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

**Master of Management
in
Human Resource Management
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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.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Retaining top employees is a primary concern for many organisations (Hausknecht, Rodda, and Howard, 2009). Turnover can take the form of either involuntary or voluntary turnover. Involuntary turnover is usually initiated by the organisation and is normally due to poor job performance or because of organisational restructuring/downsizing (Allen, Bryant, & Vardaman, 2010). Voluntary turnover is defined as “voluntary cessation of membership of an organisation by an employee of that organisation” (Morrell, Loan-Clarke, & Wilkinson, 2001, p. 220). Hence, voluntary turnover tends to be deemed avoidable and within the control of organisational leaders (Morrell et al, 2001; Hom, Roberson, & Ellis, 2008). Recently, Cascio and Boudreau (2008) reported figures of 75-250% of an employee’s salary as the true cost of turnover. As such, there is a significant cost associated with voluntary turnover.

However, it is not just financial costs that are incurred by an organisation when an employee leaves - it is also the loss of knowledge. The loss of knowledge can largely impact an organisation’s competitiveness (Allen et al., 2010). This might be especially true if a top employee leaves for a close competitor, for example, a top salesperson. In addition, employees leaving can create work disruptions for other employees. Therefore, due to the financial and non-financial costs associated with replacing an employee, organisations are interested in understanding what influences an employee’s decision to stay or leave (Morrell et al, 2001).

For many decades, researchers have tried to provide empirically based insight into employees’ intentions to leave their job. Some studies that investigated employee turnover, started by analysing demographic information to find some correlations between certain demographics and the intention to leave one’s job (McCarthy, Tyrrell, and Lehane, 2007; Griffeth, Hom, & Gaertner, 2000). Other research focused on work environment factors such

as pay (Hausknecht, Rodda, & Howard, 2009), co-work support, job autonomy (Finn, 2001), work stress, supervisor support (DeConinck & Johnson, 2009; Chen & Chiu, 2008), promotional chances, and work-life balance (Carlson, Grzywacz, & Zivnuska, 2009; Byron, 2005). Further studies investigated the overarching theme of job satisfaction and how it influences employee's turnover intentions. Griffeth et al.'s (2000) meta-analysis found the main antecedents to turnover were overall job satisfaction, pay, leadership, co-worker satisfaction, stress due to role clarity, and promotional chances.

However, a critical gap in the literature is that most of the research that investigates workplace factors do not tend to take into account, job type or the skill levels of the employees (Rozell, Pettijohn, & Parker, 2011). Much of the research mentioned above was based on white collar workers or skilled workers. Skilled workers tend to have jobs that are based primarily in an office environment and have tasks that rely on their specialised knowledge and can vary from day to day. In contrast, blue collar or low-skilled workers tend to work on assembly lines or contribute to the production of goods and are often excluded in the turnover literature. However, there is a third skill level that remains largely under researched – that of the semi-skilled worker. Semi-skilled workers tend to have more specialised knowledge than that of the low-skilled but not quite as much as the skilled employee. Therefore, due to the differences that exist between the different skill levels of workers, it is necessary to understand what factors influence each of these groups to stay or leave their job.

In addition, most studies on turnover tend to take a quantitative view (Allen, Hancock, and Vardaman, 2014). While statistics are useful in giving a breakdown of the components of turnover, it loses the personal narrative that qualitative research allows for. Also, turnover literature, whether qualitative or quantitative, tends to be based on samples from the United States. Consequently, there is a general lack of turnover intention studies within the New Zealand context, with some exceptions (Haar, Roche, & Taylor, 2012; Haar, 2004; Boxall,

Macky, & Rasmussen, 2003). As such, it is necessary to look at employees' turnover intentions using diverse methods as well as using samples from outside the United States.

Therefore, this thesis adds to the literature by testing antecedents of turnover intentions among New Zealand employees in three distinct categories: low-skilled, semi-skilled, and skilled employees. Furthermore, it extends the literature by testing a mediation model in which two factors mediate the influence of two antecedents towards the final outcome of turnover intentions. In addition, this study uses qualitative interviews to offer depth to the quantitative results, as well as providing the much needed personal narrative. The next chapter will first review and critique the past turnover literature, to give an overview of what theories, models and antecedents have been tested in relation to turnover as well as address the gaps in the literature this study wishes to fill.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The following Chapter explores a number of factors from the literature, including (1) the cost of turnover, as a means to establish its financial importance to organisations; (2) a brief discussion of the past models of turnover, to provide context for understanding turnover: this includes three main approaches (a) demographic variables, (b) psychological factors and (c) organization factors; and (3) the identified gaps in the literature. This chapter also explains this study's contribution to the turnover literature.

2.1 Cost of Turnover

As previously mentioned, employee turnover can be costly for organisations. There are direct costs as well as indirect costs. Direct costs are often split into three main categories. The first category being *separation costs*, which are those costs related to exit interviews, administration, and termination pay (Hinkin & Bruce Tracey, 2000). The second category is *replacement costs* or those expenses related to advertising job vacancies, interviews, examinations of potential candidates, and pre-employment administration. The third category is *training costs* which are associated with formal training programmes, internal training, and on-the-job instruction (Allen et al., 2010). Direct costs can often have a cost put on them with relative ease. For example, hiring a temporary worker from a recruitment company comes at a set cost. However, the same cannot be said about indirect costs. Indirect costs include such factors as a loss in employee performance before an employee leaves their job; the loss of productivity until the new employee masters the job; and the impact that the leaving person has on their co-workers and subsequently, their productivity. As such indirect cost are much harder to quantify. For example, if a top salesperson leaves, while their personal performance (total sales) can be measured, their departure may have an additional detrimental effects on

colleagues, which is harder to quantify. Also, depending on the line of work that the employee is in, these indirect costs might have serious repercussions for not only the organisation, but also the customers. Kacmar, Andrews, Van Rooy, Steilberg, and Cerrone (2006) found that turnover affected unit-level performance, and that a stable workforce allowed for greater efficiency and consequently led to stronger performance and better customer service.

However, it has been widely noted that actual turnover is the last withdrawal act (Mobley, 1977; Morrell et al., 2001), and therefore, some turnover literature focused on other outcomes that results from dissatisfied employees. Two outcomes associated with dissatisfied employees are absenteeism and deviant behaviour. Absenteeism in the US has been estimated to cost organisations around \$30 billion annually (Christian & Ellis, 2014), while deviant behaviour in the workplace, such as theft and vandalism; can have massive organisational repercussions (Christian & Ellis, 2014). The global estimates of deviant behaviours are nearly \$1 trillion dollars annually (Christian & Ellis, 2014). Research has found that turnover intentions are positively linked to absenteeism ((Davey, Cummings, Newburn-Cook, & Lo, 2009), and that turnover intentions moderate the relationship between employee moral disengagement and organisational deviant behaviour (Christian & Ellis, 2014). Therefore, if organisations can understand why an employee would want to leave, it may stop additional costs associated with these types of destructive behaviours and end up saving organisations more money (Christian & Ellis, 2014).

2.2 Past models on employee turnover

As summarised in Allen et al. (2014), the area of employee turnover has received great attention in the last 50-plus years. Often, March and Simon's (1958) model of withdrawal, predicated by movement ease and desirability, is seen as the first formal model of employee turnover (Hom, Mitchell, Lee, & Griffeth, 2012). Under this model, when both perceived ease

of movement and desirability is high, then an employee is more likely to leave their job (March & Simon, 1958). Mobley (1977) continued work on turnover by investigating the link between job satisfaction and turnover, suggesting that the link between job satisfaction and turnover was more complex than stated in much of the research. He positioned a withdrawal progression starting with a) evaluation of existing job, followed by b) experience job satisfaction/dissatisfaction, c) thinking of quitting, d) evaluation of expected utility of search and cost of quitting, e) intention to search for alternatives, f) search for alternatives, g) evaluation of alternatives, h) comparison of alternatives vs. present job, i) intention to quit/stay, and then finally j) quit/stay. However, while Mobley's theory brings to light the psychological side of the turnover process, there has been little empirical support for the model in regards to actual turnover (Lee & Mitchell, 1994).

Therefore, due to what they felt was an incomplete model or orientation of the turnover process, Lee and Mitchell (1994) theorised the "unfolding model". In their model they assert that shocks to the system can occur that can cause employees to leave more rapidly and can also change the way they view their current job. They defined a shock to the system as, "an event that makes an employee pause and think about the meaning or implication of the event in relation to his or her job" (Lee & Mitchell, 1994, p. 60). Shocks can range from a company being taken over by another company, a woman becoming pregnant, or an employee being passed over for a promotion (Lee & Mitchell, 1994). However, while there is merit in this process, from an organisational perspective, it is hard for employers to know exactly how an employee will react to a "shock". Lee and Mitchell (1994) noted that employees frame shocks through their own personal system of beliefs and, this in turn, makes it rather difficult for employers to intervene. For example, an employee might be passed over for promotion because their manager believes they are not ready for such a role, but that might prompt the employee

to consider leaving because they think they will never get a promotion, rather than staying and gaining the necessary skills for the role.

As a result, it is important for organisations to understand the varying antecedents to turnover, as some of the antecedents may be in the organisation's control to change. Within the turnover literature, a range of antecedents have been tested to see if they help to predict employee turnover. The following sections detail some of the literature on the antecedents of turnover. An extensive review of all the literature is beyond the scope of the present study. As such, this study presents the literature as follows: (a) details the role of demographic variables, (b) explores the role of psychological factors including the role of person-organization fit and then, (c) provides a review of organisational factors, which are the factors of interest for this study. Additional literature is detailed in the Chapter 3, which addresses the literature that is specific to the theoretical model being tested. Thus, this section provides a broad overview of previously tested factors with only the organisational factors section being directly related to this study's empirically tested model.

2.2a Demographic Variables and Turnover

Demographic factors were one of the first groups of antecedents to be tested in relation to turnover. The most common demographics factors that have been researched are age, gender, ethnic or racial group, marital status, tenure, and education level. However, within the literature there is a lack of agreement on which demographic factors are useful in determining an employee's turnover intentions.

When Healy, Lehman, and McDaniel (1995) performed their meta-analysis on how age related to turnover they concluded that "age alone is an insufficient predictor of voluntary turnover" (p. 341). In contrast, Griffeth et al.'s (2000) meta-analysis found that age was related to turnover but that the correlation decreased over time. Recently, Ng and Feldman (2009)

performed an updated meta-analysis and found that age and voluntary turnover were correlated at $r = -.14$ (sig at $p < .01$). They went further to test if other demographic factors actually moderated the age/turnover relationship. Within their testing, they found support for moderating effects of race, organizational tenure, and education level.

In regards to gender, Hom, Roberson, and Ellis (2008) found that women turnover rates were higher than that of their male counterparts. However, Ng and Felman (2009) results on gender seem to confirm Griffeth et al.'s (2000) meta-analysis that stated "this result conforms to a recent labour economic finding that educated women actually resemble men in turnover rate and pattern" (p. 479). Therefore, while meta-analyses suggest no gender effects on turnover, some studies do show differences. Consequently, it may not be as easy to say women turnover more or less than men, but actually requires further analysis of other potential factors. Mynatt, Omundson, Schroeder, and Stevens' (1997) study noted that men tend to hold higher positions, and therefore seem to have higher job satisfaction and are less likely to turnover than women.

In addition to age and gender, Griffeth et al.'s (2000) meta-analysis, assessed a range of other demographic factors including education, training, marital status, children, race, and tenure as predictors of turnover. Their results suggested that very few demographic factors influenced turnover, with only two demographic factors significant: having children and tenure. Since Griffeth et al.'s (2000) meta-analysis, other studies have found some of the other demographic variables do influence turnover intentions. For example, when assessing the turnover intentions of nurses, McCarthy, Tyrrell, and Lehane (2007) found that demographics factors such as age, marital status, educational attainment, and tenure of employment did impacted turnover intentions. However, while Boyar, Maertz Jr, Pearson, and Keough (2003) found that demographics factors such as marital status and those with dependents (children or aging parents) influenced their turnover intentions, this occurrence was largely due to those

groups experiencing more work-family conflict. Thus, demographic variables seem to be only surface level antecedents and only provide minor insights into employees' turnover intentions.

2.2b Psychological Factors and Person-Organisation Fit to Turnover

Due to a lack of significant effects from demographic factors, many researchers turned to the psychological factors which may influence an employee's decision to leave an organisation. Some researchers believed that certain employees were more innately prone to be satisfied with their job than other employees (Staw, Bell, & Clausen, 1986), while others were more likely to leave their job (Bouckenoghe, Raja, & Butt, 2013). As early as the 1930s, researchers were trying to link a person's psychological make-up to their job satisfaction. However, it wasn't until the 1980s that the idea of psychological factors began to make a resurgence in the field (Staw et al., 1986). The notion that people possessing a certain type of personality may be better at their jobs began to gain momentum. This brought about the concept of the big-five personalities in relation to turnover. The big five personalities are: (I) Extraversion versus Introversion, (II) Agreeableness versus Hostility, (III) Conscientiousness versus Lack of Conscientiousness, (IV) Emotional stability versus Neuroticism, and (V) Intellect/Autonomy or Openness to Experience versus Lack of Intellect/Autonomy or Closedness to Experience (Digman, 1990). Judge, Heller, and Mount (2002) found that some of the Big Five personalities linked to job satisfaction, while Mynatt et al. (1997) found no direct effect on turnover intentions. However, work by Jenkins (1993) found self-monitoring (a dispositional factor) did significantly influence turnover intentions, while Allen, Weeks, and Moffitt (2005) also found that actual turnover differed by self-monitoring, with those who are high self-monitors more likely to follow through with their turnover intentions on actual turnover behaviour.

