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# Staying in a Stressful Job? The Role of Job Embeddedness for Truck Drivers' Well-Being and Turnover Intentions

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## Abstract

In this study, we examine the role of job embeddedness in a stressful blue-collar job. Building upon previous research and COR theory, we examined whether being embedded in the organization and community prevents workers from being exhausted and intending to quit, even when work stress (time pressure, situational constraints, and electronic surveillance) is high. Based on a sample of 97 local truck drivers of nine organizations who participated in a survey administered through telephone interviews, the results confirmed the predicted relationship between being embedded in the organization and intentions to quit one's job. Additionally, we found that being embedded in the community, but not in the organization, moderated the stressor-outcome relationships: Higher time pressure was related to more turnover intentions when drivers were less embedded in the community. However, more situational constraints were related to intentions to quit when drivers were more embedded in the community. Consistent with this finding, these drivers also felt more exhausted when they experienced more situational constraints. Thus, our study demonstrated that the role of community embeddedness varies depending on the stressor. Theoretical and practical implications are discussed.

**Keywords** Conservation of resources · Blue-collar workers · Job embeddedness · Work stressors · Turnover intention

Employee turnover is often associated with high costs for organizations (e.g., Hancock et al., 2013; Hom et al., 2017; Park & Shaw, 2013). Facing escalating challenges due to high turnover rates and shortages of skilled workers is particularly evident in industries such as trucking (BAG, 2020; BGL, 2021; ATA, 2019). Here, retaining employees in organizations is essential to the operation and maintenance of the economic or health care system (Burstedde, 2021; BMVI, 2020; Mittal et al., 2018). Research has identified several factors that predict turnover intentions and actual

turnover (Griffeth et al., 2000; Heavey et al., 2013; Hom et al., 2017; Rubenstein et al., 2018) but has also raised the question of why people stay in their jobs (e.g., Mitchell et al., 2001). Mitchell and colleagues (2001) introduced the term *job embeddedness* to describe job-related factors (organizational embeddedness) but also the broader context of an individual's life outside of work (community embeddedness) that tie employees to their organizations and jobs beyond salary, affective constructs (e.g., job satisfaction and organizational commitment), and job alternatives (Crossley et al., 2007; Jiang et al., 2012; Sender et al., 2018; for an overview, see Lee et al., 2014).

Research has highlighted the benefits of both forms of embeddedness in reducing turnover intentions (e.g., Allen et al., 2016; Coetzer et al., 2019; Jiang et al., 2012; Singh et al., 2021). Some studies have shown that when they were exposed to high levels of work stress, the people who were more embedded in the organization have thought less about quitting (e.g., Rubenstein et al., 2020; Peltokorpi & Allen, 2024; for an exception, see Fasbender et al., 2019). On the relationship between community embeddedness and the presence of work stressors and turnover intentions, studies have found rather mixed results, with both reducing

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Julia Schmidbauer and Cornelia Niessen shared first authorship.

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Additional supplementary materials may be found here by searching on article title <https://osf.io/collections/jbp/discover>.

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(Fasbender et al., 2019; Treuren & Fein, 2021) and strengthening effects of high community embeddedness (Peltokorpi & Allen, 2024; Rubenstein et al., 2020). Whereas most studies have focused on the relationship between embeddedness and turnover intentions, only a few have examined how employees feel when they are highly embedded in the organization or community while experiencing work stress (Treuren & Fein, 2021). Furthermore, the studies that have examined well-being outcomes provide inconsistent results for organizational embeddedness (Allen et al., 2016; Peltokorpi, 2022).

Building on conservation of resources theory (COR; Hobfoll, 2001) in the context of job embeddedness research (Kiazad et al., 2015), we examine whether embeddedness in the organization and in the community as resource pools buffer the positive relationships between stressors, turnover intentions, and well-being (exhaustion). Whereas there is initial evidence for the benefits of organizational embeddedness, it remains unclear whether community embeddedness also brings benefits for mitigating turnover intentions and well-being in adverse environments. This gap is addressed in the present study.

To investigate these research questions, we chose local truck drivers as our study sample who operate medium-duty or light trucks over short distances. The jobs of local truck drivers are stressful due to factors as high time pressure, a broad range of situational constraints, and electronic surveillance (BMVI, 2020). As their primary workplace is their truck, they work mainly in isolation during their day trips but have the opportunity to develop community ties on a daily basis, in contrast to long-distance (-haul) drivers, which may make community embeddedness a salient resource pool for them. Therefore, for drivers' resource pool, resources associated with community embeddedness complement resources related to organizational embeddedness.

Our study contributes to research on job embeddedness in the following ways. First, we follow the call to examine not only organizational embeddedness but also community embeddedness (e.g., Singh et al., 2021; Treuren & Fein, 2021). Building on Hobfoll's notion that the value of resources is highly dependent on the ecological context (Halbesleben et al., 2014; Hobfoll et al., 2018), we argue that community embeddedness becomes a salient resource pool in jobs where the presence of employees in the organization is comparatively low. We seek to further understand the moderating role of community embeddedness in attenuating the relationship between job stressors, turnover intentions, and exhaustion. Second, the study aims to expand our knowledge of the benefits of job embeddedness by examining various everyday work stressors (time pressure, situational constraints, and a context-specific stressor like electronic surveillance) experienced by truck drivers. Prior studies have primarily focused on adverse conditions like abusive

supervision, job insecurity, and work — home conflicts (e.g., Allen et al., 2016; Peltokorpi & Allen, 2024; Rubenstein et al., 2020). By examining different everyday work stressors, we aim to extend and generalize previous results. Third, we contribute to the literature on job embeddedness by conducting a study with blue-collar workers, specifically short distance truck drivers, an underresearched sample, thereby enhancing the generalizability of the findings in the field.

From a practical view, our research provides implications for organizations seeking to optimize employee retention strategies without neglecting wellbeing. This knowledge is particularly helpful in the trucking context, which is characterized by high turnover and driver shortages, not only in long-haul transportation but also now increasingly in the transport of goods over short distances (such as delivering goods from logistics centers to supermarkets), posing a threat to our supply chains (e.g., Kelly, 2022).

## Theoretical Background

### Job Embeddedness and Its Relationship with Intentions to Quit

*Job embeddedness* stems from the idea of shifting the focus in turnover research from “why people go” to “why people stay” (Mitchell et al., 2001). Job embeddedness describes the “extent of an employee's ‘stuckness,’ or enmeshing, within a larger social system” (Lee et al., 2014, p. 201; see also Mitchell et al., 2001). It refers mainly to contextual influences as connections to other people at work and in the community (links), the perceived fit between one's job/organization or one's community culture and one's life activities (fit), and the benefits one would lose if one left the organization or community (sacrifice), and less on affective or motivational constructs (e.g., organizational commitment). The dimensions of job embeddedness are important not only on-the-job (i.e., *embeddedness in the organization*), but also off-the-job (i.e., *embeddedness in the community*; Mitchell et al., 2001). Thereby, being embedded in an organization describes to what extent people are tied to their current jobs, whereas being embedded in the community refers to the extent people are tied to the world outside the workplace, namely their community, and are therefore rooted where they live (Mitchell et al., 2001; Ng & Feldman, 2012).

There is a conceptual proximity between job embeddedness and organizational commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1990), yet there are also significant differences. According to Mitchell et al. (2001), job embeddedness can be differentiated from organizational commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1990) as (a) job embeddedness includes the community aspect and therefore goes beyond focusing solely on the organization, (b) is non-affective at its core, in contrast to

the affective dimension of organizational commitment, and (c) goes beyond the sense of obligation described by the normative dimension of organizational commitment.

Jiang et al. (2012) showed in their meta-analysis that organizational and community embeddedness *both* have a meaningful role in predicting *intentions to quit* (corrected weighted average correlations  $r_{Organization} = -0.48$  and  $r_{Community} = -0.22$ ), albeit community embeddedness to a lesser extent. Both are moderately correlated and have been shown to be distinct constructs (Jiang et al., 2012). Organizational and community embeddedness explained incremental variance in turnover intentions and actual turnover over and above job satisfaction, affective commitment, and job alternatives (Allen et al., 2016; Coetzer et al., 2019; Jiang et al., 2012; Singh et al., 2021), with concentration mainly on the relationships with organizational embeddedness and less with community embeddedness (e.g., Singh et al., 2021).

Following the approach of Kiazad et al. (2015), which is based on COR theory, job embeddedness can be seen as a resource pool. COR theory proposes that individuals strive to accumulate resources in different aspects of their lives, such as their work environment and private life because these resources hold value for them (e.g., Hobfoll, 1989, 2001). As individuals accumulate more resources within a particular domain, they become more embedded within that domain and, as a result, are more resistant to giving up domain-specific resources when they are threatened. Feelings of being embedded in a domain arise as a result of possessing substantial resources within that domain (Kiazad et al., 2015; Rubenstein et al., 2020). Specifically, the linkages and fit within organizational embeddedness can provide resources such as social support from colleagues and supervisors or skills, and, in the case of community embeddedness, social support from community groups, friends or family members, and enjoyable community activities (e.g., Burrows et al., 2022; Merino, 2014; Nicholson et al., 2014; Obeng et al., 2024; Voydanoff, 2001).

