

When job satisfaction is not enough: The role of organisational commitment and need fulfilment in shaping moonlighting intentions

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Dates:

Received: 05 Oct. 2025

Accepted: 24 Mar. 2026

Published: 25 May 2026

How to cite this article:

Siswanti, Y., & Muafi, M. (2026). When job satisfaction is not enough: The role of organisational commitment and need fulfilment in shaping moonlighting intentions. *SA Journal of Human Resource Management/SA Tydskrif vir Menslikehulpbronsbestuur*, 24(0), a3401. <https://doi.org/10.4102/sajhrm.v24i0.3401>

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Orientation: By addressing moonlighting intentions, universities can support faculty well-being and job stability, which ultimately contributes to the quality of education and reduces potential conflicts of interest in academia.

Research purpose: The study aims to examine the effect of job satisfaction on moonlighting intention, with organisational commitment and need fulfilment as moderating variables, in the context of higher education lecturers in Indonesia.

Motivation for the study: The study focuses on lecturers from private universities in two cities, which may limit the generalisability of the findings. Future research could expand the scope to include different regions, sectors or longitudinal data to strengthen external validity.

Research approach/design and method: A quantitative approach was employed using survey data from 221 lecturers at private universities in Bandung and Yogyakarta. Data were analysed with structural equation modelling using the partial least squares (SEM-PLS) method.

Main findings: The results show that job satisfaction positively influences moonlighting intention. Furthermore, both organisational commitment and need fulfilment significantly moderate the relationship between job satisfaction and moonlighting intention, indicating that psychological and economic needs play a crucial role in shaping dual work behaviour.

Practical/managerial implications: The findings highlight the importance for higher education institutions to develop human resource management strategies that not only improve job satisfaction but also strengthen organisational commitment and address faculty members' needs to reduce moonlighting tendencies.

Contribution/value-add: This study enriches the literature on moonlighting by integrating organisational and psychological perspectives and offering empirical evidence from the underexplored context of higher education in Indonesia.

Keywords: job satisfaction; moonlighting intention; need fulfilment; organisational commitment; higher education lecturers.

Introduction

Moonlighting intention, defined as an employee's propensity to engage in additional paid work beyond their primary employment, has become increasingly prevalent in both developed and developing economies (Hurka et al., 2018). Unlike casual 'side jobs', moonlighting is typically distinguished by several dimensions: the timing of work (often outside regular hours), the employment conditions (formal or informal arrangements), the legality of such work (particularly relevant in sectors with non-compete clauses) and the degree of employer disclosure (whether employees conceal or reveal their secondary employment) (Prasad, 2024; Saini, 2024). Understanding these distinctions is critical, as moonlighting intentions carry different implications for individuals and organisations than those of occasional side work.

Globally, moonlighting has become particularly pronounced in the education sector (Prasad et al., 2024). Rising costs of living, stagnant wages and the desire for professional skill development have driven educators to seek additional income sources (Seema & Sachdeva, 2020; Šťastný, 2021). While moonlighting offers financial benefits and opportunities for networking and skill acquisition (Khera, 2023), it also presents significant challenges. Employees who moonlight frequently experience time constraints, physical and mental fatigue, and disruptions to work–life balance (Kalra et al., 2023). For organisations, moonlighting can

create conflicts of interest, particularly when secondary employment overlaps with the primary job's industry, potentially affecting employee loyalty, work ethics and productivity (Khera, 2023; Malodia & Butail, 2023).

Given these trade-offs, understanding what drives employees' intentions to moonlight has become essential for developing adaptive human resource policies. Among the most frequently cited antecedents is job satisfaction or the lack thereof. Khera (2023) found that educators are more likely to seek moonlighting opportunities when dissatisfied with their primary jobs, suggesting that dissatisfaction serves as a push factor. However, the relationship between job satisfaction and moonlighting intention is unlikely to be straightforward. Recent theoretical and empirical work indicates that this relationship may be conditioned by other psychological and organisational factors (Prasad et al., 2024; Pujiyanto et al., 2024).

Two such factors warrant particular attention: organisational commitment and need fulfilment. Organisational commitment reflects an employee's psychological attachment to their institution and has been shown to influence how employees respond to dissatisfaction (Meyer & Allen, 2001). Employees with strong organisational commitment may suppress intentions to moonlight despite low job satisfaction, whereas those with weak commitment may readily seek alternatives. Similarly, need fulfilment, which encompasses both economic needs (adequate income) and psychological needs (recognition, achievement, self-actualisation), shapes the threshold at which job dissatisfaction translates into action (Rojas et al., 2023). When primary employment fails to fulfil these needs, moonlighting may be perceived not merely as optional income but as a necessity for well-being and professional growth.

