Copyright is owned by the Author of the thesis. Permission is given for a copy to be downloaded by an individual for the purpose of research and private study only. The thesis may not be reproduced elsewhere without the permission of the Author.

MASSEY UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF BUSINESS
KAUPAPA WHAI PAKIHI

TURNOVER INTENTIONS OF NEW ZEALAND EMPLOYEES: A MULTI-STUDY COMPARISON OF SKILL LEVELS

Master of Management

in

Human Resource Management

at Massey University, Albany, New Zealand.

Lindsay Richard Eastgate

2015

Abstract:

This study investigates turnover intentions across three different skill levels of New Zealand employees: low-skilled (Study 1), semi-skilled (Study 2), and skilled (Study 3) using both quantitative and qualitative methods. Specifically, this study first compares job autonomy, supervisor support, and work-life balance towards job satisfaction and turnover intentions and then ultimately, tests a two mediator model in which firstly, work-life balance and then job satisfaction act as the mediators towards turnover intentions. These mediator effects were confirmed by Monte Carlo analysis. Overall, there is strong support across the studies that work-life balance predicts job satisfaction, which in turn predicts turnover intentions. Towards the antecedents, there is uniformity between low-skilled and skilled employee samples, with supervisor support predicting work-life balance and job autonomy predicting both work-life balance and job satisfaction. Finally, this study uses qualitative interviews (Study 4) to add depth to the quantitative results and explore any additional emerging themes, while also providing a personal narrative to the turnover literature, which is often missing. The interviews generally reinforced the quantitative findings although additional themes were found, and two mini-cases were explored regarding actual turnover. Overall, this thesis aids our understanding of turnover intentions across the various skill levels.

Acknowledgements:

I would like to thank my supervisor, Professor Jarrod Haar, for all of his input, support and contributions to this thesis; I will be forever be grateful. I would also like to thank Massy University for their financial support through the Massey University Masterate Scholarship, the Mary Mallon Memorial Scholarship, and the School of Management Postgraduate Research Support. This funding made many aspects of this thesis possible, while also helping me meet my family's needs as well.

Table of Contents

Title Page ..... **i**

Abstract ..... **ii**

Acknowledgements ..... **ii**

Table of Contents ..... **iii**

List of Tables ..... **v**

List of Figures ..... **vi**

Chapter 1- Introduction **1**

Chapter 2- Literature Review **4**

2.1- Cost of turnover 4

2.2- Past models on employee turnover 5

2.3- Gaps in the literature 13

2.4- Study's contribution 18

Chapter 3- Current Study and Theoretical Model **19**

3.1- Outcomes 19

3.2- Antecedents to Turnover 20

3.3- Mediation Model 28

3.4- Skill Levels 31

Chapter 4- Quantitative Studies Methods **34**

4.1- Sample and Procedures 34

4.2- Measures 36

4.3- Measurement Models 38

4.4- Analysis 38

Chapter 5- Quantitative Studies Results **41**

5.1- Structural Models 43

Chapter 6- Qualitative Study Methods **52**

6.1- Sample 52

6.2- Procedure 53

6.3- Data Analysis 54

Chapter 7- Qualitative Study Results **55**

7.1- Alignment to Quantitative Results 55

7.2- Additional Themes 61

7.3- Actual Turnover 64

7.4- Conclusion 66

Chapter 8- Discussion **69**

Chapter 9- Limitations, Future Research, and Conclusion **79**

9.1- Limitations 79

9.2- Future Research 81

9.3- Conclusion 86

References **89**

Appendix 1 ..... **119**

Appendix 2 ..... **122**

Appendix 3 ..... **123**

Appendix 4A **124**

Appendix 4B **128**

Appendix 5 ..... **130**

List of Tables

Table 1- Results of Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Study Measures **39**

Table 2- Correlations and Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables (All Data) **42**

Table 3- Model Comparisons for Structural Models **44**

Table 4- Comparisons of Skill Level Effects **50**

List of Figures

Figure 1- Initial Theoretical Model **19**

Figure 2- Final Theoretical Model (Mediation Model) **33**

Figure 3- Final Model (Combined Sample) **45**

Figure 4- Final Model (Low-skilled Sample Only) **47**

Figure 5- Final Model (Semi-skilled Sample Only) **48**

Figure 6- Final Model (Skilled Sample Only) **49**