In line with previous research (Allen et al., 2016; Holtom & Interrieden, 2006; Peltokorpi, 2022; Rubenstein et al., 2020; Peltokorpi & Allen, 2024), we propose that organizational embeddedness should prevent drivers from developing intentions to quit due to the stressful work environment. Several stressors are prevalent in the work context of local truck drivers. These include *time pressure* (imbalance between the tasks required and the time in which they are to be accomplished), *situational constraints* (malfunctioning of organizational processes and inadequacy of tools, equipment, materials, or supplies; Fay & Sonnentag, 2002), and *electronic surveillance* (use of information and communication technologies to monitor and track various aspects of the vehicle's operations, the driver's behavior, and the surrounding environment; BMVI, 2020; Friswell

& Williamson, 2013; Ravid et al., 2023). Drivers often experience negative events on their daily trips, such as traffic jams, parking problems, loading problems, or pressure from the digital tachograph (e.g., Damjanović et al., 2022; Wijngaards et al., 2019; Van der Beek, 2012). Friswell and Williamson (2013) found that local truck drivers are especially susceptible to fatigue from long working hours with too few breaks and city traffic, whereas long-haul drivers are more likely to experience fatigue from long driving hours, including night and dusk driving. Improved tracking and communication technology, increased traffic congestion, and loading and unloading of trucks result in high workloads and tight schedules (de Croon et al., 2002). In addition, research shows that tight scheduling is a common form of role overload for transportation and logistics workers (Rydstedt et al., 1998). Although most of the literature to date has focused on long-haul truck drivers or professional drivers in general, it is likely that time pressure, situational constraints, and electronic monitoring can be considered common stressors in the logistics sector. Across different occupations, there is considerable meta-analytic evidence that stressors at work predict turnover intentions (workload:  $\rho = 0.16$ ; Bowling et al., 2015; hindrance stressors like situational constraints, hassles, and overload:  $r_c = 0.49$ , Podsakoff et al., 2007). For the trucking context, De Croon et al. (2004) showed that truck drivers' job demands (e.g., psychological job demands like work speed, problems with speed and amount, and work amount assessed with the QEEW; Van Veldhoven & Meijman, 1994) predicted turnover two years later (De Croon et al., 2004). It seems also likely that electronic surveillance in trucks (i.e., use of a digital tachograph that records a driver's driving and rest times) may lead to drivers intending to quit due to perceived privacy invasion and perceived lack of trust (Ravid et al., 2023).

A few studies have already shown that organizational embeddedness can buffer the effects of "negative shocks" (Holtom & Inderrieden, 2006), stressors as abusive supervision and job insecurity (Allen et al., 2016; Peltokorpi & Allen, 2024), work-home conflict (Peltokorpi, 2022; Rubenstein et al., 2020; Treuren & Fein, 2021), and job search (Porter et al., 2019) on turnover intentions (for an exception, see Fasbender et al., 2019). These findings are also supported by research on "sunk costs" (e.g., Arkes & Blumer, 1985; Roth et al., 2015), which manifests in a greater tendency to continue one's engagement (e.g., not quitting one's job) once an investment in money, effort, or time has been made (e.g., having built up resources and embeddedness), even though this objectively should not be influential.

From a COR perspective (Hobfoll, 2001), there are two explanations for the buffering effect of organizational embeddedness. First, resources inherent in organizational embeddedness, such as social support and skills, are invested to prevent further resource drain by effectively coping with

stressors at work, thus reducing intentions to leave. Second, employees who are deeply embedded in their organization are driven to accumulate and retain valuable job-specific resources, and thus choose to remain in their current position to prevent the loss of these resources associated with leaving (Hobfoll, 1989, 2001). Leaving the organization would mean giving up these resources, and higher embeddedness would be associated with more sacrifice in leaving. This is likely to be even more distressing and limits the motivation to consider job alternatives. Less embedded employees hold fewer organizationally valued resources, and thus would experience less resource losses if they quit. Moreover, they may also have less access to resources for coping with stressors (e.g., colleague support) which makes quitting the job more likely. Therefore, being embedded in the organization might provide local truck drivers with relevant work-related knowledge and routines (fit), and social resources (e.g., good relationships with dispatchers and links) that buffer against potential resource loss stemming from time pressure, work and organizational problems, and electronic surveillance and prevent intentions to quit. Fit and links help them solve situational constraints and cope with time pressure. Moreover, good and trusting relationships with the dispatcher, supervisor, and colleagues might mitigate anticipated fear of negative evaluation due to electronic surveillance and therefore prevent thinking about quitting.

**Hypothesis 1:** The positive relationship between local truck drivers' time pressure (a), situational constraints (b), perceived stress from electronic surveillance (c), and their intentions to quit is moderated by their organizational embeddedness, so that the relationship is less positive (i.e., buffered) for more embedded compared to less embedded local truck drivers.

Building on Hobfoll's notion (Halbesleben et al., 2014; Hobfoll et al., 2018) that the value of resources is highly dependent on the ecological context, we argue that community embeddedness becomes a salient resource pool in jobs where the presence of employees in the organization is comparatively low. For example, local transport drivers have little contact with their colleagues and supervisors during the working day as opposed to fixed-site workplaces with regular contact with co-workers and supervisors because their workplace is the truck and the road. Therefore, we aim to demonstrate that in an occupation where organizational embeddedness may be less of the primary resource pool, resources derived from community embeddedness can also mitigate turnover intentions due to stress at work (time pressure, situational constraints, and electronic surveillance). The first reason is that employees with higher levels of community embeddedness may have greater access to resources such as social support gained by the involvement

in community activities (sports and religious groups) and by being connected to community groups, friends, or family members (Burrows et al., 2022; Kiazad et al., 2015; Ng & Feldman, 2014). These resources have been shown to be transferable from one domain to another (e.g., non-work support and burnout; Halbesleben, 2006), which can therefore help to cope with aversive events at work. We assume that having links in one's community might provide additional resources for drivers, as emotional support from their friends and family increases drivers' energy and in turn helps them solve problems and cope with stressors like surveillance and time pressure (Fenlason & Beehr, 1994). Some studies have already shown that the moderating role of community embeddedness weakens the stressor-turnover relationship when community embeddedness is high (Fasbender et al., 2019; Treuren & Fein, 2021). Second, being deeply embedded in a community can be a highly valued resource in itself especially for drivers which is worth being protected and retained. Research on work-family interactions suggests that stressors at work may threaten the fulfillment of obligations and resources in the non-work (family) role, leading to work-family conflict (Greenhouse & Beutell, 1985; ten Brummelhuis & Bakker, 2012). If one values the non-work role more, which is presumably related to being embedded in the community (Burrows et al., 2022), people strive to protect these resources and can either look for a new job, as Rubenstein et al. (2020) found in a sample of working mothers (see also Peltokorpi & Allen, 2024) or they can stay because a new job also makes a change of location likely (Fasbender et al., 2019; Treuren & Fein, 2021). This would mean a further loss of community resources for the individual and family members, giving up social connections, activities, and entertainment that fit their lifestyle, which they want to avoid. Thus, we assume that the drivers that are highly embedded in the community will be more motivated to preserve threatened non-work resources compared to those less embedded in the community. Therefore, the relationships between stressors and turnover intention should be buffered by community embeddedness.

**Hypothesis 2:** The positive relationship between local truck drivers' time pressure (a), situational constraints (b), perceived stress from electronic surveillance (c), and their intentions to quit is moderated by their community embeddedness, so that the relationship is less positive (i.e., buffered) for more embedded compared to less embedded local truck drivers.

### **Job Embeddedness in Its Relationship with Well-Being**

Because job embeddedness can explain why individuals stay in their organizations, most studies have focused

on predicting turnover intentions or turnover. However, it remains unclear how individuals feel when they remain in their jobs despite adversity, especially when they are highly embedded in the organization and community. In the present study, we chose *exhaustion* (a consequence of intense physical, affective and cognitive strain, i.e., a long-term consequence of prolonged exposure to certain job demands; Demerouti et al., 2010) as indicator of well-being.<sup>1</sup> There is little research on job embeddedness and well-being (Allen et al., 2016; Peltokorpi, 2022; Singh et al., 2021), which is surprising as job embeddedness is often conceptualized as a source of resources (Kiazad et al., 2015).