Other researchers felt that there were additional aspects to a person's psychological disposition that warranted research, and that was their taxonomy of affective temperament (Watson & Clark, 1984). The theory was based on the premise that people either have a positive affectivity (PA) or negative affectivity (NA) (Watson & Clark, 1984). George (1989) found both PA and NA were related to turnover intentions, with Brief and Weiss (2002) asserting that affectivity can play a role in turnover intentions. This includes psychological capital, which is defined as "an individual's positive psychological state of development characterized by having confidence (efficacy); making positive attributions and having positive future expectations (optimism); persevering toward goals and, when necessary, redirecting paths to goals (hope); and bouncing back from adversity (resilience)" (Luthans, Youssef, & Avolio, 2007, p. 3). In their meta-analysis, Avey, Reichard, Luthans, and Mhatre (2011) found psychological capital to be significantly and negatively related to turnover intentions (corrected $r = -0.32$).

Building on the psychological factors (above), research started to suggest that the psychological make-up of an employee as well as their affectivity may make them better suited to certain situations or certain organisations. This idea was formed into the person-fit theory or organisational-person fit. Person-organisation fit (POF) is the idea that a certain type of employee would be better suited for different organisations. POF is often defined as "the congruence between the norms and values of organisations and the values of persons" (Chatman, 1989, p. 199). Schneider's (1987) model of attraction-selection-attrition (ASA) also highlights the idea of person-organisation fit. The model suggests that the cycle of attraction, selection, and attrition end up making organisations more homogenous (Godthelp & Glunk, 2003). Largely due to the fact that employees who don't feel as though they fit into the organisation, tend to leave to find other jobs.

Thus, at the crux of all of psychological theories is the basis that organisations can test or analyse an employee's deposition to find out if they will be the best person for the role or to work in the organisation. Many studies have found that there is merit in this approach especially when looking at attitudinal factors (Arthur, Bell, Villado, & Doverspike, 2006). In their meta-analysis, Arthur et al. (2006) found that P-O fit was significantly related to job satisfaction and turnover intentions. So while the person-organisation fit is potentially important and should be a factor to consider, it seems to be more relevant at the recruitment stage of the process. It is at the recruitment stage that you can assess potential employees' pre-depositions and see how they respond to situations or if their values are congruent with that of the organisation. Instead, this study wishes to focus on the factors that are present once an individual is employed and that organisations have control over (Robinson & Rousseau, 1994).

2.2c Organisational Factors and Turnover

Therefore, the present study focuses on the factors that organisations have control over. These factors are often deemed organisational factors or characteristics of the work environment. Organisational factors are those factors that influence an employee's daily life at work. It is also the factors that organisations may have control over once an employee has been employed. As previously mentioned, antecedents like demographic factors and psychological factors (sections A and B above) are better tested at the recruitment stage. Organisational factors, in contrast, can evolve as employees evolve and as the business itself develops.

Factors such as pay, training and development, job autonomy, supervisor support, and work-life balance are often categorised as organisational factors. Griffeth et al.'s (2000) meta-analysis on turnover literature provided a comprehensive analysis of the numerous turnover antecedents. Within their meta-analysis, they found that the work environment characteristics

that were the best predictors of turnover were job content, stress, leadership, work group cohesion, and to a lesser extent distributive justice and promotional chances. Lambert, Lynne Hogan, and Barton (2001) also stated “environment is very important in shaping worker job satisfaction” (p. 245). They went on to say that “Job satisfaction is a key mediating variable between the work environment and turnover intent. Our results suggest that employers should focus on the work environment to improve worker job satisfaction, and ultimately lower turnover intent” (Lambert et al., 2001, p. 245). Coomber and Louise Barriball (2007) echoed those results by finding through a review of turnover literature among nurses, that work environment factors rather than individual or demographic factors were still the most important to nurses’ turnover intentions. As such, focusing upon work factors is aligned with the literature which suggests greater understanding of turnover intentions is likely to be found in these factors.

Studies since the time of Griffeth et al.’s (2000) meta-analysis, have researched many of the different organisational factors in relation to turnover. Eisenberger, Stinglhamber, Vandenberghe, Sucharski, and Rhoades (2002) found that perceived supervisor support was related to intention to leave but was mediated by perceived organisational support. However, Kalliath and Beck (2001) found a direct relationship between supervisor social support and reduced intention to quit. Other studies have found organisational factors such as job autonomy (Spell, 2009; DeCarlo & Agarwal, 1999; Griffin, Patterson, & West, 2001) and work-life balance (Carlson, Grzywacz, & Zivnuska, 2009; Brough et al., 2014) as being related to an employee’s turnover intentions. Thompson and Prottas (2006) broke organisational factors into different groups: (1) informal organisational factors (family benefits); (2) formal organisational factors (supervisor support); and (3) job characteristics (autonomy) to try to explain the different aspects of an employee’s working environment. Drawing on the various reasoning above, this study focuses on job autonomy, supervisor support, and work-life balance as

antecedents to employee job satisfaction and turnover intentions, as these seem to encompass a sufficient amount of an employee's daily working environment. Furthermore, given the importance of work-life balance as a predictor of job satisfaction (Haar, 2013; Haar et al., 2014) and job satisfaction as a predictor of turnover intentions, these are both added as potential mediators of the effects of the aforementioned antecedents. These factors will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 3 towards building a theoretical model for testing. Overall, the literature suggests these organisational factors are likely to be the dominant predictors of turnover intentions and thus become the focus of the present study.

2.3 Gaps in the Literature

The present study has identified three gaps in the literature that help shape the overall direction and focus of the study. These are explored below.

Skill level

Much of the previously mentioned research is based on similar samples, and thus a major criticism of the turnover literature is that it suffers from homogeneous samples. For example, Allen et al. (2014) noted that often research is based on a single organisation or it only explores one specific group of people. Therefore, the aim of the present research is to bridge that gap by exploring turnover intentions across a wide variety of employees. It is important to understand if (any) differences exist between the turnover intentions of different groups within the workforce. Allen et al. (2014) performed a meta-analysis on the turnover literature to investigate if turnover literature suffered from what they deemed a Dominant Analytical Mind-set (DAM). According to Allen et al. (2014) DAM occurs when "researchers in a particular domain tend to approach their subject matter from the perspective of particular research designs, data collection and measurement strategies, and analytical techniques" (p. S62). They surveyed published articles from 1958 to 2010 from 11 top-ranked journals: (such

as *Academy of Management Journal*, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, and *Journal of Management*). The search resulted in a total of 406 articles with 447 total studies. This shows that multi-study turnover studies are seldom, with an average of 1.1 studies per paper from this data. As such, multi-study papers would help clarify and enhance findings.

Allen et al. (2014) also found that the turnover literature is dominated by certain sample characteristics. Their meta-analysis found that 81% of studies are based on people who are a college graduate or higher, 71% of participants in the studies are Caucasian (white), 77% of participants are full-time employees and most of the studies are based on homogeneous samples with 95% from one occupational group. In addition, 61% of the studies were based on professional workers. The remaining 32% (7% was based on military and therefore excluded) were made up of a combination of labours, services, and production workers. Lastly, 84% of the studies were based on United States (US) only samples. Therefore, it can be argued that much of the turnover literature is not representative of the general work force or the rest of the western world.

The present study argues because of these factors, that it is important to understand the differences between the different types of workers. The present study also performed a small qualitative meta-analysis on the turnover literature from 2011- to the present (see Appendix 1)¹. The small meta-analysis reiterated many of the points that Allen et al.'s (2014) meta-analysis found. Again, from 2011 most of the turnover literature was based on educated professional employees as well as those from one specific organisation. For example, one study looked only at a recreation and hospitality organisation and didn't expand on the different skill

¹ Note: this small meta-analysis only explored 2 journals: *Academy of Management Journal* and *Journal of Organizational Behavior*. This was simply to check that the 2011 findings had not been significantly changed over time and such an outcome was not supported. Hence, it was not the aim of the analysis to conduct a full meta-analysis on all the journals.

levels or different business unit employees within the organisation. In another study, the focus was on call centres, but rather than interview the front line staff, the directors of the call centres were interviewed. However, in some of the studies it was hard to get an accurate breakdown of the participants as these were not reported. Therefore, the lack of comparisons between a wide-range of employees, especially by skill-level remains apparent.

The post-industrial age saw the workforce being categorised into two distinct groups, blue-collar and white collar workers. Blue collar workers were traditionally manual labours or production line workers. In contrast, most authors define white collar workers by their office based jobs (Bell, 1976; Huang, 2011). White collar workers have been steadily increasing since the beginning of the post-industrial era (Bell, 1976). The more recent term for the white collar worker is knowledge worker due to the tasks that they perform within their job (Huang, 2011). Their value is often in the knowledge that they hold. In contrast, blue collar workers are not often valued for their knowledge but rather for their manual labour on production lines or other menial type of work. The tasks of blue collar workers are often repetitive and monotonous (Melamed, Ben-Avi, Luz, & Green, 1995; Bell, 1976).

The present study argues that the terms of blue collar and white collar (or knowledge worker) has limitations. For example, while an administrative role would be deemed white collar, an administrative job requires less training than a lawyer which is also deemed white collar. Therefore, this research offers three broad catchment groups within the work force: (1) low-skilled workers, (2) semi-skilled workers, and (3) skilled workers. Low-skilled workers are normally defined by having low educational achievement, low pay, and relatively low job alternatives (Carless, Fewings-Hall, Hall, Hay, Hemsworth, & Coleman, 2007). In addition, low-skilled workers often are deemed replaceable due to low barriers of entry into those jobs. Low-skilled jobs tend to be repetitive and without much variety. Jobs that are often categorised as low-skilled are assembly line jobs, cleaning, hospitality and call centres jobs (Bohle,

Buchanan, Cooke, Considine, Jakubauskas, Quinlan, & Ryan, 2008). Semi-skilled workers are those whose job requires a certain level of training. They are also slightly harder to replace, due to the estimates that it takes over 30 days for a replacement to be trained (Gregory, Zissimos, & Greenhalgh, 2001). Semi-skilled workers tend to have a slightly higher economic value placed on their jobs (Carless et al., 2007). However, semi-skilled jobs, like unskilled jobs, tend to be repetitive and don't require personal judgement from the employee. Jobs often associated with semi-skilled workers are administration jobs, sales, and service jobs (Bohle et al., 2008; Hijzen, Görg, & Hine, 2005).

In contrast skilled workers tend to be those who have attained a high level of educational achievement (Gregory et al., 2001). Skilled workers tend to have more job alternatives, are required to perform high levels of decision making, and often tend to be rather specialised in a particular area of work, for example, accountants (Hijzen et al., 2005). Skilled workers, economically, are highly valued. However, while similarities between two groups of employees (blue collar and white collar) have been found in the process of burnout there were different strengths associated with the antecedents between the two groups (Toppinen-Tanner, Kalimo, & Mutanen, 2002). Therefore, how different groups of employees view antecedents to turnover, may vary and therefore a comparison is necessary. Aligned with this approach is the work of Centers and Bugental (1966), who noted that job motivations tend to vary between different occupational levels. Centers and Bugental (1966) found at the professional-managerial level that pay was not an important factor and that interesting work was more significant of an indicator of job satisfaction. In contrast, pay for blue collar (low-skilled) ranked high as an important factor of job satisfaction, along with job security. Consequently, by exploring the antecedents to turnover intentions between three-groups of employee skills (low-skilled, semi-skilled and skilled) the present study allows for a greater fine-tuned analysis than is typically undertaken in the literature (Allen et al., 2014). As such, the present study

suggests that due to the potential differences between these three groups of employees, a comparison of how each of these three groups view facets of their job and to assess the relationship of these facets in relation to their job satisfaction and turnover intentions is warranted.

Internationalization

It is also important to note that much of the previously mentioned research has been largely based on samples located in the US (Allen et al., 2014). Therefore, a study based on New Zealand samples could add to the turnover literature. There are only a handful of studies that have been published that have used New Zealand samples (e.g., Haar, 2004; Boxall, Macky & Rasmussen, 2003). In addition, New Zealand is home to a vast amount of different cultures and ethnic groups including the Maori, who are the indigenous people of New Zealand. The 2013 New Zealand census indicated there are over 213 different ethnicities in New Zealand (Statistics New Zealand, 2013). In addition, a quarter of the New Zealand's population was born overseas (Statistics New Zealand, 2013). Therefore, New Zealand offers a rather unique diverse workforce to draw on, which may make the results of this study more applicable to a global audience beyond the US especially.

