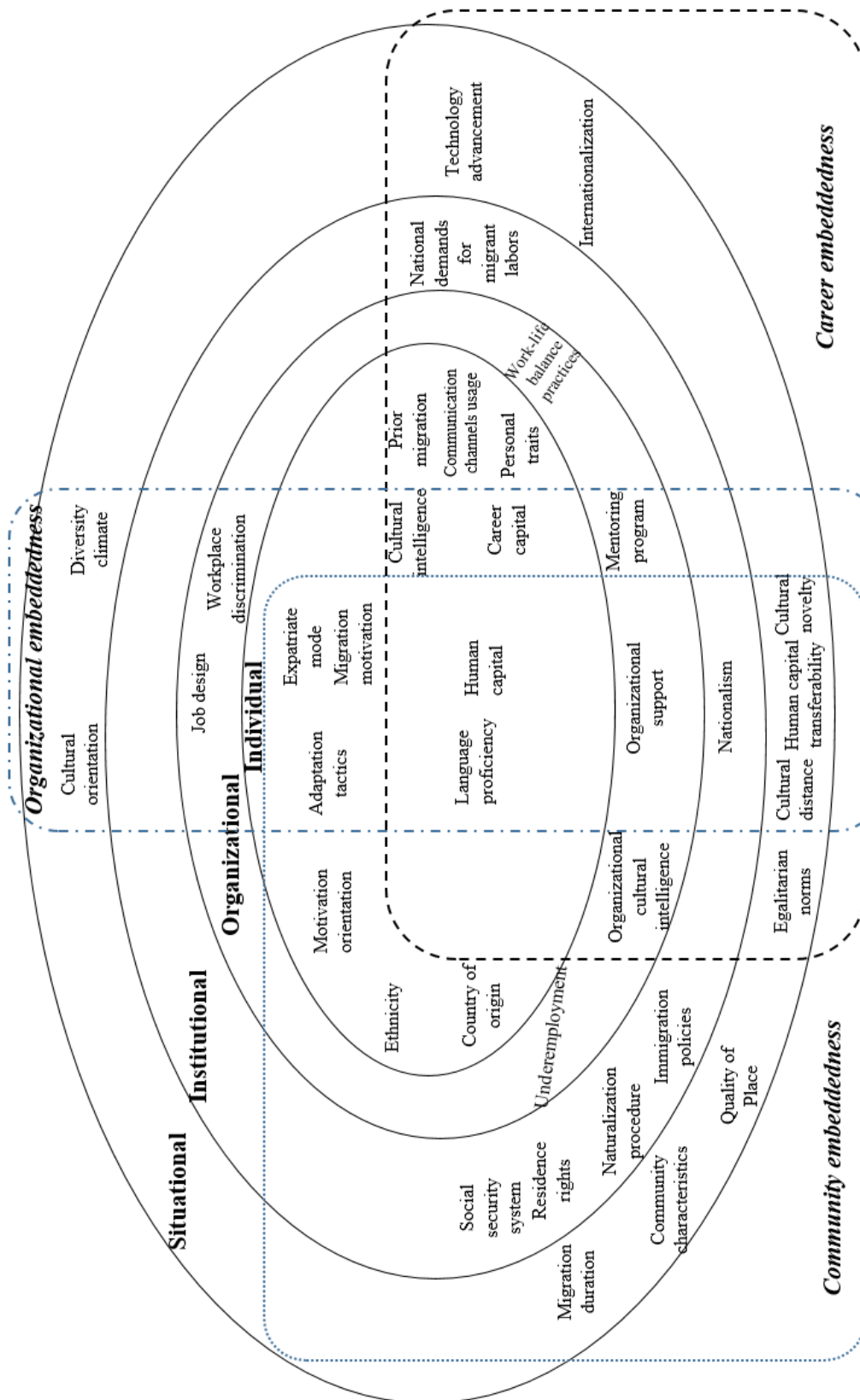


Figure 4: Multi-level factors influencing job embeddedness in the international migration context.

Note: factors are placed in the domains where they influence the embeddedness. Factors influencing multiple domains are placed in the overlapping areas between these domains.



## Factors contributing to host organizational embeddedness

### *Situational factors*

Migrant workers relocate across borders, thereby they typically confront cross-cultural barriers such as *cultural novelty* and *cultural distance*. Whereas the former concept refers to the perceived similarities and differences between home and host country in daily life customs and generic features, the latter captures the differences in cultural value dimensions (Ren et al., 2014). These factors appeared as significant impediments to migrants' immersion into host organizations because they hampered migrants' perceived compatibility with values and behavioural patterns in the workplace as well as their relationships with native colleagues (Brunton & Cook, 2018; Ren et al., 2014). At the same time, uncertainty stemming from cultural distance and cultural novelty deterred foreign workers from proactively establishing their organizational enmeshment (Ren et al., 2014). It seemed that host country *cultural orientation* similarly played a role in the embedding process of working migrants. For instance, Stoermer et al. (2020) figured out that cultural intelligence was especially beneficial for migrants' organizational embeddedness when they stayed in a host country with high in-group collectivism. High in-group collectivism is characterized by the loyalty, pride, and cohesiveness of the in-group members (House et al., 2004). This focus on the in-group thus aggravates the discrimination against employed migrants as 'the others' (Stoermer et al., 2020). In this discriminatory circumstance, cultural intelligence becomes notably necessary for migrants to immerse themselves into their workplace. This is because cultural intelligence equips foreign workers with awareness about the role of cultural influences; knowledge about host country cultural norms, values, and behavioural patterns; as well as aiding them to act accordingly in order to fit in with the working local environment (Stoermer et al., 2020).