Following the COR model of job embeddedness (Kiazad et al., 2015), we argue the same way as for the moderating effect of organizational embeddedness on the stressor-turnover relationships: Drivers who are more embedded in their organization can invest resources (e.g., work-related knowledge and routines; good relationships with other drivers, dispatchers, and supervisors) to prevent further resource drain by effectively coping with stressors at work (time pressure, situational constraints, and electronic surveillance). Several studies have shown that resources such as social support and the quality of social relationships can mitigate the impact of workload on strain, including exhaustion (e.g., Bakker et al., 2005; Lavoie-Tremblay et al., 2014; Pluut et al., 2018). Furthermore, there is evidence that resources like social support can weaken the positive relationship between stressors as situational constraints and strain (i.e., exhaustion, Dawson et al., 2016; Tadić et al., 2015). It is also possible that knowledge and experience may help to reduce the perception of stressors, and the establishment of routines can prove beneficial in coping with stress related to loading and unloading, traffic, and the contact with customers. Additionally, there is initial evidence on the buffering effects of resources on the relationship between electronic performance monitoring and strain-related outcomes (Wolff et al., 2024). In summary, resources from fit and links should help the drivers to solve situational constraints and to cope with time pressure and stress related to electronic monitoring, which in turn prevents them from becoming exhausted (e.g., Bakker et al., 2005).

However, the few studies that have been conducted on these relationships to date have shown that (organizational) embeddedness tends to strengthen rather than weaken the relationships between stressors and reduced well-being. For example, Aronsson et al. (2019) showed in their epidemiological study on 11,675 Sweden workers that being ‘locked’

in one’s job is related to suboptimal health and psychological well-being. Allen et al. (2016) have further demonstrated in two studies that being “stuck” in a job (highly embedded) and experiencing stressful work conditions (abusive supervision and job insecurity) relate negatively to physical health (both studies), emotional exhaustion, as well as sleep quality and quantity. The authors argued that simultaneously tolerating these poor working conditions to retain the embeddedness resources and dealing with stressors such as abusive supervision and job insecurity might lead to impaired well-being due to constant threat of and actual resource loss (primacy of resource loss of COR theory, Hobfoll, 1989, 2001). This is supported by a study of Peltokorpi (2022) which showed that the relationship between work-family conflict and exhaustion was strengthened by high organizational embeddedness.

However, in developing Hypothesis 3, we relied primarily on the predictions of COR theory. This theory is more comprehensive than individual empirical findings, which may be limited to specific stressors (abusive leadership and job insecurity, Allen et al., 2016; Peltokorpi, 2022). The discrepancy between the predictions of COR theory and empirical findings highlights again the need to investigate the moderating role of organizational and community embeddedness in the relationship between stressors and exhaustion. We propose:

**Hypothesis 3:** The positive relationship between local truck drivers’ time pressure (a), situational constraints (b), perceived stress from electronic surveillance (c), and their well-being (exhaustion) is moderated by their organizational embeddedness, so that the relationship is less positive (i.e., weakened) for more embedded compared to less embedded local truck drivers with respect to exhaustion.

In line with our previous arguments based on COR (Hobfoll, 1989, 2001), drivers might also use their valued resources in the community to deal with stressors. In particular, social support provided by family, neighbors, friends, and relatives can help employees cope with feelings of exhaustion (Fenlason & Beehr, 1994). These relationships can spend energy (e.g., Dutton, 2003) and support drivers to unwind and recover from work stress by providing opportunities that facilitate successful recovery through physical activity (e.g., Lindegård et al., 2015), and allow for different recovery experiences (detachment, mastery experiences, and relaxation, e.g., Sonnentag et al., 2022). Therefore, we propose:

**Hypothesis 4:** The positive relationship between local truck drivers’ time pressure (a), situational constraints (b), perceived stress from electronic surveillance (c), and their well-being (exhaustion) is moderated by their

<sup>1</sup> In the original model, we also included anger as second indicator of well-being as well as intrinsic motivation and intentions to quit the occupation. In the review-process, we decided to exclude these outcomes from the manuscript to clarify the focus of the manuscript. The results can be found at OSF: <https://osf.io/qaxyc/>.

community embeddedness, so that the relationship is less positive (i.e., weakened) for more embedded compared to less embedded local truck drivers with respect to exhaustion.

Figure 1 depicts the study model including all hypotheses.

## Method

### Participants and Procedure

Data were collected by a survey administered through telephone interviews with local truck drivers recruited from nine trucking companies on a voluntary basis. More specifically, we recruited local truck driving companies who were interested in participating through letters and phone calls. These companies, in turn, recruited their drivers on a voluntary basis by announcing the study. The interested drivers then contacted the companies and gave their written consent. The companies then sent us the written consent, phone numbers to contact the drivers within predefined timeslots (to ensure that the drivers could participate during working hours without having to drive when the interviews took place), and in some cases already the suggested interview dates. Once we had written consent for data protection in general and for the use of the phone number, interview dates were agreed on. The drivers were interviewed on the phone by two trained interviewers using a structured interview guide. Structured

telephone interviews provide a flexible, convenient, and accessible means of reaching drivers, allowing for greater participation rates. Moreover, with telephone interviews, researchers can obtain immediate responses to their questions and, if necessary, explain what is meant by the specific questions.

We interviewed a total of 107 truck drivers. Data from 10 drivers were omitted because of language difficulties ( $n = 2$ ) or their job (dispatcher and fleet manager,  $n = 4$ ; long-haul drivers instead of local drivers,  $n = 4$ ). Thus, the final sample consisted of 97 actively working local drivers.

The 97 local drivers (95% male,  $n = 92$ ) had an average age of 46.94 years ( $SD = 10.51$ ; range 17–63 years) and an average job tenure of 18.55 years ( $SD = 10.98$ ; range 1–43 years). The drivers had been working at their current employer for an average of 11.71 years ( $SD = 9.21$ ; range 1–34 years). On average, the drivers reported working 42.37 h per week ( $SD = 6.19$ ). Eighty-six drivers were German (89%); two drivers each were of Romanian, Turkish, Kosovar, and Russian nationality (2% each); and one driver each was of Polish, Croatian, and Russian-German (dual) nationality. The drivers had mainly low to middle education levels (secondary school leaving certificate (41%) or lower (46%), only 5% with a university entrance qualification, and 1% with a university degree, others are missing), and vocational training in various occupations; only 13% had trained as professional drivers, all others had completed vocational training in a different field (e.g., 10% bricklayers, 6% car mechanics, 4% retail salespersons, and 3% each butchers and carpenters). Four of the drivers (4%) did not have any vocational training.

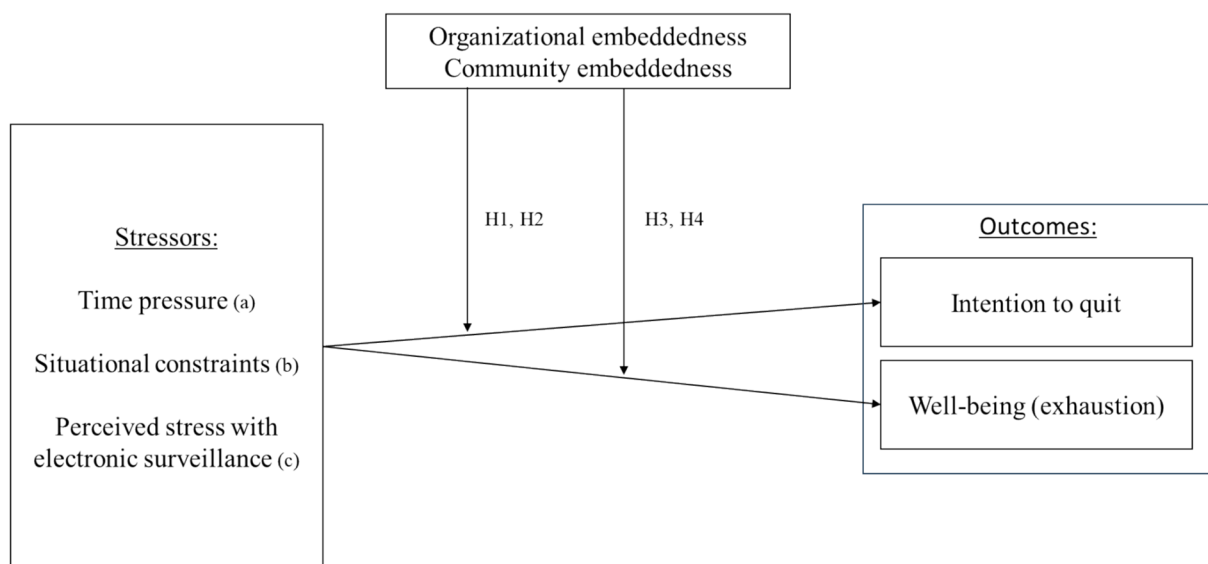


Fig. 1 Overall study model

## Measures

The interviews included closed-ended questions which were based on self-constructed and validated, well-established scales. The scales measuring job embeddedness, intention to quit, and exhaustion were, if necessary, translated into German and then back translated into English. We adjusted some items to maintain plain language, as the trucking companies advised us beforehand that not all local drivers have German as their first language. Moreover, as the interviews were conducted during working hours, we needed to keep the interviews as short as possible. Therefore, we used some single-item measures (for an extensive discussion on the use of single-item measures, see Matthews et al., 2022). During the interviews, the truck drivers gave comments on their answers and the interviewers took notes on these comments and explanations. Table 1 summarizes all measures and includes example quotes from the interviewed truck drivers for illustration.