Methodology

In addition, Allen et al. (2014) found that turnover literature was heavily dominated by quantitative research. They found that only 3 percent of the 447 studies had any type of qualitative component to it. As previously mentioned, Allen et al. (2014) suggested that researchers fall into a particular analytical mind-sets which can stunt the growth of knowledge on certain research areas. Therefore, by switching analytical mind-sets it allows for the development of theory through the insertion of one structure into forms of another (Zyphur, 2009). Thus, the present study utilizes both quantitative and qualitative methods in regards to

exploring turnover intentions, as it allows for the fusion of elements of both methods to form not only a theoretical model for turnover but also a greater understanding of the individual complexities that exist within turnover intentions. This should, in turn, help to achieve greater depth and width with regards to understanding employee turnover.

2.4 Study's Contribution

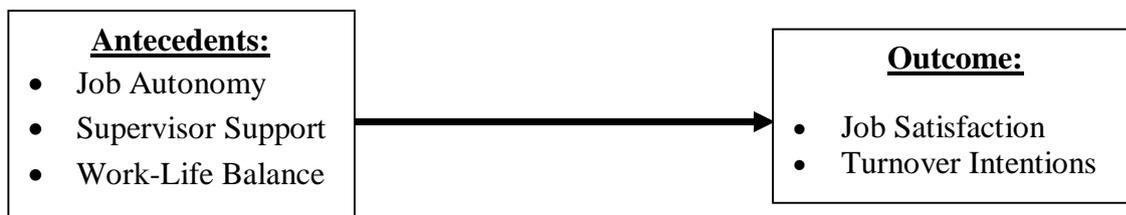
Thus, this research helps to add to the literature by providing a comparison of the turnover intentions of New Zealand employees. While this study takes a New Zealand perspective by using a sample of people currently residing in New Zealand, the findings should be attributable to other countries as well. Most countries have different tiers of low-skilled, semi-skilled, and skilled employees and the comparisons of these skill levels have not been widely researched. In addition, by using a mix-method approach this study aims to achieve width and depth. By using qualitative data to enrich the statistical results of the multi-study approach, this study will not only provide useful comparisons of the different turnover intentions of different groups within the workforce, but also to give an employee narrative, which is often missing within the turnover literature.

CHAPTER 3

CURRENT STUDY AND THEORETICAL MODEL

Turnover intentions is a intricate process that involves complex human behaviors (Lambert et al., 2001). As previously mentioned, often in the the turnover literature, the type of job or skill level has not been taken into account. Consequently, the present study first tests the selected antecedents to job satisfaction and turnover intentions for the combined sample of the three types of skill-levels (see Figure 1). This is the initial starting point based on the literature. Once I have detailed turnover intentions and the antecedents across the various skill levels I will develop this model and present an extended model at the Chapter's end. Ultimately, the present study tests a two mediator model in which firstly work-life balance and then job satisfaction act as the mediators towards turnover intentions and then uses a multi-group analysis to test for differences across the three skill-levels.

Figure 1. Initial Theoretical Model



3.1 Outcomes: Turnover Intentions

Turnover intentions is used as the outcome variable in the model due it being the best predictor of actual turnover (Tett and Meyer, 1993; Griffeth et al., 2000). Although it is not actual turnover (when an employee actually leaves their job), turnover intentions is one of the most accurate variables for predicting actual turnover (Shore & Martin, 1989). In their meta-analysis, Tett and Meyer (1993) found turnover intentions as the strongest predictor of actual

turnover at .45. More recent meta-analyses have supported these effects (Simons & Robinson, 2003), with Griffeth et al. (2000) stating that “the latest meta-analysis shows that quit intentions remain the best predictor” (p. 480). In addition, according to Ajen’s (1991) theory of planned behaviour, “intentions are assumed to capture the motivational factors that influence a behavior; they are indications of how hard people are willing to try, or how much of an effort they are planning to exert, in order to perform the behaviour” (p. 181). Ajen (1991) went on to state that “As a general rule, the stronger the intention to engage in a behavior, the more likely should be its performance” (p. 181). Therefore, turnover intention is the most effective way to gauge an employee’s turnover decisions.

3.2 Antecedents of Turnover Intentions

As previously mentioned three antecedents: job autonomy, supervisor support, and work-life balance were selected because they encompass a broad range of work related factors; relating to the job itself (job autonomy), the role of others (supervisor support), and the interface between work and life roles (work-life balance). These antecedents are detailed next and the hypotheses relating to these are also provided. The differences between skill level groups will be hypothesised at the end of the chapter.

Job Autonomy

Job autonomy is one of the ways that organisations can help enrich an employee’s job. Previous scholars have differentiated between types of autonomy. Some have researched the effects of autonomy orientation which refers to one’s dispositional tendency to self-regulate as well as self-initiate (Liu, Zhang, Wang, & Lee, 2011). Others have looked at the effects of supportive autonomy which is often characterised by situations in which people are given choices and encouraged for personal initiative (Gagné, 2003). Supportive autonomy has been predicted to promote intrinsic autonomy rather than extrinsic or controlled motivation (Gagné,

2003). For the purpose of this study autonomy has been defined using Hackman and Oldham's (1976) definition, "autonomy is the degree to which the job provides substantial freedom, independence, and discretion to the individual in scheduling the work and in determining the procedures to be used in carrying it out" (p. 258).

Job autonomy has been researched in relation to many different work outcomes. Joo, Jeung, and Yoon (2010) found a positive relationship between job autonomy and intrinsic motivation, while ten Brummelhuis, Haar, and van der Lippe (2010) found job autonomy was significantly related to employee collegiality. Ahuja, Chudoba, Kacmar, McKnight, and George (2007) found that while autonomy was positively related to organisational commitment it had no effect on work-family conflict but did influence perceived work overload. However, Voydanoff (2004) found that job autonomy was significantly related to family facilitation, and negatively related to work-to-family conflict.

Job autonomy has also been linked to other outcomes of interest to the present study, such as job satisfaction and turnover intentions (DeCarlo & Agarwal, 1999; Griffin, Patterson, & West, 2001). DeCarlo and Agarwai (1999) found that among salespeople in three different countries, autonomy was positively related to job satisfaction. A study done by Au and Cheung (2004) also found that among different nations, those nations with people reporting greater job autonomy showed higher levels of job satisfaction. In their meta-analysis of nurses' turnover intentions, Irvine and Evans (1995) found that job autonomy had a moderately strong relationship to job satisfaction. Finn (2001) echoed these results by finding that among registered nurses, job autonomy was the most important of the job components. Peng, Hwang, and Wong (2010) also found a strong positive link between job autonomy and job satisfaction while, Haar and Spell (2009) found that job autonomy was positively related to job satisfaction and negatively related to turnover intentions, providing support from a New Zealand context. Finally, Beehr and Drexler (1986) found that job autonomy was related to both job satisfaction

and job search intention. Therefore, following past research, this study proposes that job autonomy will be an antecedent of both job satisfaction and turnover intentions. Thus, employees with greater autonomy in their job will report higher job satisfaction and consequently be less likely to consider leaving their job.

Hypothesis 1: Job autonomy will be (a) positively related to job satisfaction and (b) negatively related to turnover intentions

Supervisor Support

Supervisor support has been seen to be a very important influencer of job outcomes, as it often at the supervisor level that organisational policies are implemented (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). In addition, it is also the supervisor who likely plays a role in performance appraisals, promotion decisions, pay raises etc. that the employees will receive (Eisenberger, Stinglhamber, Vandenberghe, Sucharski, & Rhoades, 2002). Similarly, when necessary, it is often the supervisor who plays a role in determining who will be terminated or made redundant. Therefore, another antecedent to turnover intentions that has been studied is supervisor support. Supervisors not only tend to have a large influence on an employee's working day (Allen et al., 2010), but employees often perceive a supervisor as embodying the organisational values and culture and thus is the image of the organisation that employees see (Dawley, Andrews, & Bucklew, 2008; Levinson, 1965).

Employees tend to form an opinion on how much their supervisor values their contributions and cares about their well-being (Maertz, Griffeth, Campbell, & Allen, 2007) and responds accordingly. Based on social exchange theory and the notion that employees reciprocate when they receive support (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchinson, & Sowa, 1986), if an employee believes that their supervisor values their contribution and supports their work effort, then that employee will work harder. The concepts of social exchange theory have been

used to describe the reciprocal relationship between an employee and the organisation they work for (Haar & Spell, 2004). The idea of reciprocation becomes even more important at a supervisor to employee level because, as previously mentioned, it is at this level that many decisions are made that impact an employee's work role.

Behind the principal of the supervisor-subordinate relationship is the “positive, beneficial actions directed at subordinates by their supervisors contribute to the development of high-quality exchange relationships that create obligations for the subordinates to reciprocate in equally positive ways” (Chen et al., 2007, p. 204). The key being that for an exchange to occur, it requires a bidirectional transaction. Therefore, subordinates need something in return for the work that they provide for their supervisor. As a result, sometimes there are transactional costs placed on the relationship. A relationship based on transactional costs is frequently defined as a transactional contract (Cullinane & Dundon, 2006). Transactional contracts are those contracts that are not based on employees expecting a long-lasting ‘relational’ process with their employer, but rather a short-term often monetised contract simply based on pay for hours (Cullinane & Dundon, 2006; Robinson & Rousseau, 1994) and are only based on the present. Consequently, transactional reciprocation seems to lack the interpersonal influences that are present under the social exchange theory, and therefore can be detrimental for the supervisor/subordinate relationship. Settoon, Bennett, and Liden (1996) stated “the more the relationships or exchanges between supervisors and subordinates are based on mutual trust and loyalty, interpersonal affect, and respect for each other, the better the subordinate's performance in terms of expected and ‘extra’ or citizenship behaviors” (p. 224). Supervisor support is often one piece of the exchange and helps to build trust with a subordinate. In addition, employees will often assume that by having supervisor support they have the support of the organisation.

When a subordinate feels an obligation to their supervisor they often work over and above what is required of them or display organisation citizenship behaviours (Settoon et al., 1996). Those employees who develop high quality or “good” relationships with their supervisor tend to have preferential treatment, higher levels of decision making, and greater growth opportunities (Kim et al., 2010; Morrow, Suzuki, Crum, Ruben, Pautsch, 2005). Supervisor support has also been found to be linked to job satisfaction (Baruch-Feldman, Brondolo, Ben-Dayan, & Schwartz, 2002). Dupré and Day (2007) found that supervisor support significantly predicted job satisfaction within the military. Within a New Zealand context, Haar (2006) found a positive link between supervisor support and employee loyalty, while Haar and Roche (2008) found significant links between supervisor support and both job satisfaction and turnover intentions. In their regression models, both Allen (2001) and Haar and Roche (2008) found supervisor support was positively related to job satisfaction and negatively related to turnover intentions. Thus, this study expects employees who rate their supervisors as being more supportive will reciprocate under social exchange theory and report higher job satisfaction and lower intentions to leave. This leads to the next hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2: Supervisor support will be (a) positively related to job satisfaction and (b) negatively related to turnover intentions.

Work-life balance

Work-life balance has become an important issue for many employees, as the number of working hours continues to rise and the ability to balance all aspects of their life has become harder to do (Haar, 2013; Bohle et al., 2008). Therefore, work-life balance becomes a significant factor when assessing how employees feel about their job. Haar (2013) defined work life balance as “the extent to which an individual is able to adequately manage the multiple roles in their life including work, family, and other major responsibilities” (p. 3308).

The inability to effectively meet one's major life or family responsibilities have been found to lead to increased levels of stress and stress-related illness, lower life satisfaction, high rates of family strife, violence, divorce, and rising incidence of substance abuse, growing problems with parenting and supervision of children and adolescents, and escalating rates of juvenile delinquency and violence (Hobson, Delunas, & Kesic, 2001). Research into work-life balance largely increased due to the increase in the employment of women, in particular mothers. Work-life balance was largely a non-issue before, because most workers were full time men, with women largely confined to unpaid labour of caring and domestic work. However, in today's society, most families are made up of dual earners, which means that both parents tend to have to balance work and life roles.

A meta-analysis done by Ford, Heinen, and Langkamer (2007) states that "work stress crosses over into the family domain in its effect on domain-specific satisfaction more than family stress crosses over into the work domain" (p. 68). Therefore, from an organisational perspective the negative spill over due to the lack of work-life balance can have organisational outcomes as well. It has been found that lack of work-life balance can lead to higher rates of absenteeism and turnover, reduced productivity, decrease job satisfaction, lower levels of organisational commitment and loyalty, and rising healthcare costs (Hobson, et al., 2001). However, while much of the literature on work life balance has been dominated by family commitments, it is important to realise that there are responsibilities that people have outside of the family. For example, many people have hobbies or belong to a sports team or community centre that requires their time. When an employee's vocational interests are matched with a supportive work environment, the employee is more likely to be satisfied in that environment and often choose to stay in that environment longer (Van Iddekinge, Roth, Putka, & Lanivich, 2011). Therefore, the need for employees to balance all aspects of their life becomes very important. Haar (2013) noted balance is not assumed to be equality in time, engagement and

satisfaction. Instead, it is a how employees personally assess the balance of their multiple roles, and not simply the total number of hours worked, which have been found to be detrimental (Major, Klein, & Ehrhart, 2002).