In Indonesia, these dynamics are particularly salient. Educators, especially those in private universities, face significant economic pressures amid rising living costs and relatively stagnant salaries (Seema et al., 2021). Khera (2023) notes that dissatisfaction with income and a lack of recognition for performance contributions drive many Indonesian educators towards moonlighting. Yet despite the prevalence of this phenomenon, empirical research on moonlighting intentions in the Indonesian higher education context remains limited. While studies have examined moonlighting among IT professionals and public sector employees globally (Seema & Sachdeva, 2020; Sidana & Malhotra, 2025), and recent Indonesian scholarship has begun exploring related constructs (Pujiyanto et al., 2024; Seema et al., 2021), no known research has investigated how organisational commitment and need fulfilment jointly moderate the job satisfaction-moonlighting intention relationship among private university lecturers in Indonesia. This study addresses these gaps by examining the effect of job satisfaction on moonlighting intention, with organisational commitment and need fulfilment as moderating variables, in the context of higher education lecturers in Indonesia.

Theory and hypotheses

Job satisfaction and moonlighting intention

While often used interchangeably with 'side jobs', moonlighting is more precisely defined as secondary employment undertaken alongside primary work, distinguished by several key dimensions: timing (typically conducted outside regular working hours), employment conditions (ranging from formal part-time contracts to informal arrangements), legality (whether such work violates employment contracts or non-compete clauses) and employer disclosure (whether employees inform their primary employers) (Prasad, 2024; Saini, 2024). Moonlighting intention, therefore, refers to an employee's propensity to engage in such secondary employment. This distinction matters because moonlighting carries different implications for organisational loyalty, work-life balance and potential conflicts of interest than casual side work (Khera, 2023).

Ganzach (1998) described job satisfaction as subjective well-being in the workplace, reflecting an individual's contentment with job-related factors. Loan (2020) stated that employees consistently seek adequate income, and when primary employers fail to offer commensurate incentives, such as basic salary or broader compensation packages, employees may look elsewhere to fulfil their needs (Abdullah & Wan, 2013; Hazrati Havidz et al., 2022).

Moonlighting provides individuals with the opportunity to earn additional income, which can compensate for shortfalls in job satisfaction in their primary employment (Umrani et al., 2019). Ara and Akbar (2016) found that when individuals are dissatisfied with their primary jobs, they tend to take on additional work outside their main employment to achieve greater satisfaction. This suggests that moonlighting functions as a coping mechanism for unmet workplace needs. Several studies have confirmed that job satisfaction has a statistically significant impact on employees' intentions to moonlight (Malodia & Butail, 2023; Seema et al., 2021). This relationship operates through multiple mechanisms: dissatisfaction stemming from inadequate income, a lack of recognition or rejection of promotion can trigger intentions to seek supplementary work. Conversely, when employees are satisfied with their jobs and compensation, their intention to moonlight tends to decrease. Employees may view moonlighting as a substitute pathway to achieving the job satisfaction that their primary employment fails to provide. Based on this reasoning, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Job satisfaction has a positive effect on moonlighting intention.

Organisational commitment as a moderating variable

Organisational commitment refers to an employee's psychological attachment to their organisation, reflected in their willingness to exert effort on behalf of the organisation and in their desire to maintain membership (Setiawan et al., 2023; Steers, 1977). While commitment has traditionally been studied as a mediator linking workplace perceptions

to outcomes, a growing body of research demonstrates that organisational commitment also functions as a moderator as it shapes the strength and direction of relationships between workplace conditions and employee behavioural intentions (Alimmah et al., 2023; Allozi et al., 2022; Liu et al., 2022). Employees with strong organisational commitment develop positive feelings towards their workplace based on favourable assessments of working conditions, compensation, relationships with colleagues and superiors, and career development opportunities (Jacobsen & Fjeldbraaten, 2020; Seema et al., 2021). These positive attachments theoretically buffer the effects of job dissatisfaction. When committed employees experience dissatisfaction, their psychological investment in the organisation may lead them to tolerate short-term dissatisfaction rather than seek external alternatives (Alimmah et al., 2023; Jufrizen et al., 2023). In contrast, employees with weak organisational commitment lack this psychological buffer; when job satisfaction declines, they have fewer reasons to remain invested and may readily consider moonlighting as a compensatory strategy (Seema et al., 2021).

This moderating logic has been empirically supported across various contexts. Allozi et al. (2022) found that organisational commitment moderates the relationship between leadership and job satisfaction, with high-commitment employees showing stronger positive responses to favourable workplace conditions. Similarly, Liu et al. (2022) demonstrated that organisational commitment lessens employees' compliance with organisational policies, influencing their responses to both rewards and sanctions. In the Indonesian context, Alimmah et al. (2023) found that organisational commitment moderates the relationship between toxic workplace environments and quiet quitting behaviour, with high-organisational commitment weakening the negative impact of workplace conditions on employee disengagement. These studies collectively suggest that organisational commitment conditions how employees interpret and respond to their work environment. Applied to the moonlighting context, this moderating logic suggests that when job satisfaction is low, employees with weak organisational commitment should exhibit stronger intentions to seek secondary employment than those with strong commitment. Employees with high-commitment may view their dissatisfaction as temporary or derive satisfaction from non-economic aspects of organisational membership, thereby reducing the need to seek external alternatives. Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2: Organisational commitment moderates the relationship between job satisfaction and the intention to engage in side jobs.