### Time Pressure

Time pressure was assessed using three items from the instrument for stress-related activity analysis (ISTA, Semmer et al., 1999) and one self-constructed item regarding route planning. Items were rated on a 5-point scale (1 = *never* to 5 = *always*) and were “How often do you feel time pressure during the week?,” “How many times a week do you need to work faster than normal to get your work done?,” “How often do you get off work later than planned because of too much work during the week?,” and “How often do you fall behind the route schedule during the week?.” Scale reliability was good ( $\omega=0.75$ ; see Revelle & Zinbarg, 2009).

### Situational Constraints

Situational constraints were identified in a workshop with drivers, dispatchers, and managers of six different companies. Problems with dispatch were assessed with “How many times in a week does it happen that there is a rescheduling?,” “How often does it happen in a week that the dispatcher does not inform you sufficiently about the route, contact persons at the customers, etc.?” “Exchange of information with the dispatcher before loading is good,” “Exchange of information with the dispatcher during the trip is good.” Problems with the customers were assessed with the following items: “There are too long waiting times at the customers’ site,” “At the customers’ site, the time window (for arrival at the customers’ site) is too narrow,” “There is no help with loading/unloading at the customers’ site,” “There is not enough space at the customers’ loading dock.” The general loading dock situation at customers’ sites was measured using one item (“How often do you find an unfavorable loading

dock situation at the customers’ site in a week (little space and few loading teams)?”). Loading times were assessed with “How many times in a week are there excessive loading times at the loading dock in your facility?” and “How often in a week are there excessively long loading times at the customers’ loading dock?” All items were rated on a 5-point scale (1 = *never* to 5 = *very often*). The different areas of situational constraints were then aggregated to one mean score. Reliability was sufficient ( $\omega=0.69$ ).

### Stress from Electronic Surveillance

Stress from electronic surveillance was measured using one self-constructed item. In relation to the digital tachograph, which implements EU law in recording driving times and rest periods in minute detail with low tolerance limits in the interpretation of the law (often leading to enormous time pressure for drivers when they reach the limits) we asked “How stressed does that make you feel?” (5-point scale from 1 = *not at all* to 5 = *very*).

### Job Embeddedness

Job embeddedness was measured using 17 items adapted from Lee et al., (2004; see also Mitchell et al., 2001). The 11 items for organizational embeddedness and the six items for community embeddedness were rated on a 5-point scale (1 = *does not apply at all* to 5 = *applies completely*) or required numeric values. All numerical values were converted to 5-point scales (the range between the lowest to the highest value was divided by 5, and afterwards the values were coded “*lowest value up to and including first fifth*” = 1, “*second fifth*” = 2 etc.). Reliability for job embeddedness ( $\omega=0.74$ ) and for the community subscale ( $\omega=0.74$ ) was good, and sufficient for the organization subscale ( $\omega=0.68$ ).

### Intentions to Quit

Intentions to quit one’s job were measured using one item (Spector et al., 1988): “I often think seriously about quitting my current company” (5-point scale; 1 = *does not apply at all* to 5 = *is completely true*).

### Well-being (Exhaustion)

Exhaustion was assessed using one item: “How often during the week do you find yourself feeling exhausted from work?” (Demerouti & Bakker, 2008) on a 5-point scale (1 = *never* to 5 = *always*).

**Table 1** Measurements overview and sample quotes

Construct	Questionnaire item	Reference	Example quote
Time pressure ( <i>imbalance between the tasks required and the time in which they are to be accomplished</i> )	How often do you feel time pressure during the week?	First three items from the instrument for stress-related activity analysis (ISTA, Semmer et al., 1999), one self-constructed item regarding route planning	Participant 2: "Time pressure is very different."
	How many times a week do you need to work faster than normal to get your work done? How often do you get off work later than planned because of too much work during the week? How often do you fall behind the tour schedule during the week?		Participant 13: "On time at the end of the working day, but very tightly timed (5–10 min plus/minus)." Participant 13: "Pure stress, too little time to load." Participant 14: "Late finish due to traffic jams or similar." Participant 65: "I lag behind the tour schedule almost every day."
Situational constraints ( <i>malfunctioning of organizational processes and inadequacy of tools, equipment, materials, or supplies</i> ; Fay & Sonnentag, 2002)	How many times in a week does it happen that there is a rescheduling?	11 items, self-constructed. Situational constraints were identified in a workshop with drivers, dispatchers, and managers of six different companies	Participant 8: "The availability of the dispatcher during the journey is sometimes better, sometimes worse."
	How often does it happen in a week that the dispatcher does not inform you sufficiently about the tour, contact persons at customers etc.?		Participant 15: "The exchange of information with the dispatcher is not good; you are always surprised in the morning."
	The exchange of information with the dispatcher before loading is good.		Participant 69: "There are many customers for whom you first have to push something aside at the ramp."
	The exchange of information with the dispatcher during the trip is good.		Participant 98: "If I have to wait too long for a customer, I leave for the next customer."
	How many times in a week are there excessive loading times at the ramp in your facility?		Participant 15: "You get used to little space on the ramp."
	How often in a week are there excessively long loading times at the customer's ramp?		Participant 15: "'Hair-raising stories' with private customers; the streets are often narrow; customers portray us as stupid with bad behavior."
	How often do you find an unfavorable ramp situation at the customer's site in a week (little space, few loading teams)?		Participant 19: "Unfavorable ramp/unloading situations due to housing estates, graveled driveways, narrow streets, parked cars, ..."
	There are too long waiting times at the customer's site.		Participant 83: "No stopping zones etc."
	At the customer's, the time window is too narrow.		Participant 84: "Unloading often has to take place on the road."
	There is no help with loading/unloading at the customer's site.		Participant 95: "Loading times vary depending on the tour (early/night shift)."
There is not enough space at the customer's ramp.	Participant 106: "Loading times at the customer: some customers take an extremely long time, others are more considerate."		

Table 1 (continued)

Construct	Questionnaire item	Reference	Example quote
Stress from electronic surveillance ( <i>use of information and communication technologies to monitor and track various aspects of e.g., the driver's behavior</i> ; BMVI, 2020; Friswell & Williamson, 2013; Ravid et al., 2023)	Do you or your employer use digital tachographs? If yes: how stressed do you feel about the use of digital tachographs?	1 item, self-constructed in relation to the digital tachograph	Participant 13: "You get used to the stress of being tracked." Participant 39: "I don't care at all." Participant 94: "You can't forget anything when you're under stress. You can't cheat either, that's protection for the drivers and it's important!" Participant 106: "Feels like 'being in view', being observed."
Organizational embeddedness ( <i>contextual influences as connections to other people at work, the perceived fit between one's job/organization and one's activities, and the benefits one would lose if one left the organization</i> ; Mitchell et al., 2001)	How long have you been employed by your current employer as a professional driver? (years) How long have you been employed by your current employer? (years) How long have you been working as a professional driver? (years) I feel that I have the necessary knowledge and skills for my job. I get along well with people at my job (i.e., my company). I like my working hours. How many people do you deal with on a regular basis in your business? (drivers, other colleagues, e.g., warehouse, dispatchers, boss) I feel that my boss (other drivers, other colleagues, e.g., warehouse, dispatchers, customers) appreciates and respects me at work. I would be giving up a lot of positive things if I left this job. My opportunities for advancement are good in my current organization. I am well compensated for my performance. I really like the place where I live. I consider the place where I live as my home. The area where I live offers the leisure activities I like (e.g., sports, nature, culture, and art). How many relatives (friends) do you have in the immediate surroundings of where you live? It would be very difficult to leave my place of residence. My neighborhood is friendly.	11 items, adapted from Lee et al., (2004; see also Mitchell et al., 2001)	Participant 13: "We are not valued by the dispatcher." Participant 16: "I don't actually have any contact with other people in the company." Participant 18: "The opportunities for promotion are theoretically good, yes." Participant 22: "I don't want to be promoted at all." Participant 34: "A promotion would be possible, but not as a driver, and I don't want to change jobs." Participant 71: "There is no support from the employer (driver safety training, etc.)" Participant 97: "People help each other among colleagues."
Community embeddedness ( <i>contextual influences as connections to others in the community, the perceived fit between one's community culture and one's life activities, and the benefits one would lose if one left the community</i> ; Mitchell et al., 2001)		6 items, adapted from Lee et al., (2004; see also Mitchell et al., 2001)	Participant 6: "I have no contact with neighbors." Participant 15: "No relatives, but my wife and children are there." Participant 35: "I would move if the company was closer to my partner." Participant 84: "There are few opportunities for making music in the village." Participant 84: "Moving would be dependent on alternatives."