Work-life balance has also been linked to various outcomes such as job satisfaction and life satisfaction (Haar, 2013) as well a decrease in psychological strain and stress (Major, Klein, & Ehrhart, 2002) and mental health issues (Haar, 2013). Haar (2013) added to the literature by finding that non-parents had nearly identical findings to those of parents in relation to their links between work life balance and outcomes including job satisfaction. These effects also held between married and single employees, suggesting that work-life balance is an important issue for all employees (Haar, 2013). Brough et al. (2014) found work-life balance from time one, significant and negatively related to turnover intentions in time two. In addition, studies on similar balance constructs such as work-family balance have been significantly correlated positively to job satisfaction and negatively to turnover intentions (Carlson, Grzywacz, & Zivnuska, 2009). As such, we can expect work-life balance to enhance the satisfaction of employees while minimizing their intentions to leave their jobs. Therefore, like the previous two antecedents this study proposes the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 3: Work-life balance will be (a) positively related to job satisfaction and (b) negatively related to turnover intentions.

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is one of the most researched predictors of an employee's turnover intentions. The idea of job satisfaction started back in the 1930s with the publication of Roethlisberger and Dickson's *Management* (Locke, 1969). Job satisfaction is defined as "the pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job as achieving or facilitating the achievement of one's job values" (Locke, 1969, p. 316). In addition, job satisfaction is "a

function of the perceived relationship between what one wants from a one's job and what one perceives it as offering or entailing" (Locke, 1969, p. 316). Put another way, "job satisfaction is considered an attribute that exists as the equity of a variety of desired and non-desired job-related experiences" (Tutuncu & Kozak, 2007, p. 3). However, at the crux of job satisfaction is the fact that it is an employee's appraisal to what degree the job fulfils one's own job values and therefore either creates a positive emotional state of satisfaction or the opposing negative feelings of dissatisfaction (Coomber & Louis Barriball, 2007).

Job satisfaction gained traction as more people saw it as the precursor to many organisational outcomes, including better firm performance, better customer service (Lu, Whil & Louise Barriball, 2005; Malhotra & Mukherjee, 2004), stronger organisational commitment (Billingsley & Cross, 1992), and lower employee turnover (Tett & Meyer, 1993; Griffeth et. al, 2000). In contrast, dissatisfaction with a job can cause poor performance or even devious behaviours (Christian & Ellis, 2014). Within service areas, such as customer service or health care, dissatisfaction with a job can lead to a decrease in customer/patient care (Lu, While, & Louise Barriball, 2005; Malhotra & Mukherjee, 2004).

In addition, there has been a vast amount of research on the links between job satisfaction and turnover intentions. Studies have found that job satisfaction was the strongest predictor of turnover intentions (Lambert et al., 2001; Tutuncu & Kozak, 2007; Griffeth, Hom, & Gaertner, 2000). In Tutuncu and Kozak's (2007) study, they found that overall job satisfaction was the biggest predictor of intention to continue working in the hotel industry. While some studies have suggested other predictors of turnover intentions, such as organisational commitment (Lum et al., 1998), Tett and Meyer (1993) performed a meta-analysis on both organisational commitment and job satisfaction and found that job satisfaction has stronger correlations with intentions/cognitions than did commitment. In addition, when reviewing structural determinants of job satisfaction and organisational commitment with

turnover models, Gaertner (2000) found that most structural determinants are directly related to job satisfaction but fewer structural determinants were directly related to organizational commitment over and above their impact on job satisfaction. Therefore, this study looks only at job satisfaction as a predictor (and ultimately mediator) of turnover intentions. The belief is that if an employee is satisfied with their job than they will be less likely to look for another job. Roznowski and Hulin (1992) stated that job satisfaction measures are “the most informative data a manager can have for predicting employee behaviour” (p. 26). Therefore, this study predicts:

Hypothesis 4: Job satisfaction will be negatively related to turnover intentions.

3.3 Mediation Model

While the above hypotheses test the direct influence of job autonomy, supervisor support, and work-life balance on job satisfaction and turnover intentions, and job satisfaction on turnover intentions, this study believes that due to the complexities of the turnover process, a mediation model may provide us more insight into how employees view their jobs. As such, two potential mediators: (1) work-life balance and (2) job satisfaction are explored, ultimately defining a model where job autonomy and supervisor support predict work-life balance and in turn, work-life balance predicts job satisfaction, which then predicts turnover intentions.

Mediator: Work-Life Balance

Due to work-life balance being a relatively new construct, it hasn't often been tested in literature as a mediating variable, with the exception of a few studies (Haar, 2013; Wu, Rusyidi, Claiborne, and McCarthy, 2013). Instead, much of the research has focused more on work-family conflict as mediating variables. However, Wu et al. (2013) found that work-life balance partially mediated the relationship between organisational support and job value towards job

satisfaction. In addition, Haar (2013) found strong evidence for work-life balance mediating the effects of the work-life interface (conflict and enrichment dimensions) towards outcomes such as job satisfaction. Therefore, it seems logical to explore work-life balance as a mediating variable towards job satisfaction and turnover intentions, mediating the effects of job autonomy and supervisor support.

Furthermore, job autonomy and supervisor support have been found to facilitate work-life balance and therefore may provide a better model towards the ultimate prediction of turnover intentions. Hopkins (2005) found that within organisations that lacked policies on work-life balance, supervisor support became an essential factor in an employee's view of work-life balance. In addition, job autonomy has been found to decrease the amount of work-family conflict that employees experience. Parasuraman, Purohit, Godshalk, and Beutell (1996) found that job autonomy was negatively related to family-work-conflict and found that autonomy enabled people to minimise the intrusion of family into work. Therefore, this study suggests that supervisor support and job autonomy will enhance the work-life balance of employees, and thus work-life balance will mediate the influence of these factors on job satisfaction. This leads to the first mediation hypothesis:

Hypothesis 5: Work-life balance will mediate the relationship between job autonomy and supervisor support towards job satisfaction.

Mediator: Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction has also been found to mediate many different variables within the turnover literature. Behson (2005) found job autonomy was significantly related to both job satisfaction and turnover intentions, although its influence (overall percentage of variance explained) was far greater towards job satisfaction than turnover intentions. In their meta-analysis, Humphrey, Nahrgang, and Morgeson (2007) found job autonomy was significantly

related to job satisfaction but not turnover intentions. DeConinck and Johnson (2009) found that while supervisor support was negatively related to turnover intentions, in their structural model the direct effects were fully mediated. Similarly, the full mediation effects of job satisfaction in the relationship between supervisor support and turnover intentions was also supported by Brough and Frame (2004) in a sample of New Zealand police officers. Finally, Van Dick, Christ, Stellmacher, Wagner, Ahlswede, Grubba, and Tissington (2004) confirmed the mediating effects of job satisfaction towards turnover intentions on other workplace factors, and this was supported across four distinct samples.

While, work-life balance has been found to predict job satisfaction, research on turnover intentions is lacking, although a few studies have found links between work-family factors and turnover intentions (Anderson, Coffey, & Byerly, 2002). Carlson et al. (2009) found a significant and negative relationship between work-family balance and turnover intentions. In a cross-section analysis, Brough et al. (2014) found that the effects of work-life balance on turnover intentions was fully mediated by job satisfaction in the New Zealand sample, and partially mediated in the Australian sample. The present study suggests a mediation effect from job satisfaction on the influence of work-life balance towards turnover intentions. Thus, an employee who has strong balance between work and life roles is likely to enjoy their work more and thus be less likely to consider leaving their job. This leads to the last mediation prediction.

Hypothesis 6: Job satisfaction will mediate the relationship between work-life balance and turnover intentions.

To provide context for the entire thesis and its associated hypotheses, it is worth noting that the variables of interest are likely to impact ultimately on turnover intentions in a path (i.e., indirectly). Thus, job autonomy and supervisor support will predict work-life balance which in

turn predicts job satisfaction, which ultimately influences turnover intentions. While work-life balance might predict turnover intentions, it is expected this effect will be mediated by job satisfaction. Similarly, while job autonomy and supervisor support can predict job satisfaction, it's expected that work-life balance will mediate these influences.

3.4 Skill Levels

In regards to skill levels, this study believes that there will be differences among the different skill levels in how the initial antecedents influence the mediating variables of work-life balance and job satisfaction. Firstly, in regards to job autonomy, semi-skilled and skilled workers tend to rely more on their own knowledge, experience, and understanding to perform their jobs when compared to low-skilled workers. For example, an assembly line has little autonomy to shape decisions about how their working day is structured, and therefore may not have as much control over their work-life balance. Conversely, an accountant might decide the order of their workday and thus having greater job autonomy will give them the flexibility to be able to balance all life roles. In addition, semi-skilled and skilled employees might expect autonomy within their roles and thus job autonomy will have a greater impact on their job satisfaction in comparison to low-skilled employees. Alternatively, low-skilled employees might not expect much job autonomy and therefore respond more positively when they receive autonomy. A similar argument could also be made for support.

The present study also suggests differences in the influence that supervisor support will have on outcomes across the different skill level groups. Semi-skilled and skilled employees are likely to depend more on themselves than low-skilled workers. Thus, a low-skilled worker's day might be more heavily influenced by their supervisor, and therefore would benefit more from having a supportive supervisor, especially in regards to their work-life balance. In contrast, semi-skilled and skilled workers may only need their supervisor for certain aspects,

such as overseeing a request for resources. This suggests that for low-skilled employees, supervisor support will influence their work-life balance and job satisfaction more so than for other skilled employees. On the other hand, semi-skilled and skilled employees' jobs might have greater complexity and scope and therefore a supportive supervisor might be invaluable and actually increase their work-life balance and job satisfaction.

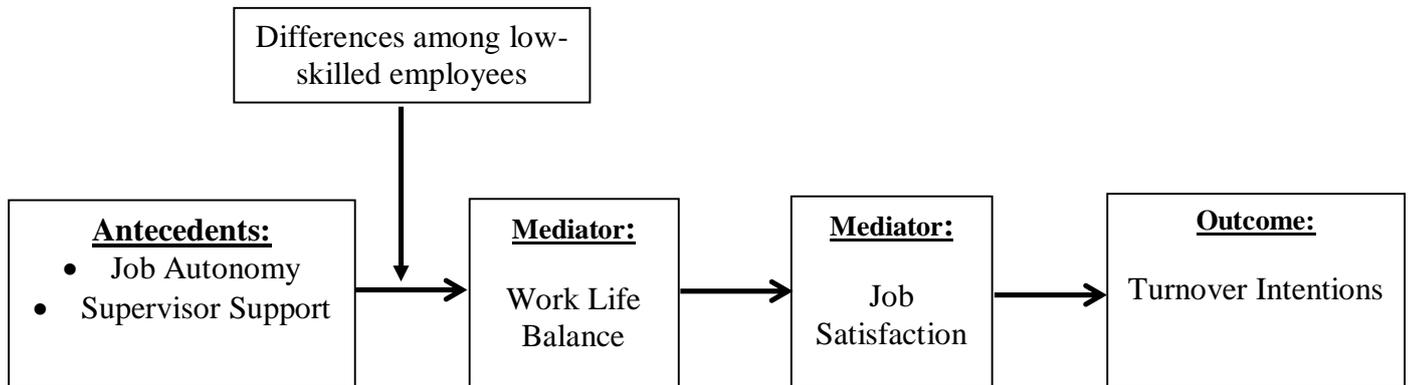
Unlike supervisor support and job autonomy, work-life balance has been found to be important for a variety of employees including married and single, and parents and non-parents (Haar, 2013). As such, given the importance of work-life balance for all employees and therefore, work-life balance will influence job satisfaction for all skill level employees. The same is likely to be true for job satisfaction towards turnover intentions. Therefore, based on the literature, it can be expected that job satisfaction will be negatively related to turnover intention across all skill-levels. Thus, an employee who is satisfied in their job, whether a low-skilled labourer or a skilled professional will be less likely to seek new job opportunities because they are satisfied in the one they have.

Overall, the present study hypothesises that significant differences will exist between the different skills level groups in relation to the influences that job autonomy and supervisor support will have on the other variables. This leads to the last hypothesis.

Hypothesis 7: Job autonomy and supervisor support will have a significantly different influence on employees' relationships with work-life balance and job satisfaction between the three groups: low-skill, semi-skilled and skilled employees, while the influences of work-life balance and job satisfaction will be constant across skill-levels.

Consequently, the final theoretical model is presented below (Figure 2) and accounts for the mediating effects of work-life balance as well as job satisfaction among the different skill level groups:

Figure 2. Final Theoretical Model (Mediation Model)



CHAPTER 4

QUANTITATIVE STUDIES METHODS

Recent arguments about empirical studies and statistical tests (Nuzzo, 2014) highlight the need for greater replication to provide greater confidence than findings from a single study. Furthermore, given the present thesis focus on three types of employees: low-skilled, semi-skilled and skilled, three studies were undertaken to test the hypotheses.