Aside from cultural elements, the *diversity climate* of the host community – manifesting in appreciation of personal uniqueness and differences in terms of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, cultural background, etc. – tended to impact migrants' relationships at work (organizational links) (Chen, 2012). A positive diverse climate at the host community possibly facilitates migrant employees' connections at work in two ways. First, it affords migrant workers with a sense of security, inclusion, and equity; thereby encouraging their relationship building behaviours and efficiency (see Ren et al., 2014; Yunlu et al., 2018). Second, it optimizes the positive perception of foreigners and reduces risks of discrimination in local community, thus paving the way for reciprocal relationships between migrant and native workers. Lastly, *transferability of human capital* such as qualifications and working experiences influences the perceived benefits (e.g., salary) and

fit between migrants' capital and their job levels. Some of the research, for example, pointed out that a lack of transferability between home and host country often induced the underpayment and underemployment of migrant workers, hence reduced their compatibility in the workplace and sacrifices that they would face in leaving their employers (Cederberg, 2017; Fernando & Patriotta, 2020; Humphries et al., 2009).

### *Individual factors*

Research demonstrates that there was a notable divergence between assigned and self-initiated migrants (i.e., *expatriation mode*) in terms of their organizational embeddedness. Assignees' networks predominantly encompassed intra-organizational colleagues while self-initiated migrant employees' connections were most likely to be established outside the workplace (Shen & Kram, 2011). In general, assigned migrant employees immersed themselves deeper into the host organization, as compared to the self-initiative counterparts (Biemann & Andersen, 2010). These results might stem from the fact that assignees - as compared to self-initiated migrants - have greater access to organizational resources (Jokinen et al., 2008). They possess more valuable organizational knowledge and establish broader networks within the entire corporation (Suutari et al., 2018). These available resources become the invaluable assets that tighten assignees to their host organizations, facilitating the immersion process even further. An alternative explanation is that individual career orientation is responsible for this divergence. Evidence from the literature suggests that assignees and self-initiated migrants pursued divergent career paths. Thereby, the former followed a traditional organizational career track and the latter typically aimed for a boundaryless career (Linder, 2019). As self-initiated migrant workers develop their career across organizations, they appear less motivated to attach to a specific company (Linder, 2019).

Another factor involved in the embedding process of employed migrants is their original *motivation to move abroad*. Migrant workers relocate abroad with a diverse set of aspirations, ranging from economic motives to career advancement, lust for adventure, family ties, and desire for a life change or escape route (Richardson & Mallon, 2005). The literature suggests that what inspires migrants to move abroad has implications for their organizational embeddedness in the host country. For instance, economic-driven migrants aim to maximize the financial benefits derived from their host organizations while potentially omitting the enmeshment in other domains (Jun & Ha, 2015; Pawlak & Goździak, 2020; also see Lo et al., 2012). This way of embedding generally reinforces the perceived sacrifices such as salary offered by the employed companies, thus deepening their immersion into the host company.

In addition, the literature points to diverse *adaptation tactics* and strategies that working migrants proactively utilize to immerse into the host organization. Among them are information seeking, positive framing (Ren et al., 2014), relationship building (Halvorsen et al., 2015; Ren et al., 2014), and participation in social gatherings and events (Beaverstock, 2002; Halvorsen et al., 2015). Information seeking refers to searching behaviours and acquisition of knowledge about situations, organizations and tasks that aid migrants in their efforts to fit the requirements, norms and values in the workplace and link with co-workers (Ren et al., 2014). Building relationships is also necessary for migrant workers to obtain social support (e.g., knowledge about daily life tasks) and interpersonal resources (e.g., psychological well-being) (Ren et al., 2014). These resources serve not only the purpose of networking but also act as important assets precluding migrants from leaving the host organization (Ren et al., 2014). Positive framing describes the cognitive self-control to apprehend situations as gains rather than losses in response to personal choices. Ren et al. (2014) explained that this positive experience energized and motivated migrant workers to integrate themselves into their working domain despite various setbacks. Lastly, the literature illustrates that most international mobile workers sustained and developed their working relationships through both social gatherings at work, such as lunchtime, and after work hours at pubs, bars, restaurants, or parties (Beaverstock, 2002; Halvorsen et al., 2015).