Need fulfilment commitment as a moderating variable

Need fulfilment is the extent to which an individual's needs are satisfied in their work environment. In organisational contexts, need fulfilment is directly linked to employee

motivation, engagement and job satisfaction (Rojas et al., 2023). Maslow and Lewis (1987) suggested that humans have five levels of needs: physiological, safety, social, esteem and self-actualisation. In the workplace, these needs translate into concrete expectations: adequate salary (physiological), job security and safe working conditions (safety), positive relationships with colleagues and superiors (social), recognition for contributions and achievements (esteem), and opportunities for professional development and meaningful work (self-actualisation).

When these needs are met, employees tend to demonstrate higher commitment and job satisfaction (Busque-Carrier et al., 2022). Job satisfaction itself refers to a positive emotional state resulting from an employee's assessment of their work experiences (Seema, 2021; Yang & Ling, 2023). Employees who perceive that their jobs fulfil their expectations and needs develop positive attitudes, loyalty and greater involvement in the organisation (Yang & Ling, 2023). However, need fulfilment does not merely function as a direct antecedent of satisfaction. Rojas et al. (2023) argue that need fulfilment can also operate as a boundary condition that shapes how employees respond to their work environment. Employees whose needs are adequately met may have a higher tolerance for fluctuations in job satisfaction because their fundamental requirements are already satisfied. In contrast, employees experiencing unmet needs – particularly at the physiological and safety levels – may be more sensitive to dissatisfaction and more likely to seek external alternatives such as moonlighting. When primary employment fails to fulfil basic needs, moonlighting becomes not merely an option but a necessity to meet those needs (Seema, 2021). This logic positions need fulfilment as a moderating variable that conditions the relationship between job satisfaction and moonlighting intention. Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3: Need fulfilment moderates the relationship between job satisfaction and moonlighting intention.

Research design

This study was conducted using a quantitative approach to measure and understand the causal relationship between variables related to job satisfaction, organisational commitment, and need fulfilment and moonlighting intentions (Figure 1). The unit of analysis in this study was 221 lecturers at private

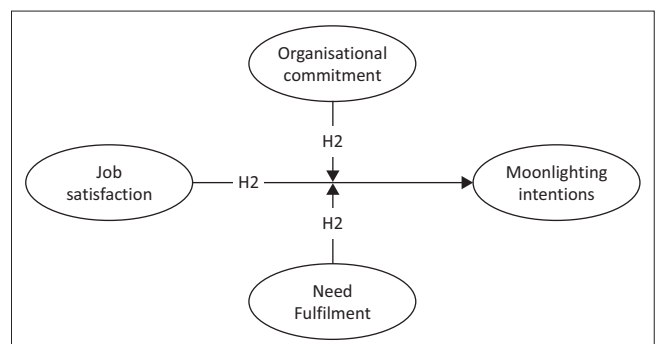


FIGURE 1: Empirical model.

universities in the provincial capitals of Yogyakarta and West Java, Indonesia. The cities of Bandung and Yogyakarta were chosen because they are centres of higher education in Indonesia with a significant concentration of public and private universities, making them relevant for describing the phenomenon under study. In this context, the universities selected as research locations were chosen based on the criterion of institutions with a minimum accreditation status of 'Very Good' from the National Accreditation Agency for Higher Education (BAN-PT), namely five universities in Bandung and Yogyakarta. Data collection was carried out over time, adjusted to the availability of respondents spread across various universities. Given the limited access and varying availability of respondents, the questionnaire was distributed via an online survey platform. The sample selection was conducted using purposive sampling based on the following criteria: (1) the sample had been working as a lecturer for at least 5 years, (2) had a minimum functional position of assistant expert, and (3) was positioned as a lecturer at the undergraduate level (S1). Descriptive statistics and correlation analysis were used to describe the data and the initial relationship between variables. Hypothesis testing was performed using structural equation modelling based on partial least squares (SEM-PLS). The characteristics of the respondents are presented in Table 1.

Measurement variable

The variables in this study are measured using scales published in previous studies. Job satisfaction is defined by Judge and Klinger (2008) as an evaluation of the job as a

whole. Job satisfaction was measured by five items adopted from the studies by Malodia and Butail (2023), Judge and Klinger (2008), and Seema et al. (2021). An example of an item is 'I find pleasure in my work'. Next, need fulfilment is measured using four items adopted from Patrick et al. (2007). An example of an item is 'The organisation is able to provide the things I need'. Next, organisational commitment is measured by four items adopted from the studies by Mowday et al. (1979), Sheldon et al. (2000), Deci and Ryan (2000), and Park (2025). An example item is 'I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organisation'. Moonlighting intention is measured by five items adopted from the studies by Seema et al. (2021) and Prasad (2024). An example item is 'I often consider pursuing hobbies or personal interests outside of my main job to earn additional income'.