4.1 Sample and Procedure

Appendix 2 has the survey questions and this was used for all studies. All quantitative study data analysed here was gathered in conjunction with my Chief Supervisor (Professor Jarrod Haar) and ethical approval for the studies has been garnered. None of the data has been used before. In total, three quantitative studies were collected.

Study One: Low-skilled worker data were collected from a single private sector (construction) organization with 180 employees in a large metropolitan New Zealand city. A single organization was the target because we were interested in non-skilled workers and as such, this allowed for a targeted approach towards collecting data. A research assistant discussed the project with senior managers and they supported being onsite and approaching employees to participate in the study. Employees were spoken to individually, and had the research goals broadly defined, and in total, 100 completed responses were received (56% response rate). Workers were typically manual laborers and due to issues around reading and comprehension, the research assistant talked about 40% of respondents through the survey. These responses did not significantly differ from the remaining 60%. Participants were in the majority male (89%), and aged between 18-65 years, with an average age of 45 years (SD=11 years). By ethnicity, the majority were New Zealand European (42%), Pacific peoples (28%), and Maori (22%), with the remainder Chinese and Indian. Employees worked an average 50 hours per week

(SD=6.5 hours). Universally, no employee had any tertiary education (degree, diploma etc.) whatsoever.

Study Two and Three: Data for semi-skilled and skilled workers were collected simultaneously from a random study of 150 organizations of various sizes, across a wide regional area of New Zealand from various industries for each study. There was a crossover of approximately 50 organizations. Three surveys per organization were hand delivered and these targeted either semi-skilled or skilled employees and the survey included a question on occupation which was subsequently coded to confirm skill level (this is detailed more below). Skilled respondents included bankers, lawyers, academics and health professionals, while semi-skilled included receptionists, office assistant, shop attendant and delicatessen worker. The crossover of 50 organizations was where semi-skilled employees (e.g., secretaries) were collected along-side skilled employees (e.g., lawyers). Occupations were coding both by the researcher and an independent professor in the field and after discussion, agreement was confirmed resulting in 131 semi-skilled and 242 skilled employees.

Semi-skilled participants were in the majority female (72%), and aged between 19-67 years, with an average age of 34.5 years (SD=12.3 years). Roughly half of respondents were married (50%) and parents (48%). Semi-skilled employees worked an average 39 hours per week (SD=9.6 hours). By education, 31% had a high school qualification while 25% had a technical college qualification. The remaining 44% had some university qualification. While the majority (88.5%) had only a single job, 9% of the sample had two, with the remaining 2.5% having between 3 to 5 jobs. By industry, respondents were fairly evenly split between the private (47%) and public sectors (46%), with a small number from the not-for-profit sector (7%).

Skilled participants were in the majority female (55%), and aged between 19-62 years, with an average age of 35.5 years (SD=11.1 years). The majority was married (63%) and parents (59%). Skilled employees worked an average 40 hours per week (SD=9.6 hours). By education, 22% had a high school qualification while 18% had a technical college qualification. The largest proportion had a university degree (39%), while 18% held a master's degree and 3% a PhD qualification. While the majority (89%) had only a single job, 11% of the sample had two jobs. By industry, respondents were fairly evenly split between the private (44%) and public sectors (48%), with a small number from the not-for-profit sector (8%).

We combined the three samples together and report the results with the samples combined. Next, a multi-group analysis was run where the three individual samples are analysed separately.

4.2 Measures

Antecedents:

Job Autonomy was measured using 3-items by Knudsen, Johnson, Martin, and Roman (2003), coded 1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree. Sample question include “I have a lot of say over what happens on my job” and “I take part in job decisions that affect me”. This scale had good reliability, $\alpha = .90$ (low-skilled), $.80$ (semi-skilled), and $.80$ (skilled). The combined sample was $\alpha = .83$.

Supervisor Support was measured with 5-items by Lambert (2000). The questions followed the stem “My supervisor...”, with sample items “Is concerned about how employees think and feel about things” and “Feels each of us is important as an individual”. Responses were coded 1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree. This scale had excellent reliability, $\alpha = .92$ (low-skilled), $.91$ (semi-skilled), and $.89$ (skilled). The combined sample was $\alpha = .91$.

Work-Life Balance was measured using a 3-item measure by Haar (2013), coded 1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree. Questions followed the stem “*The following sections relate to your work, family, and life roles [if you have no children, family might still include partner, parents, siblings, friends, flatmates etc.]*”. Because this measure is still emerging, a factor analysis was conducted (principal components, varimax rotation), which confirmed the 3-items loaded onto a single factor with an eigenvalues greater than 1 (2.298, low-skilled; 2.014, semi-skilled; 2.108, skilled), accounting for sizeable amount of variance (76.6%, low-skilled; 67.1%, semi-skilled; 70.3% skilled) and having good reliability: $\alpha = .85$ (low-skilled), $.76$ (semi-skilled), and $.79$ (skilled). The combined sample was $\alpha = .80$.

Predictor:

Job Satisfaction was measured using 4-items by Judge, Bono, Erez and Locke (2005). Sample questions are “Most days I am enthusiastic about my work” and “I consider my job rather unpleasant” (reverse coded). Items were coded 1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree. This scale had good reliability, $\alpha = .87$ (low-skilled), $.85$ (semi-skilled), and $.81$ (skilled). The combined sample was $\alpha = .84$.

Outcome:

Turnover Intentions was measured using a 4-item measure by Kelloway, Gottlieb and Barham (1999), coded 1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree. Sample questions are “I am thinking about leaving my organization” and “I am planning to look for a new job”. This scale had good reliability, $\alpha = .98$ (low-skilled), $.93$ (semi-skilled), and $.92$ (skilled). The combined sample was $\alpha = .92$.

Control Variables:

The following variables were controlled for as per usual in the turnover intentions literature (e.g., Haar, Roche, & Taylor, 2012; Hom et al., 2012; Hom, & Kinicki, 2001): gender

(1=female, 0=male), age (in years), and hours worked (total hours worked per week including over-time).

4.3 Measurement Models

To confirm the separate dimensions of the various constructs, measures were tested by SEM using AMOS 20.0. While studies using SEM typically offer a number of goodness-of-fit indexes, recently, Williams, Vandenberg and Edwards (2009) argued that some are meaningless (e.g. chi-square goodness-of-fit statistic) while others have become less useful (e.g. GFI). These authors suggested three goodness-of-fit indexes as superior ways to assess model fit: (1) the comparative fit index (CFI $>.95$), (2) the root-mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA $<.08$), and (3) the standardized root mean residual (SRMR $<.10$). The hypothesized measurement model and two alternative models are shown in Table 1 for both studies.

Overall, the hypothesized measurement model did fit the data best. To confirm whether this was the best model for each study, the CFA was re-analyzed testing a combination of alternative models, which resulted in all models being a poorer fit. Furthermore, following Hair, Black, Babin and Anderson's (2010) instructions regarding testing comparison models and this showed the alternative models were all significantly different (and worse) than the hypothesized model.

4.4 Analysis

Hypotheses were tested using SEM in AMOS to assess the direct and meditation effects of the study variables. We controlled for the effects of age, gender, and hours worked. However, these variables made no difference to the results so for ease of analysis and presentation these have been removed.

Table 1. Results of Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Study Measures

Model	Model Fit Indices					Model Differences			Details
	χ^2	df	CFI	RMSEA	SRMR	$\Delta\chi^2$	Δdf	p	
1. Hypothesized 5-factor model: job autonomy, supervisor support, work-life balance, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions.	376.5	142	.96	.06	.04				
2. Alternative 4-factor model: job autonomy, supervisor support, work-life balance and job satisfaction <u>combined</u> , and turnover intentions.	692.4	146	.90	.09	.07	315.9	4	.001	Model 2 to 1
3. Alternative 4-factor model: job autonomy and supervisor support <u>combined</u> , work-life balance, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions.	888.01	146	.87	.10	.09	511.5	4	.001	Model 3 to 1

In order to test mediated relationship, we followed the Monte Carlo method for assessing mediation as described by Bauer, Preacher and Gil (2006). For the mediated effect we calculated the distribution of the mediation effect using the estimate and the standard error of the effect of the predictor (x) on the mediator (m), as well as the estimate and the standard error of m on the outcome variable (y). The null hypothesis that m does not significantly mediate the relationship between x and y is rejected when the distribution of possible estimates for m lies above or below zero.

CHAPTER 5

QUANTITATIVE STUDIES RESULTS

Descriptive statistics for the study variables are shown in Table 2. Table 2 shows that job autonomy is significantly correlated with supervisor support ($r = 0.38, p < .01$), work-life balance ($r = 0.30, p < .01$), job satisfaction ($r = 0.42, p < .01$) and turnover intentions ($r = -0.21, p < .01$). Supervisor support is significantly correlated with work-life balance ($r = 0.36, p < .01$), job satisfaction ($r = 0.28, p < .01$) and turnover intentions ($r = -0.27, p < .01$). Work-life balance is significantly correlated with job satisfaction ($r = 0.39, p < .01$) and turnover intentions ($r = -0.31, p < .01$), and finally, job satisfaction is significantly correlated with turnover intentions ($r = -0.57, p < .01$). Overall, these effects support Hypotheses 1 to 3 (both a and b) where the antecedents of job autonomy, supervisor support and work-life balance are positively related to job satisfaction and negatively related to turnover intentions. Similarly, Hypothesis 4 is supported as job satisfaction is negatively related to turnover intentions.

A number of alternative structural models were tested, to determine the most optimal model based on the data, specifically:

- (1). A partial mediation model where work-life balance partially mediates the influence of job autonomy and supervisor support on job satisfaction. Furthermore, job satisfaction then predicts turnover intentions.
- (2). A full mediation model where work-life balance fully mediates the influence of job autonomy and supervisor support on job satisfaction, and job satisfaction then predicts turnover intentions.

Table 2. Correlations and Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables (All Data)

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Age	37.5	12.3	--						
2. Hours Worked	41.8	9.9	.34**	--					
3. Job Autonomy	3.6	.86	.10*	.03	--				
4. Supervisor Support	3.7	.80	-.08	-.12*	.38**	--			
5. Work-Life Balance	3.3	.81	-.08	-.17**	.30**	.36**	--		
6. Job Satisfaction	3.6	.82	.21**	.03	.42**	.28**	.39**	--	
7. Turnover Intentions	2.7	1.2	-.15**	.02	-.21**	-.27**	-.31**	-.57**	--

N=473, *p<.05, **p<.01

Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics and intercorrelations of the study variables.

(3). A direct effects only model where job autonomy and supervisor support predict work-life balance, job satisfaction and turnover intentions.

The three structural models and comparisons between them are shown in Table 3.

Using analyses recommended by Hair et al. (2010) regarding testing comparison models, showed that model 1 (partial mediation model), is superior to the other models all at $p < .001$. The final structural models are shown in Figure 1.

5.1 Structural Models

Aligned with the recommendations of Grace and Bollen (2005), unstandardized regression coefficients are presented. Figure 3 shows that job autonomy is significantly linked with work-life balance (path coefficient = .22, $p < .001$) and job satisfaction (path coefficient = .39, $p < .01$). Supervisor support is also significantly linked with work-life balance (path coefficient = .37, $p < .001$). Work-life balance is significantly linked with job satisfaction (path coefficient = .40, $p < .001$), while job satisfaction is significantly and negatively linked with turnover intentions (path coefficient = -.82, $p < .001$). The model accounts for moderate amounts of variance towards work-life balance ($r^2 = .22$), and larger amounts towards job satisfaction ($r^2 = .35$) and turnover intentions ($r^2 = .40$).

Hypothesis 5 proposed that work-life balance would mediate the influence of employees job autonomy and supervisor support on job satisfaction. Monte Carlo tests (at 20,000 repetitions) provided support for this mediation effect (Bauer et al., 2006) for job autonomy: LL = 0.035, UL = 0.1515 ($p < .05$) and supervisor support: LL = 0.08392, UL = 0.2224 ($p < .05$).