Furthermore, *human capital* appears as a strong influencer on the embeddedness of migrants in their companies. For instance, *cultural intelligence* describes a specific ability encompassing meta-cognition, knowledge, and skills (Thomas et al., 2015). Meta-cognition refers to the general acknowledgement and control over one's cognition, behaviours and learning in cross-cultural circumstances (Thomas et al., 2015). Knowledge describes the ability to grasp cultural differences and recognize the influences of culture in cross-cultural contexts whereas skills enable the appropriate action to meet the cross-cultural demands (Thomas et al., 2015). Cultural intelligence boosted the embedding process of foreign workers in their organization by minimizing the cross-cultural setbacks, creating comfortable connections with colleagues, and generating opportunities through confident interactions in the workplace (Stoermer et al., 2020). Likewise, migrant employees who were proficient in the *host country language* were likely to immerse themselves deeper in their organization (Ren et al., 2014). Language helped foreign workers to nurture relationships with local employees, to cope with uncertainties, and to acclimate to working environments with various cultural and social features (Ren et al., 2014). By contrast, language deficiencies induced notable obstacles for migrant employees as they endeavoured to integrate into the workplace (Cook et al., 2011). Lastly, *career capital* represents the potential

for social exchange between migrants and co-workers facilitating “guanxi” or connections at work (Cook et al., 2011; Yang & Lau, 2015). In line with that, research revealed that highly qualified migrant workers were more likely to immerse themselves into their workplace (Cook et al., 2011). By contrast, lower qualified employees are confronted with hindrances, such as precarious working conditions that retarded their enmeshment process in the organization (Cook et al., 2011).

### *Organizational factors*

The embeddedness of working migrants in their organizations inevitably relates to factors existing in the workplace. First, *support provided by organizations* in terms of finance, career, adjustment and on occasion spirituality was shown to benefit migrant employees’ immersion into the organization by motivating them in both intrinsic and extrinsic ways (Chen & Shaffer, 2017). Specifically, financial supports promoted controlled motivation among working migrants by increasing their gauge of sacrifice for leaving the host company (Chen & Shaffer, 2017). At the same time, organizations’ career assistance and relocation aid facilitated migrants’ autonomous motivation, which energized and sustained their embedding process with the company (Chen & Shaffer, 2017). In some cases, foreign employees embraced their organization’s support for religious beliefs and ideologies which in turn promoted links between co-workers and supervisors (Halvorsen et al., 2015). Second, the research also highlighted the damage caused by *discrimination* and intergroup conflicts on the embeddedness of migrant workers (Brunton & Cook, 2018). Discriminatory and conflict ridden working conditions – between native and foreign employees – hampered migrants’ professional connections and their perception of efficiency, thus straining their links and fit (Brunton & Cook, 2018). Some studies offered solutions for these issues. For instance, designing jobs in a way that promotes professional interdependence between local and foreign employees nourished their working relations (Cook et al., 2011; Fee et al., 2017). It seemed that *mentoring programs* in the host organization similarly improved migrants’ teamwork and perceived sacrifice such as promotability (Carragher et al., 2008).

### *Institutional factors*

Research indicated that *nationalist* state policies induced discrimination against migrant workers at the workplace (Bajt, 2016). Migrant employees in highly nationalist state environments often found their wages, benefits, and working conditions were hindered and exploited by the employers (Bajt, 2016), consequentially hampering their embeddedness in the host organization.

## Factors contributing to host community embeddedness

### *Situational factors*

Migrant workers appeared to deepen their community enmeshment over *time*. Research indicates that the longer migrants stay in the host nation, the wider and tighter their networks become and the more assimilated to their new environment they become, leading to enriched links and fit (Koelet et al., 2017; Martinovic et al., 2015; Tsuda, 1999). Similarly, the *characteristics of local communities* seems to affect their community embeddedness. Both neighbourhoods primarily occupied by foreigners and highly interactive neighbourhoods enabled migrants to interconnect and broaden their social networks (Beaverstock, 2002). The *quality of place* – including aspects such as housing quality, healthcare, education services, transport, leisure, and infrastructure - contributed to the amenities and ease of daily life, thus fostering a perceived fit of migrant workers in their host community (Kim & Cocks, 2017).

Moreover, the review literature indicates anew the influences of cultural barriers – such as *cultural novelty* and *distance* – on migrants' community embeddedness (Halvorsen et al., 2015; Ren et al., 2014). Differences between homeland and host nation, e.g., in terms of daily life customs and cultural orientation, made it difficult for migrants to feel comfortable and fit in the local society (Ren et al., 2014). Community embeddedness of the women migrants particularly benefited from *egalitarian norms* prevailing in the receiving nations (Pawlak & Goździak, 2020). Gender equality offered internationally mobile women a security that elevated their comfort in the host society and raised the stakes for leaving the receiving nation (Pawlak & Goździak, 2020). Lastly, *transferability of human capital* between home and host country, for example, in terms of qualifications and working experiences, seemed to affect the social status of migrants in their host nation, hence their immersion into the host community (Cederberg, 2017). Migrants living in a country where their human capital was unrecognized often struggled to secure their preferred social class and lifestyle, thereby experiencing jeopardy while embedding abroad (Cederberg, 2017).