Ethical considerations

Ethical clearance to conduct this study was obtained from the Committee of Ethics, Universitas Pembangunan Nasional 'Veteran' Yogyakarta (Ref. No. 727/UN62.14/TU/2025).

Results

Data analysis

Partial least squares analysis with SmartPLS3.0 software was used to analyse the proposed hypothetical model. To perform SEM, experts recommend a two-stage analytical procedure that includes testing the external measurement model and examining the internal structural model. A 1–5 Likert scale was used in this study to measure perceptions of variables.

Respondent characteristics

Based on Table 2, there were 221 respondents in this study, consisting of lecturers from private universities in Yogyakarta and West Java, with the majority being male (57.9%) compared to females (42.1%). In terms of age, most respondents were in the productive age group of 31–37 years

TABLE 1: Measurement of variables.

Variable	Item	Source
Job satisfaction	I find pleasure in my work. I find my job rather unpleasant. I am quite satisfied with my job. I often feel unmotivated at my main job, so I am considering taking on additional work. I often feel bored with my main job routine and am thinking about taking on a side job.	Judge & Klinger, 2008; Malodia & Butail 2023
Moonlighting intention	I often consider pursuing a hobby or personal interest outside of my main job to earn additional income. I often consider taking another job that has high career growth or income potential. I have registered on online platforms (such as freelance marketplaces or job boards) to find additional work outside of my main job. I always read the part-time job vacancy site on the website to look for part-time job opportunities. I often consider looking for additional work to earn money.	Prasad, 2024; Seema et al., 2021
Need fulfilment	My organisation can provide what I need. My organisation provides me with the opportunity to demonstrate my expertise. My organisation provides opportunities for me to express my ideas and opinions. My individual needs are always met in my work environment.	Patrick et al., 2007
Organisational commitment	I am proud to tell others that I am part of this organisation. I am confident that my contribution to this organisation is appreciated. I am fully committed to the organisation at present. I am emotionally attached to my organisation.	Deci & Ryan 2000; Mowday et al., 1979; Park, 2025; Sheldon et al., 2000

Note: Please see the full reference list of this article Siswanti, Y., & Muafi, M. (2026). When job satisfaction is not enough: The role of organisational commitment and need fulfilment in shaping moonlighting intentions. *SA Journal of Human Resource Management/SA Tydskrif vir Menslikehulpbronbestuur*, 24(0), a3401. <https://doi.org/10.4102/sajhrm.v24i0.3401> for more information.

TABLE 2: Respondent characteristics.

Descriptive respondent characteristics	n	%
Gender		
Male	128	57.9
Female	93	42.1
Age (years)		
25–30	36	16.3
31–37	92	41.6
> 38	93	42.1
Marital status		
Married	167	75.6
Unmarried	54	24.4
Education		
Masters	172	77.8
PhD	49	22.2
Experience (years)		
5–10	79	35.7
11–16	68	30.8
16–21	42	19.0
> 22	32	14.5

PhD, Doctor of Philosophy.

(41.6%) and over 38 years (42.1%), while those in the 25–30 years age group were relatively fewer (16.3%). Most respondents were married (75.6%) and had a master's degree as their highest level of education (77.8%), while the rest had a doctorate (22.2%). In terms of work experience, the majority of respondents had been teaching for between 5–10 years (35.7%) and 11–16 years (30.8%), followed by those with 16–21 years (19.0%) and more than 22 years (14.5%) of experience. These findings indicate that the research respondents were predominantly lecturers with master's degrees, considerable experience and relatively mature ages, all of which are typical of those pursuing an academic profession.

Measurement model

Based on the results of the reliability and construct validity tests in Table 3, all research variables showed excellent instrument quality. The factor loading values for all indicators were above 0.70 (0.742–0.881), indicating that each indicator adequately reflected the construct being measured. Furthermore, Cronbach's alpha values for all variables were above 0.70 (0.824–0.921), indicating excellent internal consistency and reliability. These results are also reinforced by a composite reliability (CR) value greater than 0.88 for all constructs, indicating measurement stability and consistency among indicators in explaining each latent variable. In terms of convergent validity, the average variance extracted (AVE) value of all constructs was above the threshold of 0.50 (range: 0.651–0.677), so it can be concluded that the proportion of indicator variance explained by the construct is quite high. These findings confirm that the research instrument has excellent measurement quality, whereby the variables of Job Satisfaction, Moonlighting Intention, Need Fulfilment and Organisational Commitment can be measured validly and reliably. Thus, the measurement model in this study can proceed to the structural model analysis stage (inner model) to test the causal relationships between constructs with high confidence in the quality of the measurement data.