Table 1 (continued)

Construct	Questionnaire item	Reference	Example quote
Intention to quit ( <i>intention to quit the current job</i> )	I often think seriously about quitting at my current company.	1 item (Spector et al., 1988)	Participant 6: "Reasons are private, I will stay in the truck industry." Participant 54: "Branch will close at the end of 2025; I will not move to another branch."
Exhaustion ( <i>consequence of intense physical, affective and cognitive strain</i> ; Demerouti et al., 2010)	How often during the week do you find yourself feeling exhausted from work?	1 item (Demerouti & Bakker, 2008)	Participant 52: "Always after work." Participant 69: "Also because of physical problems." Participant 97: "As soon as you get some rest, you get tired."

## Data Analysis

Hypotheses were tested with a path-analysis using *R* (available at <http://r-project.org>) using the package 'lavaan' (Rosseel, 2012). We plotted the interactions and calculated simple slopes for moderator values of  $-1 SD$ , *mean*, and  $+1 SD$  using an online tool by Preacher et al. (2006) and the 'reghepler' package (Hughes, 2020). Johnson-Neyman regions of significance are reported. Post hoc analyses showed that our model ( $N = 97$ ;  $\alpha = 0.05$ ), had enough power for detecting interactions on intentions to quit (time pressure  $\times$  organizational/community embeddedness; Cohen's  $f^2 = 0.04/0.14$  power is 0.61/0.98; situational constraints  $\times$  organizational/community embeddedness: Cohen's  $f^2 = 0.03/0.16$ , power is 0.55/0.99; electronic surveillance  $\times$  organizational/community embeddedness: Cohen's  $f^2 = 0.05/0.02$ , power is 0.68/0.38) and on exhaustion (time pressure  $\times$  organizational/community embeddedness: Cohen's  $f^2 = 0.01/0.08$ , power is 0.19/0.88; time pressure  $\times$  organizational/community embeddedness: Cohen's  $f^2 = 0.004/0.12$ , power is 0.15/0.96; electronic surveillance  $\times$  organizational/community embeddedness: Cohen's  $f^2 = 0.01/0.001$ , power is 0.27/0.05). The path analysis included all direct and interaction effects, correlations between predictors (time pressure, situational constraints, and electronic surveillance), correlations between moderators (job embeddedness organization and community), and outcomes (intention to quit and exhaustion). Predictors and moderators were grandmean-centered and treated as random. We built the interaction terms by multiplying the centered predictors and the centered moderators.

## Results

Table 2 shows the *mean* values, *SDs* and intercorrelations for the study variables.

As our analyses rely on cross-sectional data, we followed the recommendations of Jordan and Troth (2020; see also Podsakoff et al., 2012) and tested our data for a potential common methods bias by using the Harman's one factor test (e.g., Fuller et al., 2016; Podsakoff & Organ, 1986) and by modeling an unmeasured latent method construct (ULMC; Bagozzi & Phillips, 1982; see also Fuller et al., 2016 and Podsakoff et al., 2012). With exploratory factor analyses, we checked whether all measurement items load onto a single factor (Harman's one factor test; e.g., Fuller et al., 2016). Our results show that the first factor accounts for 15%.<sup>2</sup> As a discussed cutoff for shared variance due to common method bias is 50% of the variance

<sup>2</sup> See also OSF: <https://osf.io/qaxyc/>

**Table 2** Means, standard deviations, and correlations of the study variables

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Age	46.94	10.51								
2. Gender	0.05	0.22	-.15							
3. Time pressure	2.25	0.90	-.01	.10						
4. Situational constraints	2.49	0.63	-.04	-.07	.52**					
5. Stress from electronic surveillance	1.68	1.11	-.12	.11	.38**	.27**				
6. Organizational embeddedness	3.40	0.50	.40**	.03	-.20	-.25*	-.20			
7. Community embeddedness	3.36	0.54	.13	.03	.01	.08	-.04	.32**		
8. Intention to quit one’s job	1.71	1.16	-.48**	.06	.23*	.21*	.29**	-.42**	-.30**	
9. Exhaustion	2.60	1.11	-.03	.21*	.37**	.32**	.22*	-.14	-.17	.29**

*N* = 97. Response ranges were 1–5

\*\* *p* < .01. \* *p* < .05

among variables (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986), our potential common method bias seems to be sufficiently low. More importantly, for modeling the ULMC, we used bootstrapping (1000 iterations); we set the variance of the method-factor to one and modeled all other factors to be unrelated to the method-factor (covariance was set to zero), and we modeled the predictors, moderators, and outcomes to be correlated to each other. The results show that a CFA not including the method factor ( $\chi^2 (df=620) = 1060.73, p < 0.001$ ) fits significantly better than the model including the method factor ( $\chi^2 (df=680) = 1167.63, p < 0.001$ ;  $\Delta \chi^2 (df=60) = 106.90, p < 0.001$ ). Modeling an additional CFA including the method factor and setting the factor loadings on this factor to be equal, the square of the equal factor loadings (0.22) also indicates a shared variance of 5%. Thus, both methods for detecting a potential common method bias show that even though there might be shared

variance due to common methods in our data, it seems to be sufficiently low.

In Hypothesis 1, we proposed that the positive relationship between drivers’ time pressure (a), situational constraints (b), perceived stress from electronic surveillance (c), and their intentions to quit is moderated by their organizational embeddedness, so that the relationship is less positive (i.e., buffered) for more embedded compared to less embedded local truck drivers. None of the interactions between the stressors and organizational embeddedness on intention to quit was significant (see Table 3). Therefore, we found no support for Hypothesis 1. Table 3 also shows that organizational embeddedness negatively predicted intentions to quit (*est* = -0.93, *SE* = 0.19, *p* < 0.001).

We further proposed that the positive relationship between drivers’ time pressure (a), situational constraints (b), perceived stress from electronic surveillance (c), and

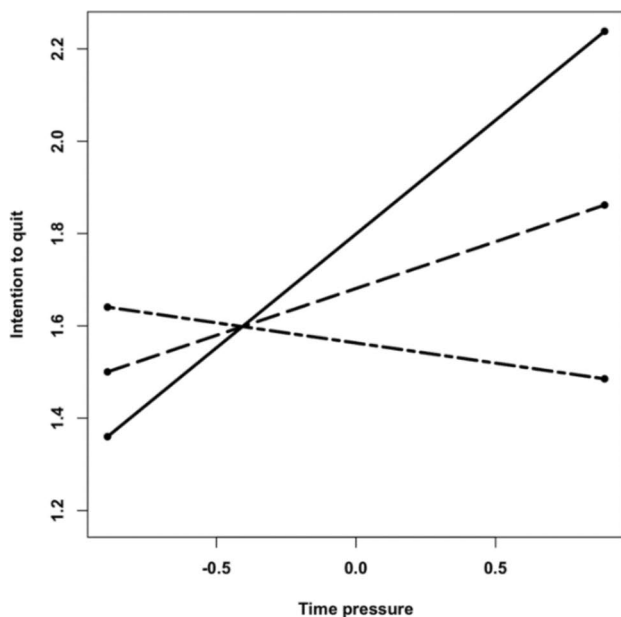
**Table 3** Results of path modeling

Variable	Intention to quit		Exhaustion	
	<i>Est</i> ( <i>SE</i> )	<i>z</i>	<i>Est</i> ( <i>SE</i> )	<i>z</i>
Intercept	1.68 (0.09)	17.81***	2.59 (0.10)	25.81***
Time pressure	0.20 (0.13)	1.63	0.39 (0.13)	2.93**
Situational constraints	0.03 (0.17)	0.19	0.27 (0.18)	1.44
Stress from electronic surveillance	0.14 (0.09)	1.55	0.06 (0.10)	0.65
Organizational embeddedness	-0.93 (0.19)	-4.96***	0.18 (0.20)	0.92
Community embeddedness	-0.18 (0.15)	-1.23	-0.27 (0.16)	-1.71
Time pressure × organizational embeddedness	0.32 (0.27)	1.19	0.04 (0.28)	0.14
Situational constraints × organizational embeddedness	-0.42 (0.38)	-1.09	0.05 (0.41)	0.12
Electronic surveillance × organizational embeddedness	-0.25 (0.19)	-1.31	-0.13 (0.20)	-0.63
Time pressure × community embeddedness	-0.45 (0.20)	-2.28*	-0.36 (0.21)	-1.73
Situational constraints × community embeddedness	0.74 (0.31)	2.39*	0.69 (0.33)	2.08*
Electronic surveillance × community embeddedness	0.12 (0.14)	0.82	-0.01 (0.15)	-0.04
Model <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	.362		.263	