### *Individual factors*

Research pointed out various individual factors that played a role in migrants' community enmeshment. First, *expatriation mode* plays a role. Assigned and self-initiated working migrants demonstrated divergent embedding ways (Meuer et al., 2019; Shen & Kram, 2011). While the latter group built their networks outside the workplace, the former tended to connect within the organizations (Agha-Alikhani, 2016; Shen & Kram, 2011). Lack of organizational resources

perhaps motivates self-initiated migrants to acquire and accumulate resources (e.g. social and psychological support, information) from the host society and deepens their embeddedness there. Second, *motivations to move abroad* seemed to influence their embedding ways. Economic-driven migrants aimed to maximize their monetary acquisitions, thus typically advancing their organizational enmeshment while omitting the connectedness with local community (Jun & Ha, 2015; Pawlak & Goździak, 2020). This is because the focus on remittance generally precluded them from obtaining the necessary embedding instruments such as time, language learning, and socialization (Jun & Ha, 2015; Pawlak & Goździak, 2020). By contrast, those who desired a permanent life abroad were proactive in establishing their roots in the host society. For example, they built and nurtured relationships with host country nationals (Martinovic et al., 2015). Finally, migrants with prior migration experiences were more prepared and adaptable, thereby paving the way for their enmeshment in the host community (Bürgelt et al., 2008).

It seems that *ethnicity or country of origin* similarly plays a role in the immersion process of migrant workers. For instance, migrants from some ethnicities had more advantages than others in developing ties in the host nation (Martinovic et al., 2015). In the reviewed literature, this fact was associated with the proximity between migrants and host country nationals in terms of their predominant religious beliefs and shared history (Martinovic et al., 2015). Likewise, the components of community embeddedness proved different between working migrants from developed or industrialized countries and those migrated from less developed areas (Khoo et al., 2008). For instance, the former group was more likely to immerse themselves through preferable lifestyle and climate whereas the latter tended to value the progressive socio-economic states in the destination (Khoo et al., 2008, 2011; Khoo et al., 2009).

Other important factors at individual level are *adaptation tactics* and *motivation orientation*. It seems that foreign employees played a notably active role in their embeddedness as they applied a wide range of tactics to immerse themselves into host communities. Among those tactics are relationship building, information seeking, positive framing, and social media utilization. Relationship building refers to a set of behaviours that aim to network and socialize with people in the local community (Yunlu et al., 2018). These acts can include attending community social events and socializing with people outside their household (Yunlu et al., 2018). As a consequence, individuals engaging in these activities were more likely to obtain a wider network and belongingness in the host society (Yunlu et al., 2018). Akin to that, migrants who proactively searched for information perceived less ambiguity in the host society and gained knowledge about its norms

and rules, thereby increasing community fit (Ren et al., 2014). The ability to manage positive cognition while confronting adaptation challenges similarly motivated foreign workers to integrate into local life (Ren et al., 2014). Social media was particularly useful in expanding and maintaining social connections in the host community, as it acted as a companion to conventional communication channels (Ryan & Mulholland, 2014b). Lastly, research identified that autonomous motivation promoted the immersion of working migrants in their host community. More specifically, those who were motivated intrinsically possessed more energy to proactively construct their networks and embed themselves into local communities by utilizing various strategies (Chen & Shaffer, 2017).

Finally, learning *host country languages* enabled working migrants to communicate with host country nationals and develop their awareness of societal rules and norms (Ren et al., 2014). Furthermore, it served as an important asset in strengthening foreign employees' ties to their host society, since moving to another country effaced the value of their native language skills (Martinovic et al., 2015). Our reviewed studies revealed various factors related to human capital that affect migrants' community embeddedness. Qualification levels played a role in the ways migrants developed their embeddedness in the host community (Roggeveen & van Meeteren, 2013). Low qualified migrant workers often worked in unfavourable conditions such as temporary, precarious, or shifting jobs; thus, they were confronted with various obstacles (e.g. lack of time and energy) to establish their connections with the locals (Jun & Ha, 2015; Roggeveen & van Meeteren, 2013). By contrast, highly qualified migrant workers were more motivated to acquire social capital in the host nation, thus broadening their connections with the natives (Roggeveen & van Meeteren, 2013).

### *Organizational factors*

*Organizational support* in terms of adjustment, for instance relocation assistance and language and cross-cultural training, promoted the community embeddedness of working migrants (Chen, 2012). Organizational support provided means for working migrants to adjust in a new environment. It also motivated and invigorated them to establish their connections with their host communities in an intrinsic manner (Chen, 2012). Similarly, organizational family support such as promoting a family-friendly environment and providing benefits for families facilitated the enmeshment of working migrants in their community, especially among women (David et al., 2019). Organizational family support fostered the embeddedness of foreign workers by increasing the embeddedness of their family. Thereby, family members' embeddedness served as a proxy for migrants to connect with the local community, for instance through education and social activities of their children as well as through the social network of their partners.

Likewise, *organizational cultural intelligence* – characterized by HRM practices that are culturally sensitive and supportive – facilitated the adjustment among male migrants and promoted their community embeddedness (David et al., 2019). In contrast, *underemployment* often depleted the social status of working migrants in their community (Cederberg, 2017). Underemployed foreign workers were generally unable to sustain their desired lifestyle and financial conditions, thus obstructing their fit and decreasing their gauge of loss for leaving the host community (Cederberg, 2017).