The results of the discriminant validity test in Table 4 show that all constructs in this study have met the Fornell–Larcker and Heterotrait–monotrait (HTMT) criteria. Based on the Fornell–Larcker Criterion, the AVE square root value (shown on the diagonal) for each construct, namely Job Satisfaction (0.807), Moonlighting Intention (0.811), Need Fulfilment (0.810) and Organisational Commitment (0.823), is greater than the correlations between constructs outside the diagonal. This indicates that each construct is better able to explain its own indicators than those of other constructs, thereby fulfilling the discriminant validity criterion. Furthermore, the

TABLE 3: Construct reliability and validity test result.

Variable	LF	CA	CR	AVE
Job satisfaction (JS)	0.748–0.881	0.866	0.903	0.651
Moonlighting intention (MI)	0.771–0.843	0.870	0.906	0.658
Need fulfilment (NF)	0.742–0.785	0.824	0.883	0.655
Organisational commitment (OC)	0.807–0.850	0.921	0.936	0.677

AVE, average variance extracted; CA, Cronbach's alpha; CR, composite reliability; LF, latent factors.

HTMT ratio results reinforce this finding, as all values between constructs are below the 0.85 threshold; for example, the relationships between Job Satisfaction and Moonlighting Intention (0.482), Need Fulfilment and Moonlighting Intention (0.821), and Organisational Commitment and Moonlighting Intention (0.745). These values confirm that the constructs in this study are clearly distinct from one another, so there is no problem of conceptual multicollinearity. Thus, it can be concluded that the research instrument has good discriminant validity, allowing the structural model to be analysed further with high accuracy.

Based on Table 5, the results of the multicollinearity and common method bias tests show that all constructs in this study are free from multicollinearity. This is indicated by the variance inflation factor (VIF) values ranging from 1.210 to 1.465, well below the critical threshold of 5.0 or even 3.3, which is often recommended in SEM-PLS-based studies. These relatively low VIF values indicate that the independent variables in the model do not exhibit excessive linear relationships, so each construct provides unique information for explaining the endogenous variables. Furthermore, the low VIF values also confirm that common method bias is not a significant issue in this study, as there is no indication that the variability is solely due to the same data collection method. Thus, it can be concluded that this research model is stable, reliable and capable of producing more accurate estimates when testing causal relationships between constructs.

The results of the coefficient of determination test in Table 6 show that the *R*-square value for the moonlighting intention variable is 0.730 with an adjusted *R*-square value of 0.724. This value indicates that approximately 73.0% of the variation in lecturers' intention to do side jobs is explained by the independent constructs in the model, namely job satisfaction, need fulfilment and organisational commitment. Meanwhile, the remaining 27.0% is influenced by factors outside this research model, such as economic pressure, organisational

TABLE 4: Discriminant validity Fornell–Larcker criterion and Heterotrait–monotrait ratio.

Variable	Fornell–Larcker criterion				HTMT ratio		
	JS	MI	NF	OC	JS	MI	NF
JS	0.807	-	-	-	-	-	-
MI	0.425	0.811	-	-	0.482	-	-
NF	0.424	0.699	0.810	-	0.491	0.821	-
OC	0.218	0.670	0.408	0.823	0.239	0.745	0.463

HTMT, Heterotrait–monotrait; JS, job satisfaction; MI, moonlighting intention; NF, need fulfilment; OC, organisational commitment.

TABLE 5: Multicollinearity and common method bias.

Variable	Moonlighting intention
Job satisfaction	1.239
Moonlighting intention	-
Need fulfilment	1.465
Organisational commitment	1.210

TABLE 6: Coefficient of determination.

Variable	<i>R</i> -square	<i>R</i> -square adjusted
Moonlighting intention	0.730	0.724

culture and unmeasured personal factors. Based on the criteria of Chin et al. (1998), an R -square value of 0.727 falls into the substantial category, indicating that the constructed structural model has strong explanatory power for the main endogenous variables. The small difference between R -square and adjusted R -square (0.006) also indicates that the model is stable and does not experience over-fitting, because the additional variables in the model remain relevant and make a real contribution. Thus, these findings confirm that the constructs used in the study are appropriate for explaining lecturers' moonlighting intentions at private universities in DIY and West Java.

Based on Table 7, the results of the predictive relevance test (Q^2) show that only the endogenous variable moonlighting intention has a Q^2 value of 0.470, while exogenous variables such as job satisfaction, need fulfilment and organisational commitment have a value of zero because they act as predictors, not predicted variables in the model. A Q^2 value of $0.470 > 0$ indicates that the research model has good predictive ability and is practically relevant in explaining the variability in lecturers' intentions to do side jobs. According to Hair et al.'s (2011) criteria, a Q^2 value between 0.35 and 0.50 falls into the strong predictive relevance category, indicating that the independent variables in this study make a substantial contribution to predicting moonlighting intention. This also reinforces the results of the previous coefficient of determination test ($R^2 = 0.730$), that the research model is not only capable of explaining internal variance but also has high predictive power. Thus, this study is not only descriptive but also provides empirical evidence that job satisfaction, need fulfilment and organisational commitment are important determinants of lecturers' tendency to engage in side jobs at private universities.