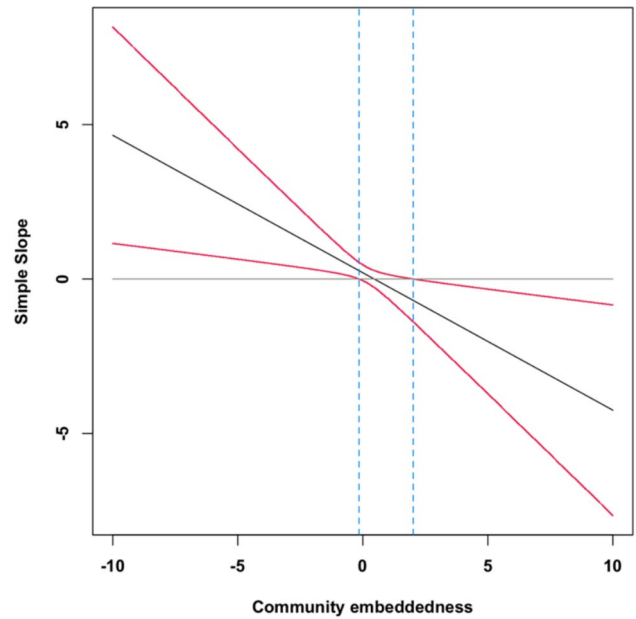
\*\*\* *p* < .001, \*\* *p* < .01, \* *p* < .05

their intentions to quit is moderated by their community embeddedness, so that the relationship is less positive (i.e., buffered) for more embedded compared to less embedded local truck drivers (Hypothesis 2). Hypothesis 2a was partly supported, as the interaction between time pressure and embeddedness in the community significantly predicted drivers' intention to quit their job ( $est = -0.45, SE = 0.20, p = 0.02$ ; see Table 3). The simple slope revealed that the less embedded the drivers were in their communities, the stronger the relation between time pressure and intention to quit one's job (low level of community embeddedness ( $-1 SD = -0.65$ ): simple slope = 0.49,  $SE = 0.18, p = 0.01$ ; region of significance: lower bound =  $-0.15$ , upper bound 2.02; slopes are significant outside this region; as the value of  $-1 SD$  is below  $-0.15$  and therefore within the significant region, the slope is significant; see Figs. 2 and 3). The simple slopes for medium ( $M = 0.00$ ) and high levels ( $+1 SD = 0.65$ ) of community embeddedness were not significant ( $p > 0.12$ ). Thus, the local drivers who were less embedded in their communities were more likely to intent to quit their job when time pressure was high, but higher time pressure was not significantly related to higher intentions to quit one's job when community embeddedness was at least medium.

Moreover, we found a significant interaction between situational constraints and embeddedness in the community on drivers' intention to quit their job ( $est = 0.74, SE = 0.31, p = 0.02$ ; see Table 3). However, contrary to our hypothesis, the simple slope revealed that the more embedded the drivers were in their communities, the stronger the relation between situational constraints and intention to quit one's

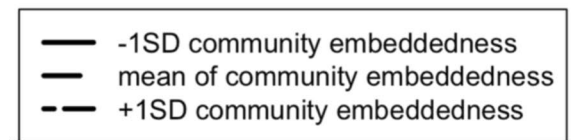


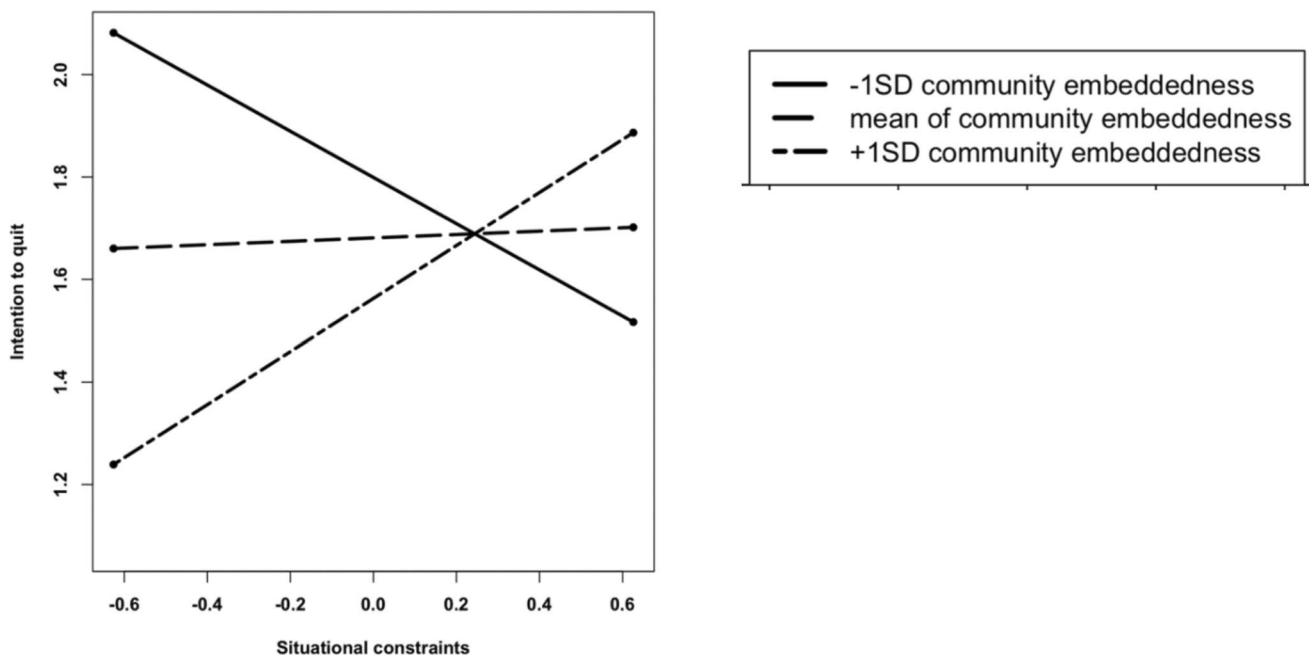
**Fig. 2** Relationships between time pressure and intention to quit the job at the values of  $-1 SD$ , *mean*, and  $+1 SD$  of the moderator (community embeddedness)



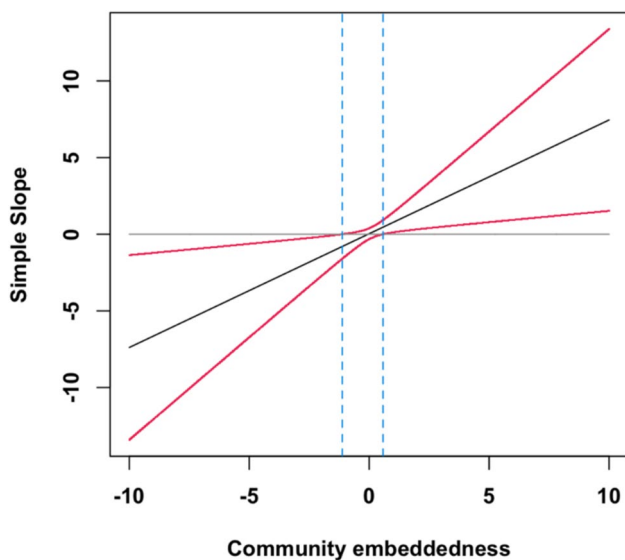
**Fig. 3** Regions of significance for the relationships between time pressure and intention to quit the job. Simple slopes of community embeddedness are significant outside the region marked with dashed lines

job (high level of community embeddedness ( $+1 SD = 0.65$ ): simple slope = 0.52,  $SE = 0.24, p = 0.03$ ; region of significance: lower bound =  $-1.12$ , upper bound 0.58, slopes are significant outside this region; see Figs. 4 and 5). The simple slopes for medium ( $M = 0.00$ ) and high levels ( $-1$





**Fig. 4** Relationships between situational constraints and intention to quit the job at the values of  $-1 SD$ , mean, and  $+1 SD$  of the moderator (community embeddedness)