### *Institutional factors*

Literature indicated various institutional conditions that were associated with migrants' community embeddedness in the host country. *Immigration policies*, for example, were crucial for foreign workers to integrate into their host society. Some policies included opportunities for chain immigration (i.e., reunification with micro- and extensive family members) which in turn developed migrant social networks in the host nation (Tsuda, 1999). Moreover, *naturalization procedures* – the process to obtain host country citizenship – seemed to impact the settlement of working migrants in their host community (Humphries et al., 2009). Strict nationalization laws precluded migrants and their family members from integrating into host society and potentially pushed onward migration to a more preferable destination (Humphries et al., 2009; Kōu et al., 2017). Likewise, *nationalism* existing at the state level often led to discrimination towards foreigners in the host country, barring them from interactions with host country nationals as well as obstructing their inclusion and belonging in the host society (Bajt, 2016). *Residence rights* for migrants similarly acted as a valuable anchor that made their stay permanent (Agyeman & Garcia, 2016; Ette et al., 2016). Lack of residence rights often led to detachment among international mobile workers and promoted migration elsewhere (Humphries et al., 2009). Lastly, *social security systems* were associated with the community embeddedness among migrant employees. Research illustrates that the benefits offered by social security systems, pensions for instance, kept migrants in the host nation (Agyeman & Garcia, 2016).

## **Factors contributing to host career embeddedness**

### *Situational factors*

Research has indicated that *cultural novelty* and *distance* deplete migrants' perceived compatibility with career environments and impair their professional networks (Fernando & Patriotta, 2020; Ryan & Mulholland, 2014b). This relationship possibly stems from the fact that cross-cultural barriers create uncertainty in the working environment. This circumstance demands significant effort from



migrants to adapt and fit in (Beaverstock, 2002; Ryan & Mulholland, 2014b). Furthermore, it seems that the more *internationalization* that happened in the host nation, the easier it was for working migrants to build their career embeddedness (Beaverstock, 2002). In these countries, career capital such as expertise or networks was more likely to be transferable, hence it increased the fit between migrants' capacity and their host country demands (Beaverstock, 2002). These countries further provided agencies, such as business associations, that facilitated the professional enmeshment of working migrants (Beaverstock, 2002). Some countries, however, obtained less global recognition, thus the value of international career capital decreased. Migrant workers residing in these countries experienced more barriers in achieving their international career aspirations (Bilodeau, 2010; Mendoza & Guitart, 2008). *Transferability of human capital* further affected the embeddedness of migrants in their career pathway. Those whose qualifications and working experiences were unrecognized in the host nation generally underwent underemployment, degraded job levels, and inferior compensation (Cederberg, 2017; Fernando & Patriotta, 2020). Advanced professional technologies in the host nation, by contrast, elevated the sense of sacrifice for leaving the country among the internationally mobile workers (Fernando & Patriotta, 2020; Poppe et al., 2016).

Another factor related to the career embeddedness of working migrants abroad is the egalitarian norms in the host nation. Career prospects of working migrants, especially women, benefitted from the gender equality in the host country (Pawlak & Goździak, 2020). Equity enabled women migrants to advance their career without systemic discrimination relating to gender roles and efficacy (Pawlak & Goździak, 2020; van den Bergh & Du Plessis, 2012). Indeed, a host society that preserved traditional gender roles – for instance in terms of parental responsibility – forced women migrants to forgo their career advancement for family duties (van den Bergh & Du Plessis, 2012). Country of origin similarly impacts migrants' career prospects abroad. Those migrating from lower status countries were prone to underemployment (Cederberg, 2017; Fernando & Patriotta, 2020; Humphries et al., 2009) and discrimination in the labor market (Cederberg, 2017). These constraints inhibited their career embeddedness in terms of fit (e.g., compatibility) and sacrifice (e.g. income and job status).

### *Individual factors*

Migrants who had *relocated for work previously* were more efficient in networking with other professionals and clients, and in advancing their career abroad (Beaverstock, 2002). It is possible they developed their *cultural intelligence* through these journeys which in turn enabled them to grasp the underlying rules within the foreign working contexts (Beaverstock, 2002). Likewise, *personal traits*

such as sociability and self-efficacy provided them with confidence to build and maintain their professional connections in the host country (Ryan & Mulholland, 2014b). The career embeddedness among working migrants seemed to involve various *communication channels* such as social media and informal social gatherings. Migrant workers who employed these means appeared to be effective in broadening and maintaining their career networks (Beaverstock, 2002; Ryan & Mulholland, 2014b). Likewise, those who possessed surplus social capital could employ support from their social ties to advance their career, for instance by acquiring information and knowledge about the working culture in the host country (Beaverstock, 2002).

The embeddedness of working migrants in the international career is further related to their *career capital and human capital*. Occupational expertise and soft skills, for example, represented the sources for social exchange which fostered migrants' working relationships and career success (Yang & Lau, 2015). Highly qualified migrants possessed more advantages to find suitable employment in the host country (Cederberg, 2017), hence augmenting their perceived fit with the international career environment. By contrast, those whose host country language command was insufficient often experienced hardships in job seeking and professional relationship building (Brunton & Cook, 2018; Cederberg, 2017).