Hypothesis testing

The results of the path coefficient test in Table 8 and Figure 2 show that all research hypotheses are accepted at a high level of significance. Firstly, the relationship between job satisfaction and moonlighting intention (H1) has a coefficient of $\beta = 0.151$, with a t -statistic value of 3.345 and a p -value of 0.001, indicating that job satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on lecturers' intention to moonlight. This implies that the higher the level of job satisfaction, the greater the tendency for lecturers to seek additional work, which can be explained as a form of self-actualisation or a search for job variety even though their basic needs have been met. Secondly, the moderating effect of job satisfaction $\times$ organisational commitment on moonlighting intention (H2) shows a significant positive effect ($\beta = 0.198$; $t = 4.073$; $p = 0.000$), confirming that

organisational commitment strengthens the relationship between job satisfaction and moonlighting intention. In other words, even though lecturers have a high level of commitment to the institution, their job satisfaction still leads them to pursue side jobs, possibly as a strategy to expand their network or gain additional experience. Thirdly, the moderating effect of job satisfaction $\times$ need fulfilment on moonlighting intention (H3) is also significant with a coefficient of $\beta = 0.179$; $t = 4.914$; $p < 0.000$, indicating that the fulfilment of personal needs strengthens the influence of job satisfaction on moonlighting intention. This indicates that when lecturers' needs (both financial and non-financial) are not fully met, even with high job satisfaction, they still tend to seek additional work to fill the gap. Overall, these results show that moonlighting intention is not solely triggered by job dissatisfaction but is also influenced by moderating factors such as organisational commitment and need fulfilment, which together form a complex dynamic in lecturers' behaviour towards side jobs.

Discussion

The analysis confirms that the proposed model adequately explains moonlighting intention among private university (PTS) lecturers in Yogyakarta and West Java. The findings not only explain the sample data but also have significant predictive relevance. The core finding indicates that job satisfaction positively influences moonlighting intention. While this may initially seem counterintuitive, as one might

TABLE 8: Path coefficient test result.

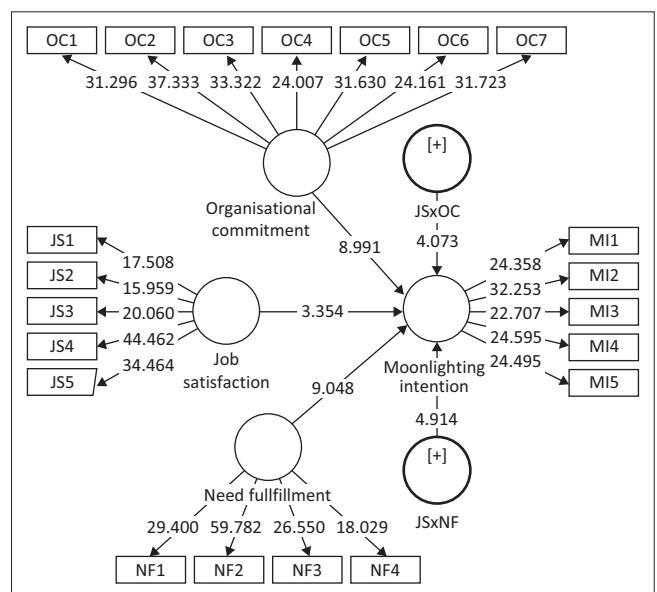
Hypothesis	β	SD	t -statistics	p -value	Status
Job satisfaction $\rightarrow$ moonlighting intention (H1)	0.151	0.045	3.345	0.001	Accepted
JS $\times$ OC $\rightarrow$ moonlighting intention (H2)	0.198	0.049	4.073	0.000	Accepted
JS $\times$ NF $\rightarrow$ moonlighting intention (H3)	0.179	0.036	4.914	0.000	Accepted

SD, standard deviation; JS, job satisfaction; NF, need fulfilment; OC, organisational commitment.

TABLE 7: Predictive relevance (Q^2).

Variable	SSO	SSE	$Q^2 (=1-SSE/SSO)$
Job satisfaction	1105.000	1105.000	-
Moonlighting intention	1105.000	587.690	0.470
Need fulfilment	884.000	884.000	-
Organisational commitment	1547.000	1547.000	-

SSE, sum of squared errors; SSO, sum of squared observations.



JS, job satisfaction; MI, moonlighting intention; NF, need fulfilment; OC, organisational commitment.