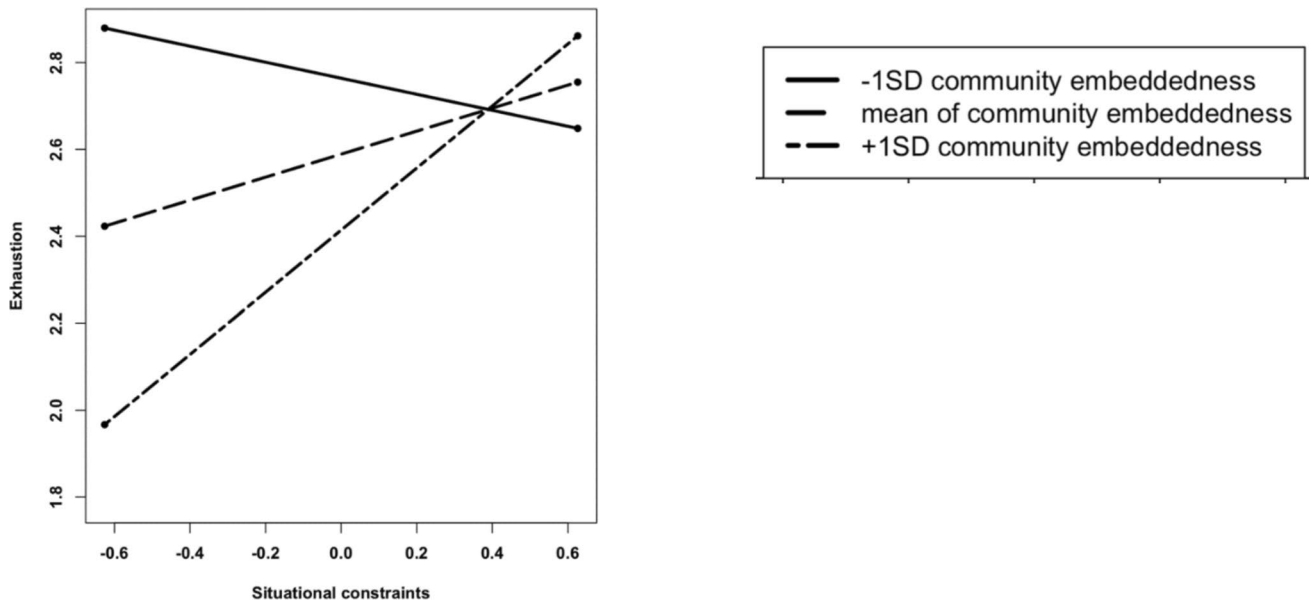


**Fig. 5** Regions of significance for the relationships between situational constraints and intention to quit the job. Simple slopes of community embeddedness are significant outside the region marked with dashed lines

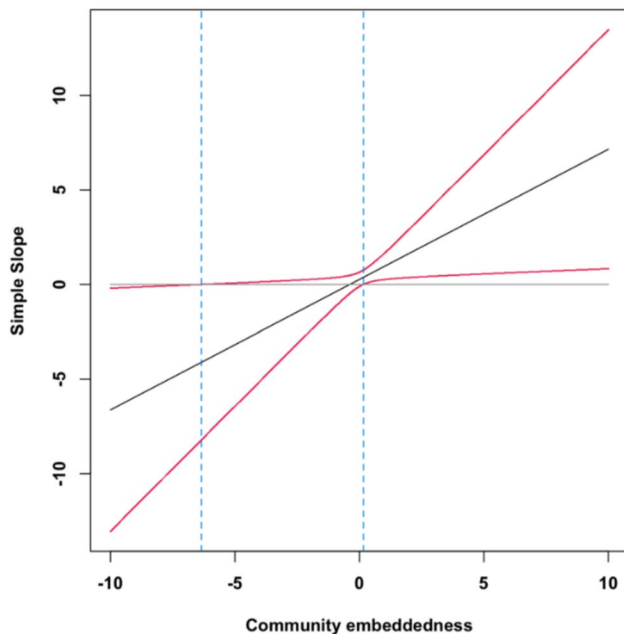
$SD=0.65$ ) of community embeddedness were not significant ( $p > 0.11$ ). We did not find an interaction between community embeddedness and electronic surveillance on intention to quit. In contrast to organizational embeddedness, community embeddedness was not directly related to intentions to quit (see Table 3).

Hypothesis 3 stated that the relationship between the local truck drivers’ time pressure (a), situational constraints (b), perceived stress from electronic surveillance (c), and their well-being (exhaustion) is moderated by their organizational embeddedness, so that the relationship is less positive (i.e., weakened) for more embedded compared to less embedded local truck drivers. Again, none of the interactions between the stressors and organizational embeddedness significantly predicted truck drivers’ exhaustion (see Table 3). Therefore, Hypothesis 3 was not supported.

In Hypothesis 4, we proposed that the relationship between the local truck drivers’ time pressure (a), situational constraints (b), perceived stress from electronic surveillance (c), and their well-being (exhaustion) is moderated by their community embeddedness, so that the relationship is less positive (i.e., weakened) for more embedded compared to less embedded local truck drivers. The interaction between situational constraints and community embeddedness significantly predicted local truck drivers’ exhaustion ( $est=0.69$ ,  $SE=0.33$ ,  $p=0.04$ ; see Table 3). However, the simple slope analysis revealed that the more embedded the drivers were in their communities, the stronger the relation between situational constraints and exhaustion (high level of community embeddedness ( $+1 SD=0.65$ ): simple slope =  $0.71$ ,  $SE=0.26$ ,  $p=0.01$ ; region of significance: lower bound =  $-6.34$ , upper bound  $0.17$ , slopes are significant outside this region; see Figs. 6 and 7). The simple slopes for low ( $-1 SD=-0.65$ ) and medium levels ( $M=0.00$ ) of community embeddedness were not significant



**Fig. 6** Relationships between situational constraints and exhaustion at the values of  $-1$  SD, mean, and  $+1$  SD of the moderator (community embeddedness)



**Fig. 7** Regions of significance for the relationships between situational constraints and intention to quit the job. Simple slopes of community embeddedness are significant outside the region marked with dashed lines

(all  $p > 0.16$ ). Thus, the local drivers who were more embedded in their communities were more likely to be more exhausted when there were many situational constraints, but more situational constraints were not significantly related to higher exhaustion when community embeddedness was at

a medium level or lower. Again, no other interaction with community embeddedness significantly predicted truck drivers' exhaustion.

## Discussion

The aim of the present study was to examine the role of job embeddedness in turnover intentions and well-being in stressful work environments. How do employees feel when they stay in their jobs despite adversity, especially when they are highly embedded in the organization and community? Using a sample of local truck drivers, which is particularly suited for analyzing the often neglected role of embeddedness in the community rather than just in the organization, we address the gaps in understanding the role of job embeddedness and contribute to the literature on job embeddedness and turnover: We extend previous research by focusing on the interplay between both forms of job embeddedness and daily stressors such as time pressure, situational constraints, and electronic surveillance. Our study took place in a context (local truck driving in logistics), where a skilled labor shortage has created a situation where companies, often with less than desirable working conditions, and society as a whole are particularly interested in workforce retention. In response to this, we contribute to the existing but limited body of knowledge concerning blue-collar workers, with a specific emphasis on local truck drivers. The implications of our study have resonance for both organizational strategy

and policy by offering a more comprehensive understanding of the issue.

To summarize, we found that community embeddedness but not organizational embeddedness, as proposed, moderated the stressor-outcome relationships. However, the role of community embeddedness varied depending on the stressor. Higher time pressure was related to more turnover intentions, when drivers were less embedded in the community. Contrary, drivers were more likely to quit when situational constraints were higher, but drivers were more embedded in the community. Consistent with this finding, the more embedded drivers also felt more exhausted when they experienced more situational constraints, supporting previous studies that found job embeddedness strengthened the relationship between stressors and exhaustion (e.g., Allen et al., 2016; Ng & Feldman, 2012; Peltokorpi, 2022). Additionally, our findings are in line with the existing literature on the negative relationship between organizational embeddedness and intention to quit one's job. Unexpectedly, turnover intentions were not predicted by being embedded in the community or by stressors directly.

## Theoretical Implications

Our research has several theoretical implications. First, our findings highlight that community embeddedness moderates stressor-outcome relationships differently depending on the type of stressor. According to COR theory, people strive to acquire and conserve resources, and stress occurs when key resources are threatened or lost (Hobfoll, 1989; Hobfoll et al., 2018). Thereby, stressors deplete resources, leading to strain and negative outcomes, while resources can help in mitigating further resource loss. However, the Challenge-Hindrance Framework (e.g., for an overview, see Podsakoff et al., 2023) offers a more nuanced perspective by distinguishing between two types of stressors that threaten resources: Challenge stressors such as time pressure are stressful aspects of a job but can still provide opportunities for accomplishment, goal attainment, and growth. Thus, these stressors can increase strain but also promote motivation if individuals have sufficient resources to cope. Hindrance stressors like situational constraints refer to barriers that impede goal achievement without offering personal growth opportunities, reducing well-being, motivation, and commitment (for meta-analytic evidence see, Crawford et al., 2010; LePine et al., 2005; Podsakoff et al., 2007; Downes et al., 2021). Our study revealed that time pressure, a challenge stressor, was associated with higher turnover intentions only when community embeddedness was low. This relationship disappeared when drivers were more embedded in their community. While time pressure often motivates individuals to work harder and achieve goals,

its impact depends on the availability of coping resources. Drivers with low community embeddedness lack access to external resources, such as emotional support, advice, or opportunities for recovery and stress relief. Without these resources, time pressure can become overwhelming, leading to heightened turnover intentions as the stress is perceived as insurmountable. More resources in terms of community embeddedness have been shown to be a buffer against the positive relationship between time pressure and turnover intentions.