Table 3. Model Comparisons for Structural Models

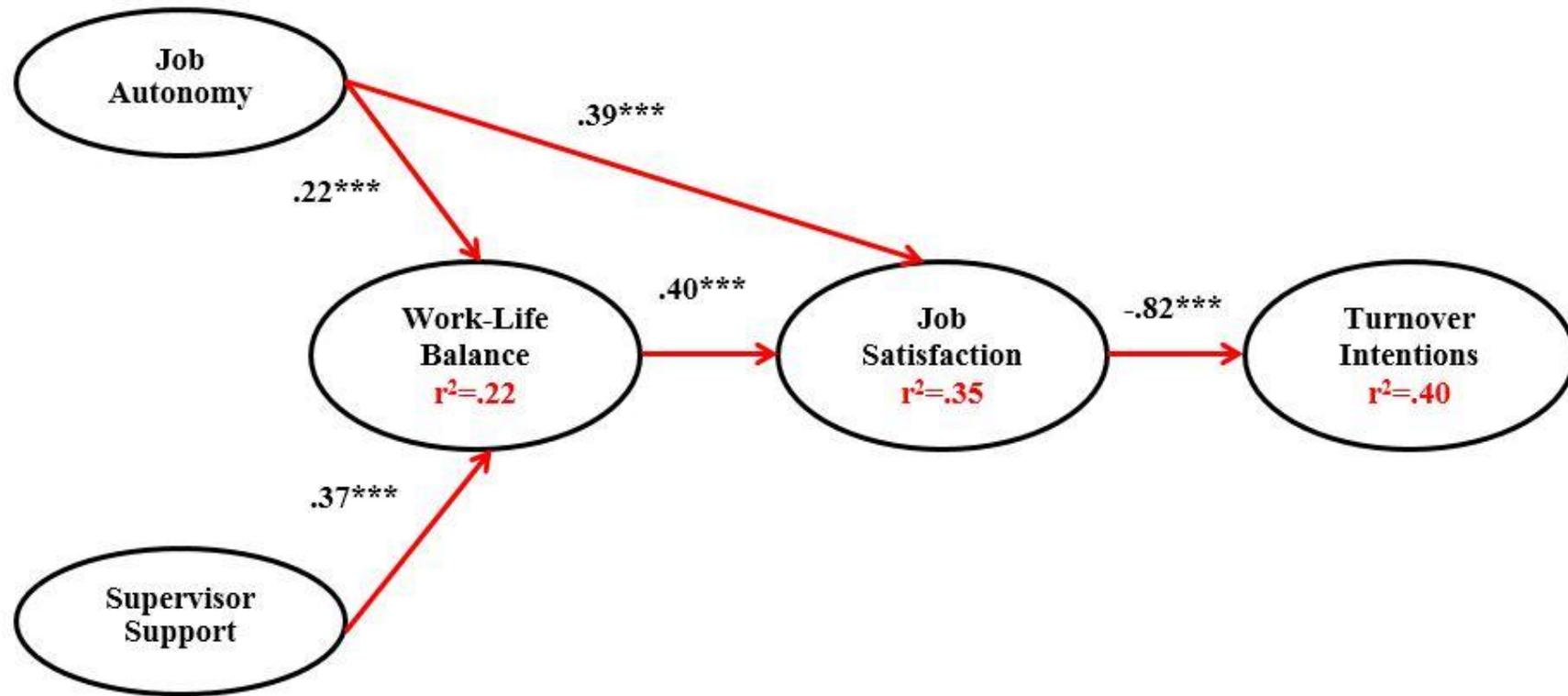
Model	Model Fit Indices					Model Differences			
	χ^2	df	CFI	RMSEA	SRMR	χ^2	Δ df	p	Details
Model 1	389.2	144	.96	.06	.05				
Model 2	434.0	147	.95	.06	.07	44.8	3	.001	Model 2 to 1
Model 3	568.6	145	.93	.08	.11	179.4	1	.001	Model 3 to 1

(1). A partial mediation model where work-life balance partially mediates the influence of job autonomy and supervisor support on job satisfaction. Furthermore, job satisfaction then predicts turnover intentions.

(2). A full mediation model where work-life balance fully mediates the influence of job autonomy and supervisor support on job satisfaction, and job satisfaction then predicts turnover intentions.

(3). A direct effects only model where job autonomy and supervisor support predict work-life balance, job satisfaction and turnover intentions.

Figure 3. Final Model (Combined Sample)



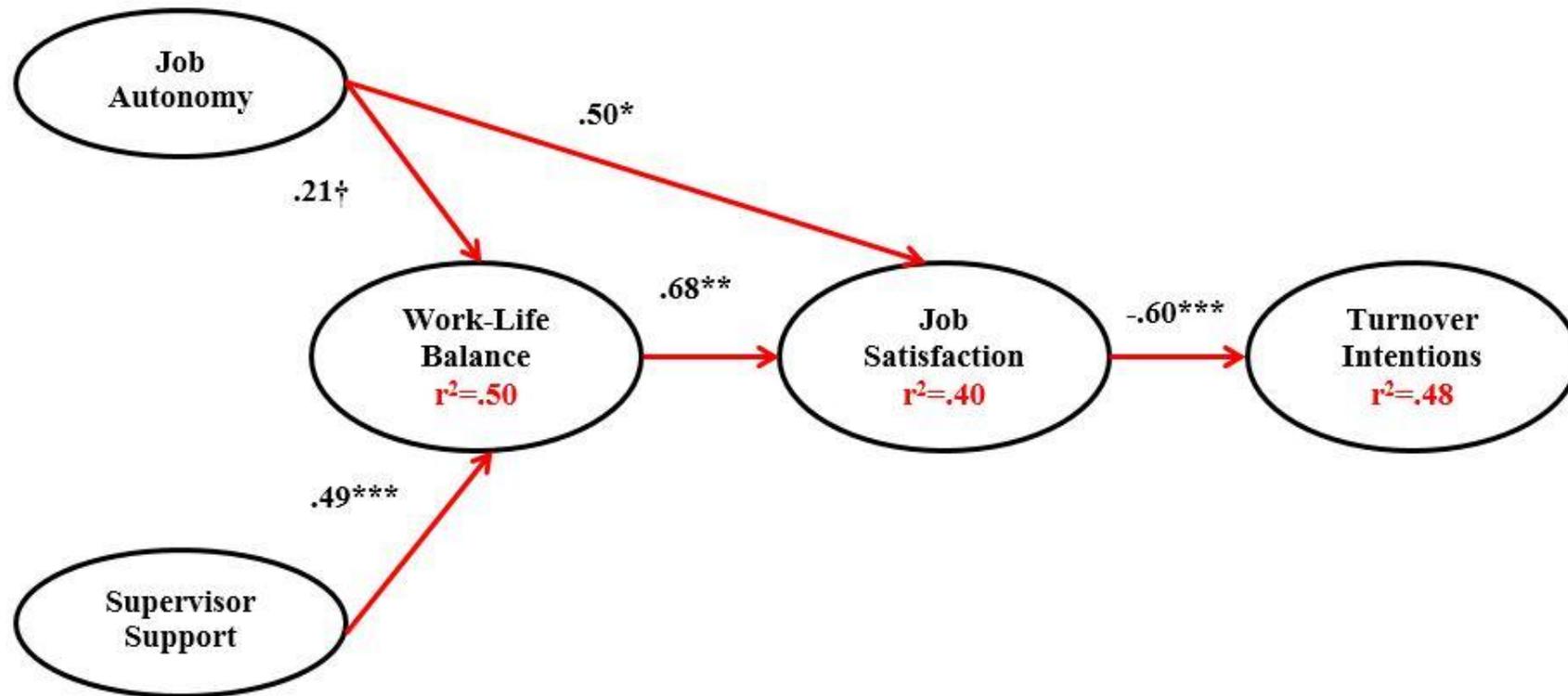
†p < .1, *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001

Similarly, Hypothesis 6 proposed that job satisfaction would mediate the influence of employees work-life balance on turnover intentions. Monte Carlo tests (at 20,000 repetitions) provided support for this mediation effect (Bauer et al., 2006): LL = -0.4458, UL = -0.2112 ($p < .05$).

Finally, to test for the last Hypothesis 7 regarding potential differences between skill levels (low-skilled, semi-skilled, and skilled), a multi-group analysis (Bou & Satorra, 2010) were conducted in AMOS. Results showed there was a significant difference by skill: $\Delta\chi^2 = 97.9$, $df=42$, $p = .000$, supporting Hypothesis 7. To facilitate understanding of these differences, the final structural model is repeated for the low-skilled sample only (Figure 4), semi-skilled sample only (Figure 5) and skilled sample only (Figure 6). A comparison between the overall findings and the individual effects for each of the skill level samples is shown in Table 4.

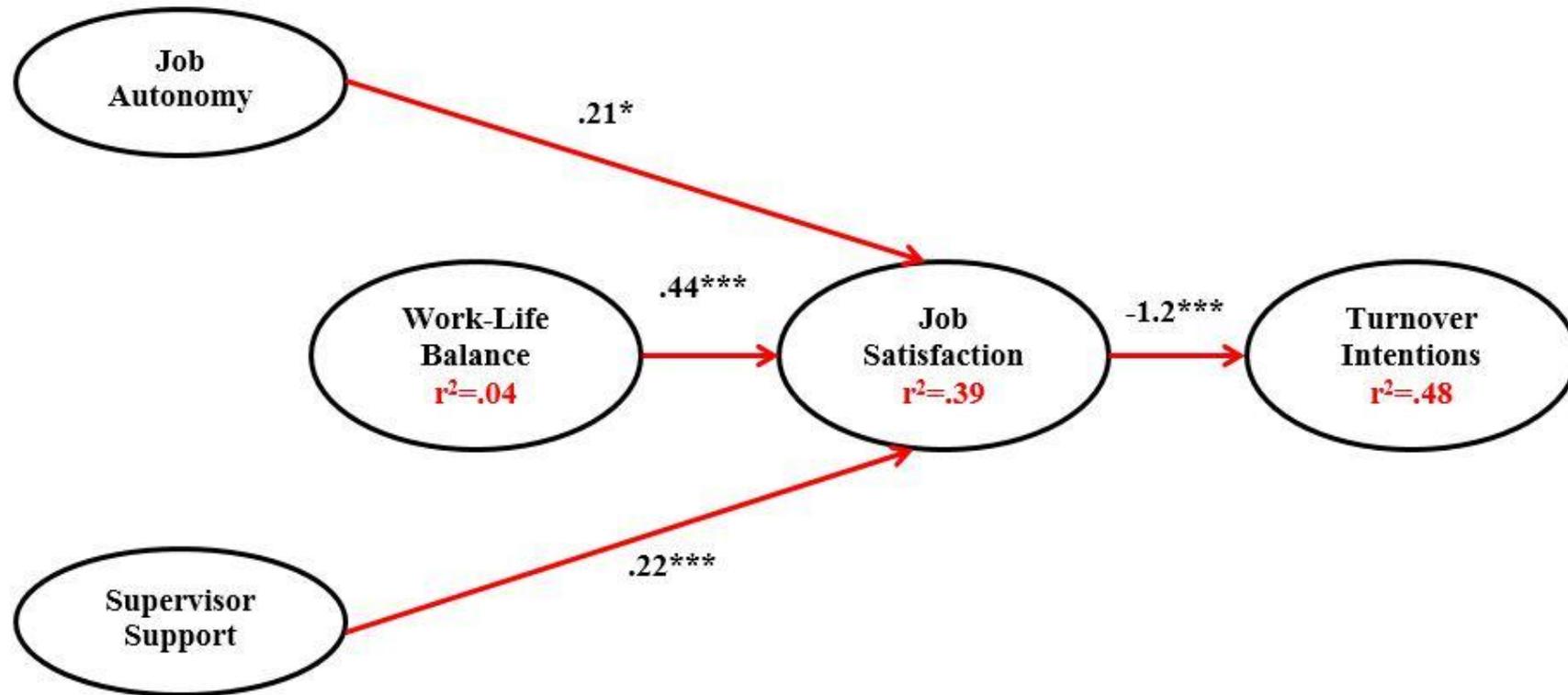
Overall, the effects of work-life balance to job satisfaction and job satisfaction to turnover intentions holds across the combined sample, and the samples of low-skilled, semi-skilled, and skilled employees. This supports the assertions of Hypothesis 7 around there being no significant differences across these relationships. In addition, job autonomy was significantly related to job satisfaction over and above the relationship with work-life balance, indicating that work-life balance only partially mediates this effect and it is consistent across the combined sample and all three skill-level samples. However, in the combined sample, job autonomy was positively related to work-life balance and this held for the low-skilled and skilled groups as well, but not for the semi-skilled group of employees. In addition, there was a similar effect for supervisor support. It was positively related to work-life balance in the combined sample, and the multi-group analysis for low-skilled and skilled employees. However, again, for semi-skilled employees, supervisor support was directly related to job satisfaction and not towards work-life balance. Overall, these effects provide some support for Hypothesis 7.