FIGURE 2: Inner model.

expect satisfied employees to remain content in their primary roles, this result aligns with contemporary career theories that view job satisfaction as a source of psychological energy enabling exploratory behaviour rather than a guarantee of retention (Briscoe et al., 2021; Guan et al., 2019). In the context of PTS lecturers, who are predominantly of productive age, married, hold master's degrees and have 5–16 years of professional experience, moonlighting intentions appear driven by a combination of financial motives, competency development and professional networking. Thus, job satisfaction does not function as a shield against external opportunities; rather, it provides a sense of empowerment that allows individuals to view supplementary work not as an escape from dissatisfaction, but as a means of career enrichment and income diversification (Prasad et al., 2024).

This interpretation is further supported by the significant moderating effects observed. Both organisational commitment and need fulfilment were found to strengthen the relationship between job satisfaction and moonlighting intention. These findings challenge classical organisational behaviour assumptions, which traditionally position organisational commitment as a deterrent to extra-organisational activities (Mowday et al., 1979). Instead, the results are more consistent with boundaryless career and portfolio career perspectives (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996), in which individuals who are satisfied and committed to their institutions may nonetheless engage in external activities that complement rather than compete with their formal roles. For PTS lecturers, activities such as consulting, training, collaborative research or community service can strengthen institutional reputation, expand academic networks and improve the quality of human capital. In this configuration, job satisfaction provides the motivational energy, organisational commitment provides legitimacy and access, and their combination increases the propensity to engage in productive activities outside the institution (Allozi et al., 2022; Liu et al., 2022).

The positive moderating role of need fulfilment is equally significant. Drawing on Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1943) and self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000), need fulfilment refers to the satisfaction of both financial and psychological needs. When job satisfaction is high, the fulfilment of these needs provides personal resources such as time-management capacity, self-confidence and social support, which enable lecturers to engage in value-added external activities (Rojas et al., 2023). These activities are not merely compensatory mechanisms for financial shortfalls but rather serve as arenas for self-actualisation: strengthening thought leadership, building research portfolios and monetising specialised expertise. Conversely, if higher-level needs are not fully met within the primary institution, moonlighting can function as a complementary mechanism (need completion). These dual mechanisms, namely resource enrichment and need completion, operate simultaneously, explaining why the interaction between job satisfaction and need fulfilment significantly shapes moonlighting intentions (Busque-Carrier et al., 2022).

Taken together, these findings suggest that moonlighting intention among PTS lecturers is a multidimensional phenomenon that cannot be reduced to job satisfaction alone. The direct effect of job satisfaction, while statistically significant, is relatively modest. Its substantive meaning emerges only when considered in conjunction with organisational commitment and need fulfilment. The variability in moonlighting intentions is explained more by these conditional interactions than by the main effect in isolation. This aligns with contemporary perspectives in organisational behaviour that emphasise the importance of contextual and interactional effects in understanding workplace phenomena (Johns, 2006). Moonlighting intentions among academics must therefore be understood as the result of a complex interplay between personal motivation, organisational conditions and the dynamics of individual needs.

Managerial implications

The findings of this study have several important implications for human resource management in private universities (PTS). Firstly, the finding that job satisfaction is positively related to moonlighting intention shows that job satisfaction does not automatically suppress lecturers' intention to seek side jobs. Therefore, PTS management needs to understand that improving job satisfaction is only part of the retention strategy and must be combined with more integrated policies, such as career planning, workload management and performance-based incentives. Secondly, the significant moderation of organisational commitment indicates that lecturers who are satisfied and highly committed to the institution are more motivated to engage in side activities aligned with the three pillars of higher education. This provides an opportunity for private universities to manage moonlighting strategically: not by imposing strict prohibitions, but by directing side activities to align with the institution's mission – for example, through research collaborations, consulting projects, community service or professional training. In this way, moonlighting activities can serve as a means of fostering harmony, strengthening the institution's reputation and expanding its academic and industrial networks.

Thirdly, moderation in need fulfilment indicates that lecturers whose basic needs are met tend to moonlight for career enrichment rather than simply for additional income. PTS management can benefit from these findings by providing support facilities (e.g. access to research funds, conference scholarships, work flexibility or digital infrastructure) that enable lecturers to pursue external activities productively without compromising the quality of their internal performance.

Overall, the managerial implications of this study emphasise that the management of moonlighting at private universities should not focus solely on control or restriction, but rather on alignment mechanisms. By providing space, support and clear regulations, private universities can turn lecturers' side

activities into strategic assets that strengthen institutional competitiveness, while maintaining lecturers' long-term welfare and motivation.

Theoretical implications

This study makes several contributions to the literature on moonlighting intention in the context of higher education. Firstly, the finding that job satisfaction positively relates to moonlighting intention challenges classical assumptions in organisational behaviour, which typically position satisfaction as a deterrent to turnover and extra-organisational activities (Mowday et al., 1982). For private university lecturers, these results indicate that job satisfaction can serve as a source of psychological energy, strengthening self-confidence and capabilities and thereby increasing the drive to explore external opportunities. This finding aligns with the boundaryless career perspective (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996), which suggests that contemporary professionals increasingly view their careers as spanning multiple organisations rather than being confined to a single employer. Satisfaction with one's primary role may provide the foundation for such boundaryless orientations rather than inhibiting them. This extends the boundaryless career literature by identifying job satisfaction as an enabling condition for, rather than a barrier to, extra-organisational career exploration.