### *Organizational factors*

Evidence from the reviewed literature suggests that the mentoring programs in host organizations were especially instrumental for migrants in immersing themselves in their international career. Mentors provided migrants with reliable information, thereby minimizing ambiguity, and increasing their effectiveness in handling tasks (Carragher et al., 2008). They offered social-psychological support and personal coaching that facilitates migrants' productivity (Carragher et al., 2008). As a consequence, migrants benefited from their mentors in terms of enhancing their professional relationships, performance, and promotability (Carragher et al., 2008; van den Bergh & Du Plessis, 2012).

Research similarly points out various kinds of organizational support mechanisms that promoted career embeddedness among migrant employees. For instance, adjustment aids and benefits for families eased the transition and settlement, thus affording working migrants the opportunity to concentrate on their work and elevate their career satisfaction (i.e., sacrifice) (Cao et al., 2014; David et al., 2019). Career support – for instance in the form of training opportunities and career development plans – generated a sense of affinity with the international career pathway and kept them there (Fernando & Patriotta, 2020). Work-life balance practices – such as flexible working hours – enabled migrants to meet both work and personal responsibilities (Fernando & Patriotta, 2020). Thus, they

emerged as important benefits that strengthened migrant workers ties to their host country in a professional context (Fernando & Patriotta, 2020). Finally, organizations that were highly culturally intelligent equipped migrant men with the means to adjust better in a new working environment, thereby augmenting their career satisfaction (David et al., 2019).

### *Institutional factors*

National demands for an international labour force – often in some specific industries – paved the way for migrants to broaden their professional network. This is because employers operating these fields often relied on existing personal networks to recruit newcomers, triggering diaspora (Humphries et al., 2009; Tsuda, 1999). State nationalist policies, by contrast, created significant obstacles such as discrimination in the labour market and, hence, precluded working migrants from finding suitable employment and achieving their desired job levels or income (Bajt, 2016).

## **DISCUSSION**

Whereas results from this SLR reveals a wide range of factors that impact migrant workers' embeddedness abroad, there are remaining areas calling for further insights. In this section, we discuss the implications of this SLR for theory and research by exploring research gaps in the current literature and by providing possible directions for future research. The implications for theory and research are illustrated in Table 15. In addition, we propose several recommendations for organizations to facilitate their migrant employees' immersion in the host country.

Embedding domains	Research gaps	Directions for future research
<b>Organizational embeddedness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Insufficient research on organizational factors</li> <li>- Insufficient research on institutional factors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- More studies on antecedents at organization level (e.g., organizational and supervisor justice)</li> <li>- More research on administrative and legal barriers (e.g., visas, work permits), national economic growth, structural demands for migrant laborers, integration policies</li> </ul>
<b>Community embeddedness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lack of relevant factors in the measurement of community embeddedness among migrant employees</li> <li>- Insufficient research on personality traits</li> <li>- Insufficient research on organizational factors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Adapted scale of migrants' community embeddedness incorporating factors such as residency permit status, residence rights, social security benefits, discriminatory or inclusiveness of social climate in the host nation, perceived openness of immigration policies</li> <li>- Further studies on personality traits (e.g., openness to experiences, personal initiative)</li> <li>- Further studies on organizational factors (e.g., work-life balance practices)</li> </ul>
<b>Career embeddedness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Insufficient research on career embeddedness</li> <li>- Insufficient research on institutional factors</li> <li>- Insufficient research on individual factors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Further studies on career embeddedness of migrant employees (including its outcomes)</li> <li>- Further studies on institutional factors (e.g., immigration policies, economic/ business climate)</li> <li>- Further studies on individual factors (e.g., migration aspirations, expatriate mode)</li> </ul>

**Table 15:** *Research gaps in current research on migrants' embeddedness*

## Discussion on factors influencing host organizational embeddedness

### *Furthering research on organizational and institutional factors*

The literature we reviewed revealed several factors that are associated with the embeddedness of migrant workers in their organizations. These factors are widespread across levels. In some cases, the organizational embeddedness of migrants stemmed from the interaction of cross-level conditions such as the combination of cultural intelligence and host country cultural orientation (Stoermer et al., 2016)

al., 2020). Various factors are peculiar in the international mobility context, for instance cross-cultural barriers, language proficiency, expatriate mode, migration aspiration, organizational support for relocation and policies focusing on nationalism. Migrant employees undergo complex immersion processes where employment is not the sole relevant domain, but rather a complex situation emerges from a combination of multi-level factors. These complex immersion processes reinforced the necessity to view host organizational embeddedness from an interdisciplinary perspective.