Figure 4. Final Model (Low-Skilled Sample Only)



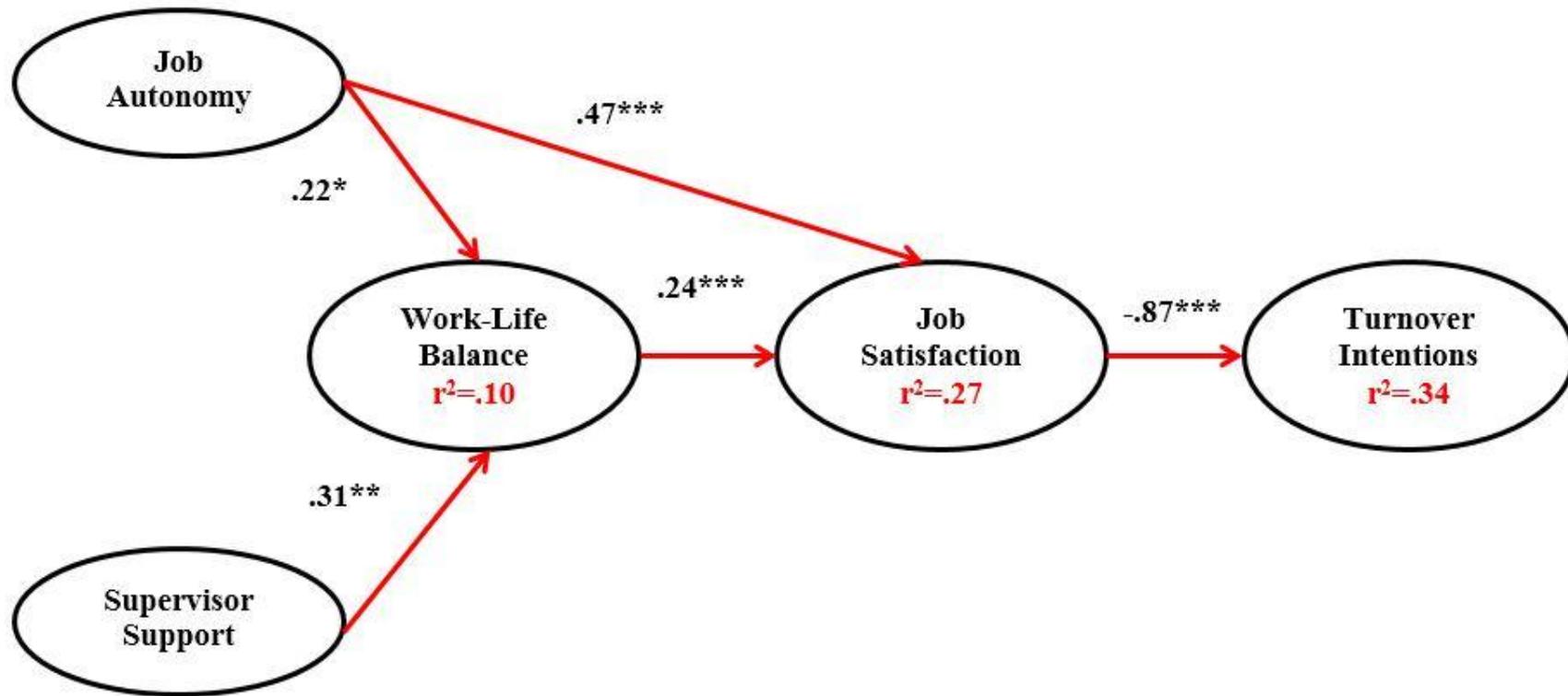
$^\dagger p < .1$, $* p < .05$, $** p < .01$, $*** p < .001$

Figure 5. Final Model (Semi-Skilled Sample Only)



† $p < .1$, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Figure 6. Final Model (Skilled Sample Only)



†p < .1, *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001

Table 4. Comparisons of Skill Level Effects

Relationships	Combined Sample	Low-Skilled Sample	Semi-Skilled Sample	Skilled Sample
Job Autonomy -> Work-Life Balance	.22***	.21†	--	.22*
Job Autonomy -> Job Satisfaction	.39***	.50*	.21*	.47***
Supervisor Support -> Work-Life Balance	.37***	.49**	--	.31***
Work-life Balance -> Job Satisfaction	.40***	.68**	.44***	.24***
Job Satisfaction -> Turnover Intentions	-.82***	-.60***	-1.20***	-.87***
Additional Relationship				
Supervisor Support -> Job Satisfaction			.22***	

†p< .1, *p< .05, **p< .01, ***p< .001

The only additional significant relationships were in the semi-skilled sample where supervisor support was significantly related to job satisfaction (path coefficient = .22, $p < .001$) and job autonomy was also significantly related to job satisfaction (path coefficient = .21, $p < .05$). Overall, these findings support the Hypothesis that differences would not exist within the skill-level samples regarding the direct effects of work-life balance to job satisfaction and job satisfaction towards turnover intentions. In addition, the effects of antecedents were expected to differ among the different skill level groups and this was also supported with the semi-skilled results varying from the low-skilled and skilled employees. It is worth noting that the only differences were amongst the semi-skilled employee group and not the other (more extreme) groups of low-skilled and skilled employee groups. The implications of this are discussed in the next chapters.

CHAPTER 6

QUALITATIVE STUDY METHODS

Allen et al. (2014) stated the need for more qualitative studies in the turnover literature. Following this call, semi-structured interviews were undertaken for this study to give depth to the quantitative results and give a much-needed personal narrative in regards to turnover intentions.

6.1 Sample

To gain a deeper understanding of the survey results, 16 qualitative interviews were undertaken and at this point, data ‘saturation’ was assessed to have been attained. Data saturation is “reached when the researcher gathers data to the point of diminishing returns, when nothing new is being added” (Bowen, 2008, p. 140). An important focus of the qualitative study was to gain a representative sample of the New Zealand workforce (insofar as can be achieved with a small sample). Therefore, the age of employees interviewed ranged widely (from 19 to 55 years) and the sample consisted of an even split by gender (eight women and eight men). The break down in terms of skill level was as follows: four low-skilled, three semi-skilled, and nine skilled. While the researcher tried to recruit more individuals in low-skilled and semi-skilled positions, these were harder to attract, and given the similarities between responses (see below), it was not felt that fewer respondents in these categories was problematic. In addition, none of these participants were involved in the quantitative studies.

Job tenure for the group of participants ranged from three weeks to 24.5 years. The majority of respondents were parents (69%), while 31% of the participants did not have any children. Of those with children, the majority (55%) had children under 16 years of age. The education level of the participants also varied widely, with the majority (seven) having a bachelor degree and with five holding a high school qualification only. The remaining four had,

a master's degree (two), a technical degree (one) and a post graduate diploma (one). By ethnicity, the majority were New Zealand European (six), four were Southeastern Asian, two identified as Maori, and the rest were European/Greek (one), European/Chinese (one), European/Tongan (one), and French (one). By type of contact, the majority (12) were on full time permanent contracts, while three were on part-time contracts and only one was on a temporary contract. Overall, the researcher felt that a fairly representative sample of the New Zealand workforce was attained given the national demographic and work-related profile (Statistics New Zealand, 2013).

6.2 Procedure

This study used convenience sampling to try and gain a representative sample of the New Zealand workforce. After obtaining the necessary ethics approval from Massey University (see Appendix 3), the interview questions were critiqued by two Professors to make sure all the right areas of interest were covered. The final version of the interview questions was then confirmed. Potential participants were contacted via email, Facebook, or telephone to ask if they would be willing to participate in the study. All agreed, so times were set up for the interviews. At the time of the interviews the researcher let the participants choose where they would like to be interviewed to make them feel at ease. Each participant read an information sheet (Appendix 4a) and was asked to sign the corresponding consent form (Appendix 4b) before continuing with the interview. The information sheet and consent form were drafted along established lines as other Massey University research projects, taking account of particularities of this inquiry. Some of the interviews were conducted over the phone, so the consent form was read out to the participants prior to the interview commencing and the participants gave their verbal consent. All participants were made aware that they could stop the interview at any point and did not have to answer any questions they did not feel comfortable with.

The interviews lasted between 15 to 45 minutes. All the interviews were recorded and then transcribed. The interviews consisted of roughly 21 questions (see appendix 5). Participants were asked demographic questions to start with, such as “What is your highest level of education?” They were then asked more detailed questions about their job, such as; “How satisfied with your job are you?”, “What do you like most about your job and why?” Do you feel as though you have job autonomy?” The initial 21 questions were used as a guide and additional questions were asked based on some of the responses that were given.

6.3 Data analysis

Once the interviews were transcribed, analysis was done on the interviews to see how many participants were thinking of leaving their job and the breakdown of those who had job autonomy, supervisor support, and work-life balance. Thus, content analysis was conducted to determine the number of commonalities between respondents. Content analysis is “a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns” (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1278). Thematic analysis was also used to explore and understand any additional trends or themes which emerged. Thematic analysis is define as: “The process involves the identification of themes through careful reading and re-reading of the data. It is a form of pattern recognition within the data, where emerging themes become the categories for analysis” (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2008, p. 82). After all of the interviews had been coded, three additional dominant themes emerged.

CHAPTER 7

QUALITATIVE STUDY RESULTS

7.1 Alignment with Quantitative Results

Overall the results from the interviews largely supported the quantitative results. Out of the 16 participants, six were planning on leaving their job. One of the six who were planning on leaving, left her job within a month of the interview being conducted. In addition to the six who were planning on leaving, one participant actually left their job within two weeks of initially setting up the interview and conducting the interview. These two actual turnover cases will be explored in-depth below. In addition, three participants were not leaving at the moment but were planning to in the near future. Each of them indicated that they would be leaving within the next two years. Six further participants stated they had no intention of leaving their job. Therefore, a good mix and broad range of turnover intentions was captured through the interviews.

Job Autonomy

Participants were asked if they felt that they had autonomy within their role. A total of 14 out of the 16 participants believed that they did have some form of autonomy within their role. The two remaining participants answered both yes and no to having job autonomy. Somewhat surprisingly, these participants were both skilled workers. These results seem to help support the quantitative results that job autonomy actually exists between all skill levels and is a contributing factor to turnover intentions across the differing skill levels.

The participants were asked why they felt they had job autonomy to try and understand how they viewed and operationalised job autonomy. Overwhelming, people

viewed autonomy as the ability to make decisions about their work and what tasks they work on. As one participant summed up

I get to choose what work I do on a daily basis for within my mandate within market data and analysis I get to prioritise anything within that bucket based on its importance to the market or as it impacts EOD sort of focus. So it is a lot of choice of what actually needs to be done in that space. [Skilled male]

However, for two of the participants the lack of autonomy was largely due to their manager.

One respondent said

Just a change in structure and what we do and change in management as well. We have become very structured and more red tape around everything we do. I can't go off and do what I like to do but it much more controlled. [Skilled female]

Another participant stated

Then in terms research when you are doing reports, yeah there tends to be a strong emphasis on like the boss is trying to push a point of some sort or another. So it's true that you do feel like, often when reports, the boss will ask you to do a report usually he has a preconceived idea of what he wants it to look like. [Skilled male]

Thus, there seems to be a disconnect between the organisation trying to give a sense of autonomy and the employee actually feeling he or she has autonomy. However, the need for autonomy seems to be present among all workers and a factor that influences their decision to stay or leave. As one respondent said when asked about why she felt she had autonomy:

Yeah I mean the role itself is pretty standard, but the time you get there and you know if you want to take a break that is completely free. So I can basically rock up whenever I want to and as long as I do the job that is fine. There is no time limits there is no schedules, it's all pretty chill. [Low-skilled female]

She went to say that the autonomy she had around schedules was one of the things she was most satisfied with in her job. Conversely, when autonomy is taken away it can cause dissatisfaction. One skilled female said that she didn't have as much autonomy as she used to due to increasing red tape within the business and this directly influenced her satisfaction "I

am happy to have a job and I am happy with the environment to a degree but it's just all the red tape not is not making as enjoyable as it used to be". So while it is a factor that adds or hinders some employees' satisfaction it also appears to be a factor that they look for when looking for another job. As one skilled male stated when asked what he was looking for in a new job, "It will be the same type of flexibility of work arrangement being responsible for your own work on a day to day basis. Autonomy."