Contrary to the expected buffering effect of community embeddedness on the relationship between time pressure and turnover intentions, our study found that situational constraints were associated with higher turnover intentions and exhaustion when community embeddedness was high. This amplifying effect can be explained using the Challenge-Hindrance Framework (e.g., Podsakoff et al., 2023), which classifies situational constraints as hindrance stressors. Unlike challenge stressors, hindrance stressors are more likely to be perceived as insurmountable obstacles. In such cases, the social support and energizing effects associated with community embeddedness are less effective and too weak in helping individuals cope with the difficulties. Instead, they may intensify the negative emotional responses, such as frustration or helplessness, by reinforcing a sense of being “trapped” in an unfavorable situation. Future research should replicate and further investigate how job embeddedness (organizational and community embeddedness) can either buffer or exacerbate stressor effects depending on the type of stressor.

Second, and related to the previous point, the results of our study suggest that being embedded in a community provides resources that do not just emerge organically, but need to be nurtured and invested in. For example, highly embedded drivers with strong community ties may need to maintain social contacts in the community or fulfill obligations on a regular basis, such as playing on a local sports team. Therefore, they may be committed to maintaining this valued resource and feel obliged to nurture it, which can lead to work-family conflict and in turn exacerbate exhaustion under severe situational constraints. Thus, high community embeddedness can amplify the detrimental effects of hindrance stressors, in particular, increasing both exhaustion and turnover intentions as the perceived barriers become overwhelming. Our findings extend the integration of COR theory into the embeddedness research of Kiazad et al. (2015) by emphasizing that resources have to be invested in job embeddedness and, therefore, job embeddedness can also have costs and create obligations (see also Halbesleben et al., 2014; Hobfoll et al., 2018). When integrating research on work-family conflict and work-family enrichment (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006; ten Brummelhuis & Bakker, 2012) with research on job embeddedness (see as examples Ng &

Feldman, 2012; Peltokorpi & Allen, 2024; Rubenstein et al., 2020), it might be interesting to further explore under which working conditions and community conditions the conservation and investment of resources have positive or negative outcomes for employees.

Third, our study supports Hobfoll's (2001) argument that the value of resources is context dependent (see also Hobfoll et al., 2018). The study has shown that resources provided by organizational embeddedness prevent turnover intentions. However, in our sample these resources do not seem to be helpful for dealing with stressors. We showed that organizational embeddedness, which has so far been considered the most relevant aspect of job embeddedness, did not show a moderating effect at all. Drivers have a more isolated work environment in their truck with limited daily interactions within the organization. Therefore, when they experience negative events on their daily trips, such as traffic jams, parking problems, or loading problems, they are mostly on their own. Social support from colleagues and supervisors is less available. This underlines the importance of embeddedness in the community for work environments with low social interactions in the company and might explain why we did not find a significant interaction between organizational embeddedness and the job stressors. Thus, it would be interesting to investigate whether there is a similar pattern of results for other jobs with similar characteristics or for remote work as an extreme example of difficult access to organizational resources and building organizational embeddedness on the one hand, and an opportunity for community embeddedness on the other hand.

## Practical Implications

Organizational embeddedness was negatively related to turnover intentions, and it is tempting to assume that if policymakers and employers increase organizational embeddedness, employees will have a reduced intention to quit their jobs. Yet, as Allen et al. (2016) showed, organizational embeddedness might be not beneficial in high-stress work contexts when most time is spent in organizations. Additionally, as community embeddedness buffered the relationship between time pressure and intentions to quit, one could assume that encouraging employees to embed themselves in their community would also mitigate the relationships between stress and intentions to quit one's job. However, this seems to be only true for challenge stressors, as our results also show that being highly embedded in the community when having high work stress — in terms of hindrance stressors — might have negative consequences for well-being and intentions to quit. Practitioners therefore should have in mind that even though employees might stay in their company when they are highly embedded in their

community, especially the more embedded employees might also experience exhaustion and are more likely to quit if hindrance stressors are pronounced. As Allen et al. (2016) stated, such detrimental effects might be especially important in the long run. As in Germany around 30,000 professional drivers retire every year, but only around 17,000 new workers enter the occupation (BGL, 2021); politicians and employers (i.e., CEOs, HR department heads/strategists, HR directors) should have in mind that promoting embeddedness without changing stressors is not sustainable. This is not only important for employers but also for policymakers, as maintaining drivers is essential for society (BMVI, 2020; Burstedde, 2021; Mittal et al., 2018). Therefore, we want to emphasize that to sustainably retain employees, the first priority should be to minimize stressors, especially hindrance stressors and mitigate stress responses.

Our results provide indications that reducing time pressure, situational constraints, and stress from electronic surveillance should be beneficial for drivers' well-being. For example, routes too tightly timed by dispatchers, too narrow time windows at the customers' site for unloading, and traffic jams due to poor infrastructure create time pressure, which is further exacerbated by the shortage of drivers. Situational constraints also stem from different sources; for example, problems with dispatch or customers are primarily issues that the company can address, and the parking situation and loading goods are also political issues. The digital tachograph can also be useful when it is used to protect drivers from exploitation and accidents. In sum, in order to address the stressors, there is the need for policymakers and companies (both trucking companies and shippers) to work together.

## Strength and Limitations

Our study has several strengths and limitations. One strength is that we investigated blue-collar workers, an underrepresented group in IO research. Moreover, we conducted a survey administered through telephone interviews, which is particularly valuable for people with a lower level of education and non-native speakers of the interview language, as they offer the opportunity to explain what is meant by specific questions. Yet, our study also has some limitations.

First, we examined cross-sectional relationships, and all variables were assessed via self-report, which limits the causal interpretation of the data and can lead to common method bias. However, our main interest was on interaction effects, which are generally less affected by common method bias (Evans, 1985; Siemsen et al., 2010). Additionally, we tried minimizing the potential common methods bias before data collection (e.g., we tried to minimize ambiguity in items by making the items as specific and clear for

our truck-driver sample as possible, and we tried to motivate the participants in unbiased answers in transparently communicating the purpose of the study; Podsakoff et al., 2012, see also Jordan & Troth, 2020), and the statistical test for common methods bias revealed no significant shared variance due to common methods in our data. Even if it is difficult to obtain data from blue-collar workers at multiple time points (Decius et al., 2021), future research should still aim to further prevent common method bias with longitudinal data. However, cross-sectional data can provide valuable inputs for future longitudinal studies (Disabato, 2016; Spector, 2019). Second, due to the difficulty of interviewing blue-collar workers in general, the sample size of our study was rather small ( $n=97$ ). Third, as we conducted a survey administered through telephone interviews, there might have been a social desirability bias (Nederhof, 1985). However, we minimized the potential emergence of social desirability bias, as the interviewer came from a different professional context (the university) and was only a voice on the phone.

## Conclusion

Overall, our study shows that being embedded in the community can prevent local truck drivers from intending to quit their jobs. However, depending on the type of stressor, being embedded in one's community is more like "being stuck" when the working conditions are bad and can therefore also have negative relationships with turnover intentions and well-being.

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**Author Contribution** All the authors contributed to the study conception and design. Material preparation, data collection, and analysis were performed by Julia Schmidbauer and Cornelia Niessen. The first draft of the manuscript was written by Julia Schmidbauer and Cornelia Niessen, and all the authors commented on the previous versions of the manuscript. All the authors read and approved the final manuscript. Some of the data were presented at the 2024 Centre for Transformative Work Design Conference, Perth, Australia in February 2024.

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**Data and Code Availability** The datasets generated during and/or analyzed during the current study and the code are available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

## Declarations

**Ethics Approval** In our study, we have followed the guidelines of ethics approval of the German Research Council: privacy was respected (data protection was proofed by the data protection officer; all researchers who had direct or indirect contact with the participants or their data

were bound to data secrecy; participants were informed about data privacy; anonymization was realized by using consecutive numbers as code for the interviews and contact information were stored in a second document; deletion of the data is possible at any time and, without request, the data will be deleted automatically after 10 years); study participation was voluntary and that withdrawal was possible at any time. After informing the participants, their written consent was obtained. There was no physical or mental stress induced or required and no deception was used. We did not have an official ethical approval, as following the ethical guidelines is usually sufficient in Germany for assessing low-invasive self-reported measures as personality measures (Big5), affect, and behavior.

**Consent to Participate** Informed consent was obtained from all the individual participants included in the study.

**Competing Interests** The authors declare no competing interests.

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