In this light, the current literature clearly illustrates underexplored areas at organizational levels. The lack of studies discerning organizational influencers seems surprising, providing notable proximity between these factors and organizational embeddedness. The role of organizations in the embedding process among migrant employees thus remains largely under researched as compared to systematic evidence obtained on the domestic population (Kiazad et al., 2015). This research gap opens up promising directions for future studies. For instance, organizational and supervisor justice potentially emerges as an important influencer in the ways migrant employees immerse themselves into their organizations. Justice – either performed by an organization or by a supervisor – refers to the perceived fairness demonstrated in the allocation of resources and the outcomes in a given decision-making context (distributive justice) as well as the processes leading to that decision (procedural justice). Justice further encompasses the respect and propriety expressed by the decision-makers (interactional justice) and the ways they use honest and truthful information to justify the outcomes (informative justice) (Colquitt, 2012). Research demonstrates that inequality is a notable issue in the context where international workers are present (Oltra et al., 2013). Therein, inequality may manifest in various ways, from discrimination against particular groups to favoritism towards particular ethnicities in staffing and compensation policies (Cook et al., 2011; Oltra et al., 2013). Injustice strains connections between migrant employees and native workers creating intergroup conflicts (Bajt, 2016; Oltra et al., 2013) and eventually thwarting migrants' links with their co-workers (Brunton & Cook, 2018). It similarly decreases migrants' gauge of sacrifice for leaving the employed companies (Bajt, 2016). Justice assures that migrant employees receive equitable treatment in terms of rewards and salary, interactions, procedure, and transparency. These conditions contribute to a secure, comfortable, and respectful working environment that facilitates the organizational embeddedness of migrant workers.

Akin to that, current literature has patently omitted the influence of institutional factors on the organizational embeddedness among migrant employees. Literature reviews, however, suggests that various influencers on migrants' organizational embeddedness stem from institutional conditions (Al Ariss &

Sidani, 2016). For instance, administrative and legal barriers such as visas and work permits might restrict migrants' access into suitable employment, leading to underemployment or discounting skills entailed in their jobs (Al Ariss, 2010; Al Ariss & Sidani, 2016). By contrast, national economic growth and structural demands for migrant laborers often lead to diaspora (Tsuda, 1999) and foster migrants' social capital and network at the workplace (Cook et al., 2011). Finally, research suggests that political parties form divergent integration policies that affect migrants' means of immersing themselves into organizations. Such policies may hinder language training opportunities and access to job seeking aids (Natter et al., 2020). Further investigation is necessary to uncover the links between these institutional characters and the organizational embeddedness of migrant employees.

#### *Providing supports according to multi-level conditions*

There is a wide range of measures that organizations might apply to aid the embeddedness of migrant workers in their workplace. First, organizational support is particularly beneficial for self-initiated migrants to immerse themselves into the company, as their access to resources at work is restricted compared to assigned migrants (Suutari et al., 2018). Further assistance might include suitable job designs and assignments that minimize underemployment and promote interdependent working relationships. Likewise, mentoring programs might reduce adaptation stress, provide information, and ease the immersion process of migrants in their workplace. Second, organizations could play an active role to minimize discrimination towards foreigners in the host country through lobbying with political parties and governments (Al Ariss, 2010). They might work closely with immigration offices to ease the relocation process and administrative requirements for their foreign workers. Third, comparative HRM practices that are specialized for each group of migrants – depending on their background and individual differences – are necessary to foster migrants' organizational embeddedness (Al Ariss & Sidani, 2016). For instance, companies should pay attention to foreign workers from countries with highly distant cultures, i.e., those who face the greatest challenges in adapting to the host country's language and customs. Language and cultural training particularly boost their immersion process within this group of migrants.

## Discussion on factors influencing host community embeddedness

### *Developing community embeddedness scale and call for research on personality traits, and organizational factors*

The reviewed literature sheds light on various influencers on the community embeddedness of migrant workers. Moreover, it proposes several implications for theory and research. First, our literature review reaffirmed that working migrants immersed themselves into the host society in various ways. The measurement of community embeddedness therefore requires adaptation in the migrant population (cf. Linder, 2016). For instance, the adapted version might incorporate the residency permit status, residence rights, and social security benefits of working migrants; the discriminatory or inclusiveness of social climate in the host nation; and perceived openness of immigration policies. These factors appear to be distinctive due to the international mobility context, and, therefore, have not been included in the original measurements among domestic populations. Further studies might improve instruments of measurement by encompassing multi-level factors involved in the community embeddedness of working migrants.

Second, even though research has revealed various influencers on migrants' community embeddedness, it has omitted the notable role of personality traits. Rather than relying solely on the external environment, migrants seem to play an active role in their embedding process (Halvorsen et al., 2015; Ren et al., 2014). Personality traits therefore inevitably influence motivation, ways, and behaviours through which their community enmeshment is shaped. For instance, openness to experiences might promote migrants to adopt cultural and social norms and to overcome cross-cultural barriers more readily, hence increasing their compatibility with the host community. Similarly, proactiveness and persistence as a behavioural approach – representing personal initiative – might energize migrants to integrate into host communities despite various setbacks (Frese & Fay, 2001). Future research is necessary to explore the impact of personality traits in the ways migrants construct their embeddedness in the host society.

Lastly, the scarce evidence of organizational factors within current research demonstrates a research gap. Various practices generated by host companies might influence the ways migrants immerse themselves into the host community. For instance, organizational work-life balance practices – including flexible working time, working from home, on-site childcare, compassion, and bereavement leave – appear to reduce work-life conflict and aid employees as they tailor their work in accordance with their personal situations (Beauregard & Henry, 2009). Migration population – as compared to native ones – often requires extra resources in the immersion process, thus these practices might especially assist

migrants in reaching higher levels of embeddedness there. For instance, they can utilize more time for socializing, leisure activities, and relationships with family members (i.e., community links) (Beauregard & Henry, 2009). These factors become particularly relevant within the Covid-19 pandemic when teleworking becomes mandatory in various sectors and settings. In fact, some research on assignees has illustrated that working from home facilitates relationships between migrant managers and their family members (Mello & Tomei, 2021). This situation strengthened their community links. Organizational conditions thus illustrate a promising direction for future research on migrants' community embeddedness.