Secondly, the moderating role of organisational commitment offers a nuanced view of how commitment operates in contemporary academic careers. Rather than functioning as a constraint that limits external activities, high commitment among satisfied lecturers appears to channel moonlighting towards activities that may ultimately benefit their primary institution, such as consulting, collaborative research or professional training that enhances institutional reputation and networks. This suggests that commitment and external engagement can coexist productively when individuals perceive their moonlighting as complementary rather than competitive with organisational goals.

Thirdly, the moderating role of need fulfilment contributes to self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000) by demonstrating that satisfaction of basic psychological needs (autonomy, competence, relatedness) provides personal resources that enable individuals to pursue value-added external activities. When needs are met within the primary workplace, lecturers have greater capacity for time management, self-confidence and social support, all of which facilitate the exploration of supplementary work. Conversely, when needs remain unmet, moonlighting may function as a compensatory mechanism for need completion (Rojas et al., 2023). This dual mechanism enriches understanding of how need fulfilment operates not merely as a direct antecedent of outcomes, but also as a condition that shapes when and how job satisfaction translates into behavioural intentions. Collectively, these findings suggest that moonlighting intention among academics is best understood through an integrated lens that combines career theory and motivational

psychology – rather than through traditional retention frameworks that assume that satisfaction and commitment necessarily reduce intentions to engage in external work.

Limitations and future research

This study has several limitations that should be considered so that the results can be interpreted more proportionally. Firstly, this study uses only a quantitative survey-based approach with a questionnaire, so the data obtained depend on the subjective perceptions of the respondents. This raises the potential for social bias and common method bias, even though validity tests have been carried out. Secondly, the scope of the study was limited to lecturers at private universities (PTS) in two Indonesian cities (Yogyakarta and West Java) using a non-probability purposive sampling design. Consequently, the findings are bounded by the contextual characteristics of the sample; caution is warranted in extending these results beyond the studied population, particularly to state universities, other regions or non-academic sectors. Thirdly, the research model does not accommodate mediating variables or external factors, such as economic pressure, government regulations or social norms, that may also influence the intention to moonlight.

Given these limitations, future research can expand the scope and enrich the analysis model. Firstly, it is recommended to use a longitudinal research design to capture the dynamics of the relationships among job satisfaction, organisational commitment, need fulfilment, and moonlighting intentions over time. Secondly, further research can conduct cross-context comparisons, for example, between lecturers at private and public universities or even between the academic and non-academic sectors, to test the consistency of the relationship patterns found. Thirdly, mediating variables such as career aspirations, financial security and perceived organisational support need to be included to provide a more comprehensive explanation of the mechanisms underlying moonlighting intentions. Finally, qualitative or mixed-methods approaches can be used to explore, in greater depth, the motivations, experiences, and meanings that individuals construct in carrying out moonlighting activities, thereby producing a richer, more contextual understanding.

Conclusion

This study confirms that job satisfaction, organisational commitment and the fulfilment of needs have a significant influence on the intention to moonlight among lecturers at private universities. The findings indicate that while each variable stands on its own, they also reinforce one another in shaping dual work behaviour. The high coefficient of determination indicates that the constructed model explains most of the variation in moonlighting intentions, while the validity, reliability and predictive relevance tests ensure that these findings have a strong empirical basis. Theoretically, this study expands our understanding of the dynamics of work behaviour in the higher education sector, particularly in the context of the increasingly relevant phenomenon of

moonlighting amid economic uncertainty and high professional demands. The overall results of the study indicate that although job satisfaction and organisational commitment play an important role in restraining moonlighting intentions, the factor of need fulfilment remains a strong determinant that drives individuals to seek additional sources of income. Thus, this study makes a significant contribution to enriching the human resource management literature and opens up space for more comprehensive follow-up research.

Acknowledgements

Competing interests

The authors, Yuni Siswanti, Muafi Muafi, declare that they have no financial or personal relationships that may have inappropriately influenced them in writing this article.

CRedit authorship contribution

Yuni Siswanti: Conceptualisation, Data curation, Formal analysis, Funding acquisition, Project administration, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing, Muafi Muafi: Conceptualisation, Investigation, Methodology, Resources, Software, Supervision, Visualisation, Validation, Writing – review & editing. All authors reviewed the article, contributed to the discussion of results, approved the final version for submission and publication, and take responsibility for the integrity of its findings.

Funding information

The authors received no financial support for the research, authorship and/or publication of this article.

Data availability

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author, Yuni Siswanti, upon reasonable request.

Disclaimer

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