#### *Strategies to aid migrant workers' community embeddedness*

There are various implications for practices that we derive from literature review results. The influence of ethnicity and country of origin on community embeddedness among migrant workers calls for more specialized approaches within organizations. Specifically, organizations might offer a diverse set of services depending on their preferred ways of embedding. For instance, migrants from equivalently developed/ industrialized countries benefit particularly from sports activities, tips for local trips, and socializing events. By contrast, those from less advanced areas possibly prefer support with social security benefits and the integration of family members. On the same note, the more egalitarian norms exhibited in the host society, the more migrant workers – especially those belonging to the minority and disadvantaged groups – feel safe and included, hence increasing their community fit. Organizations therefore can align with authorities to support equality and inclusiveness. Finally, they can motivate their working migrants to immerse themselves into the local community by providing a wide range of support mechanisms, for instance, language and cross-cultural training, relocation, and settlement support (e.g., accommodation and schooling) for both the foreign employees and their family members.

#### **Discussion on factors influencing host career embeddedness**

##### *Notable gap in research on career embeddedness and directions for future studies*

Even though the research reveals a number of factors associated with the career embeddedness of migrant workers in their host country, the focus on this domain was patently insufficient compared to that in organizational or community embeddedness. This gap demonstrates notable limitations as career embeddedness is a significant predictor of several important outcomes, such as repatriation (Tharenou & Caulfield, 2010). Therefore, further studies are necessary to



reach a more comprehensive view on the career pathway of working migrants abroad.

Moreover, it seems that factors contributing to career and organizational embeddedness share a large overlapping part. This might stem from the fact that career and organizational embeddedness are both on-the-job domains (Ng & Feldman, 2007). However, career embeddedness of working migrants is more likely to link with socio-economic conditions in a host nation such as internationalization or egalitarian norms. In this light, the current literature clearly overlooks the institutional influencers on career embeddedness among foreign workers (cf. Al Ariss & Özbilgin, 2010). For instance, the immigration policies in the host country (e.g., work permit, integration program) potentially determines the migrants' accessibility into the host country labor market and opportunities for them to acquire suitable employment (Al Ariss & Özbilgin, 2010). Immigration policies therefore emerge as crucial influences on migrants' immersion in their international career pathway. The economic/ business climate similarly impacts their career embeddedness abroad. A flourishing economy typically demands migrant labor sources, thus forcing the host national authorities to alleviate the immigration barriers and create matching employment opportunities for migrant employees (Smet, 2013). Further research is necessary to capture the relationships between institutional conditions and career embeddedness among migrant workers.

Akin to that, studies have rarely identified the role of individual factors in career embeddedness among migrant employees. However, various factors seem to act as important sources for migrant workers to immerse themselves into their career pathways abroad. For instance, migrants who moved for career advancement exhibit stronger determination to establish their international career prospects (Beaverstock, 2002) whereas those who desired life change or followed their family members often put less effort into immersing themselves into their professions in the host country (Mendoza & Guitart, 2008). Likewise, the expatriate mode might determine the ways migrants become embedded in their working environment. Self-initiated migrants were more likely than assignees to immerse deeply into the career pathway abroad. This is because the former makes their own choice about the destination where they will develop their career whereas the latter relies on their employers' decision (Suutari et al., 2018). Influencers from the national career context thus have more impact on self-initiated migrants than assignees whose careers mainly develop within the company. In addition, self-initiated migrants whose organizational resources are limited need to accumulate support from external sources, such as native professionals outside the workplace. Indeed, research has shown that they possessed wider networks with external professionals compared to their assigned migrants (Agha-Alikhani, 2016).

Further research is necessary to better understand the role of individual elements in the career embedding process among working migrants.

### *Helping migrants build their career embeddedness abroad*

Organizations can implement several measures to optimize career embeddedness among their foreign employees. For instance, they should invest in their migrant employees' career and human capital. In particular, research has demonstrated the effectiveness of intensive training programs (e.g., expertise, soft skills, and language) and career development plan. Akin to that, mentoring programs are necessary to optimize migrants' performance and career advancement. HRM practitioners can incorporate culturally intelligent practices in their working procedures, such as regulating their communication to fit in the cultural background of migrant employees. They could further apply work-life balance practices, such as flexible and teleworking as well as benefits for family members. Third, in terms of macro-level conditions, organizations can liaise with political institutions and authorities to accelerate the egalitarian norms within the host society and diminish discrimination in the labour market.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Our research provides a comprehensive view of factors that relate to job embeddedness among international migrant workers. The results illustrate that working migrants' embeddedness is formed by various influencers at the situational, individual, organizational, and institutional levels. Thereby, we assert that it is necessary to use an interdisciplinary approach to comprehend job embeddedness in the international migration context. Furthermore, we believe studies can improve upon the measurements used to evaluate job embeddedness in the international migration context by incorporating these multi-level factors.

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