Supervisor Support

Participants were also asked if they felt as though they had supervisor support in their role. Seven stated they felt they had high levels of supervisor support while four said they had reasonable supervisor support (representing moderate levels of support). The remaining five commented that they didn't feel as though they had supervisor support (representing low levels). The participants were asked to further explain why they felt as though they did or did not have supervisor support. As one respondent stated

As far as day to day things, yes (to having supervisor support). As far as looking at goals and opportunities, no because I think my manager also has the same issues: nowhere to go. So they can't give me anything because it is just sloshing around, going back to what you have done eight years ago. [Semi-skilled female]

Interestingly, some respondents received more support from their other team members than from their supervisor, with a participant stating

More of my team support. I have good team support. My manager is also good, but he is quite high level manager. So because we all report to him there is no middle level. Generally on a daily basis I would need someone like Mike or Bob as another level to get the task done. So I only go directly go to my manager for leave, stuff like that. [Skilled female]

However, others felt that they had no supervisor support, "Um short answer, no uh I don't believe my manager actually knows what is going on". Another participant also nodded

to the notion that their supervisor didn't have the necessary operational knowledge and therefore could not support staff, stating:

No. Probably they lack... they are not as competent as I would expect. You know if you are in a managerial position, you would expect them to manage the team rather than there as a manager. Especially since we are pretty much a flat structure below the manager and pretty much everyone can have their say so you would expect your manager to add more value to your team instead of "hey I'm the manager. [Skilled male]

Therefore, many expect their supervisor to have more work-related knowledge than them. They want to be able to learn from their supervisor and go to them if they have a question or issue. The lack of ability to learn from their supervisors lends many to pose the question, why are they my manager? Remarkably, within the interviews only one participant mentioned supervisor support in relation to support outside of the workplace. Therefore, supervisor support was only mentioned in regards to work tasks and not in relation to employee's personal life. However, the one employee who did mention their supervisor influencing their personal life was irritated by the situation, as she believed it was her manager who was hindering her ability to work four days a week instead of five:

So I did ask for four days and they said no. Only because who your manager is and if they are willing to fight for you. But ideally I would have liked to go back 4 days and then reviewed it later like in 6 months. I didn't think it was that much to ask but..... So who manages what team you are in would depend if you got part time. So if your manager is willing to fight for you. [Skilled Female]

It is also important to note another respondent who took quite a cynical view of why their supervisor supports him:

I think as far. Yeah they try to support you to keep you in your same job to do the same thing... You just keep doing the same job and you're doing it well. Just keep doing it. The day you leave, they have to hire someone else they have to train someone else, and they don't want to do it. Cause it is a hassle, it takes long enough to train somebody, they don't want to go through the pain. But

then again they don't reward you when you are there. They get all the upside and you get all the downside. [Skilled male]

Therefore, supervisor support seems to vary greatly by person. All three skill groups had both people who said they had supervisor support and others who stated that they did not. In addition, many suggested that the lack of supervisor support was a cause of frustration. One respondent noted his frustration due to a lack of supervisor support:

Uh that can be frustrating because I can end up having to repeat myself often and having to explain things that I would expect my manager to have an understanding of. Even if it is an overall or strategic understanding of rather than in-depth I don't expect him to have a complete in depth knowledge but having a passing knowledge would be good. So if I say we have to do this this and this to achieve this and all I want to do is get an idea of does that fit the strategy of how we should do something not break it down and ah it is actually going to have this impact and this impact and this impact rather than. He should be able to see the overall picture or have an understanding of how we do our work here and how our systems achieve it. [Skilled male]

As suggested by past turnover literature, supervisors impact a great deal of employees' working day, therefore it is not surprising that the lack of supervisor support can make employees frustrated and in some cases dissatisfied with their jobs, which ultimately enhances their feelings of leaving their job.

Work-life balance

Participants were also asked about their work-life balance. Of the 16 participants, ten stated they had good work-life balance, three said that they have some form of work-life balance, and three said that they have no work-life balance. However, while one might assume that the reason behind not having work-life balance is due to the employee's organisation or his/her manager, this is not always the case. As one participant said

I hate doing [work], I hate the fact that I like doing it in the evening. So it takes me away from Jill. Like Chad will want to play with me and I am like, 'Oh I just want to do this bit of work'. Almost in preference. I hate that, I feel evil. [Skilled male]

Therefore in this instance the interviewee chose to not have work/life balance because he enjoyed his work so much.

Yet, others who reported having work-life balance did not really give any credit to their employer for having it, with one employee stating:

Ah yes (I have work-life balance) because I made it rather than they gave it. I realised that being there, that the incentive to work more than 40 hours was not there at all. When I worked at the <<organisations name>> there was an incentive to work harder and longer but there was no incentive there. [Skilled female]

Still others felt that the work-life balance is somewhat pushed, rather than the organisation actually wanting to give it to their employees. As another female skilled employee stated, “It is a bit pushed. It is not natural for the bank to want to give you what you want.”

However, across the three skill levels, all the employees mentioned work-life balance as something that they wanted in a job or would look for within another job. This appeared to be especially prevalent among the participants who had young children. All of the women who had young children noted work-life balance as essential, and those who did not feel they had it in their current job were looking for another job to gain that balance.

Job satisfaction

When asked about their job satisfaction, five participants stated they were very satisfied with their jobs, five said that they were satisfied or reasonably satisfied, four stated that they were dissatisfied, and two said they were both satisfied and unsatisfied. The respondents’ comments support the quantitative results as well as the previous literature that job satisfaction is a strong and prominent predictor of turnover intentions and in two cases, actual turnover. All of the participants who reported being dissatisfied were planning to leave their job. One low-skilled female who was “Very unsatisfied but I am enjoying getting paid” said when asked if she was planning on leaving, “I am actually looking, I am going to an agency on Monday so

I am looking now” (she left her job within 1 month of the interview). Those who were very satisfied with their jobs, were planning to stay at their job. One skilled male, who was very satisfied said “Certainly planning on staying here for now”.

The ones who were both satisfied and dissatisfied reported they would stay in the short term but would be looking for other job alternatives in the near future. As one skilled female, whose job satisfaction was at 5/10, said, “Planning for the short term to stay, and then we will see how we go. Probably leave in the next 2 years”. Another stated:

Reasonably satisfied. That part of the actual being able to do things new is the part of the job I like. Actually effecting change. Ongoing testing and repeat testing is something I loathe but is a necessary part of the other part of my role which is systems upgrades. But that is only every 2 to 3 years. [Skilled male]

He went on to state that he was only planning on staying in the role for another two years.

Therefore, these interviews seem to confirm the strong link between job satisfaction and turnover intentions.

However, while it seems that the results from the interviews supported the quantitative results, further investigation of the interviews revealed that other antecedents that come into play when deciding whether to leave one’s job. Therefore, the interviews were coded for additional factors or themes that influenced the employees’ decision to stay or leave. These additional themes are explored below.

7.2 Additional Themes

Monotony

The first theme that emerged was the idea of monotony. Many of the participants stated their disdain for repetitive tasks, as typified by the following quote by a skilled male: “Any repetitive nature of it. That’s on going testing and that is when it has to be repeated. Some of that is heart-breaking and demoralizing.” Interestingly, this theme seemed to emerge

more from the semi-skilled and skilled workers than the low-skilled. Although, one of the low-skilled participants did find her job repetitive, “It can be really tedious. I mean, I been doing the same thing. The role doesn’t change. So it’s the same thing...that can be quite draining as you are doing the same thing every single day.”

Therefore, while repetitive tasks have traditionally been associated with low-skilled work, for example production line workers, this may no longer be the case. Repetitive or monotonous tasks now appear to be an issue across a wide spectrum of employees. For instance, one skilled worker compared their job to a machine, “It feels you are just another piece of the machinery.” He went on to say “I compare it from Charlie Chaplin’s movie, *Modern Times*, we aren’t just there to put screws in screwdrivers and hammer nails in pieces of wood”.

Consequently, while many of these same workers stated that they had job autonomy within their role, their job tasks were more the issue, in terms of being monotonous. Hence, they wanted to have a variety of tasks. Although, many recognized that monotonous tasks needed to be done, there was a need to have other tasks or jobs that were varied to help make the repetitive tasks more tolerable.

The need for challenges

A second and related theme that emerged from the interviews was that employees need to be challenged. As one semi-skilled female participant stated, “There is nothing challenging [in my job]...I have reached my limit”. In addition, the need for challenging work seems to be a factor that some of the participants specifically look for when assessing job alternatives. As one low skilled female responded to the question about what she is looking for in a new job, “Something that is challenging and bit more creative.” This was also

echoed by a skilled male when asked the same question, “I think again, challenging and just building on my experience and progression upwards.”

The need for a challenge is not just confined to the younger generations either, but rather, it appeared to be a factor across all respondents from various ages. While some might have assumed that by a certain age, employees are happy to just turn up and do their job, this was not found to be the case. The older participants (those aged 45 years plus all mentioned a need for a challenge and that they do not wish to be side-lined. Younger participants also wanted to be challenged. They wanted to gain more skills to better themselves. One skilled male stated “They (organisations) have missed the point that people want to continue education and keep learning. They really forget about that.” However, a semi-skilled male stated that the factor that was keeping him at this job was “the ability to gain and develop my skills”. Therefore, it seems that challenging work may help to retain staff but the lack of challenge can make staff leave.

The need for continued learning strongly emerged across the different skill levels. Therefore, as with much of the other research presented, many of the factors that influence employees to stay or leave their job are applicable across low-skilled, semi-skilled, and skilled workers.

Career Progression

The third additional theme to emerge from the interviews was the need for career progression. This theme seemed to be largely an issue for the skilled workers and was not referred to by the low- or semi- skilled workers. As one skilled male stated, “It is just the prospects. There is just too few prospects. There is no career progression. You are very much locked to what you got to do.” The lack of career progression seems to be a frustration for many of the skilled workers. However, just stating a career path is not enough for some

skilled employees; they need to feel as though the career path is actually attainable. The lack of an attainable career path was a large reason why one skilled female decided to leave her job, “I couldn’t see a career path there, even though they did offer me one, I didn’t feel as though it was attainable”.

Therefore, career progression needs to be clearly stated but also, achievable. This seems to have become more of an issue as organisations are becoming flatter in structure. In the past, an organisation was largely hierarchical. The hierarchy normally meant that the older generations held the senior management positions, the middle aged workers held the middle management, and the younger generations worked in your entry level positions (Gursoy, Maier, & Chi, 2008). In doing so, employees had an idea of where they were heading within the organisation. However, with organisations having less hierarchies, employees do not have a clear sense as to where the next step within the company is. One skilled male noted this problem, “I think here, the structure is quite flat so you can’t really step up.” Therefore, while career progression has often been associated with a promotion or change in title, some participants see it as the ability to make more decisions and have more responsibility. Others also see it as the ability to train in a different areas of the business. Consequently, organisations may need to think outside the box when it comes to fulfilling this need for career progression. If the structure is flat, than maybe more responsibility and other rewards will be the way to show that a person is growing within the organisation.

7.3 Actual Turnover

Through the qualitative interviews, this study was able to go beyond turnover intentions and capture actual turnover. Two cases of actual turnover occurred within the broad timeframe of the study and as such they are presented here as a mini-case study in actual turnover. One skilled female was so dissatisfied with her job that she left within two weeks of setting up the

interview. This gave insight into how quickly some employees will move once they have decided they are dissatisfied with their job and they want to leave. When asked if she was satisfied she said “Not really, so I resigned”. However, she was an interesting participant because she felt she had job autonomy, supervisor support, and work-life balance yet she left her job. Only through the additional questions could the true reasons come out as to why she left. The reasons she gave was “(the need for) A career plan, attainable career plan” as well as having an employer who understood employees’ differing perspective. She said:

The two head guys were married with children who had wives at home and I felt that they perhaps weren’t that appreciative of the different motivations that people have to work and that my motivation to work were different from their motivations, just because I have a different, not life style, but just perspective. I wasn’t a man with two children

When asked if this was something she would look for in another job she said

Oh yeah definitely. I will be looking for somebody who doesn’t have conservative, conventional views. Even if they live it, that they at least are appreciative of other people who don’t have the same life style as them. And someone who sees that people have different motivations for working.

In addition, when she was asked what motivates her and what else she is looking for in another job she said:

Wanting to be appreciated for the work that you do for other people. Wanting to achieve high standard for myself as well so that I am always learning and working to high standard. Just trying to always get the next level up and the next level after that.

Therefore, for this interviewee while she may have had job autonomy, supervisor support, and work-life balance she needed more, an attainable career path and an open-minded organisation.

This study was fortunate to have an additional actual turnover case. This time it was from a low-skilled female employee. Again through the interview, this study was able to see

how quickly some employees will react on their turnover intentions. When asked if she would be staying or leaving her current job she stated:

I am actually looking, I am going to an agency on Monday so I am looking now. Unless they can be a bit more flexible, uh I think even if they were more flexible where I am, I don't think I would last long with the actual job because it is so boring.

She was contacted within a month of the interview and she had indeed left her job. This case reiterates how strong of a predictor turnover intentions is for actual turnover. When asked what she is looking for in a job she said:

I think the main things for me, I need interaction with people so I need to be able to talk to people and feel like I am in a cool environment. Something that is challenging and bit more creative and preferable something that works better with my kids. It needs to be better hours.

She stressed the need for work-life balance as she had younger children. Her new job is often based in the evenings so she is able to drop off her children at school and pick them up. The days she works changes each week, so that gives her flexibility to manage all aspects of her life. In addition, the tasks can vary with her new role which helps her fulfil the need for a challenge. Therefore, this confirms the strength of work-life balance as an antecedent to turnover intentions and in this case actual turnover as well as the need to be challenged.

7.4 Conclusion:

Overall, the qualitative interviews largely supported the quantitative data that while there are differences between skill level groups' turnover intentions, they are not as pronounced as one might have previously thought. Across all skill levels, employees want to have job autonomy, supervisor support, and work-life balance. In addition, for all employees job satisfaction was the strongest predictor of turnover. Through qualitative interviews, this study was able to explore the complexities in regards job satisfaction, which helped to shed some light on how employees' satisfaction leads to turnover.

This study had two participants who said they were both (simultaneously) satisfied and dissatisfied which often is not captured with surveys. Delving deeper into their satisfaction and dissatisfaction they both stated that within 2 years they would have most likely left their jobs. Therefore, it may be those that are on the cusp of dissatisfaction that through organisational policies might be able to be made more satisfied. As with the skilled female, who saw her autonomy being eroded, all it might take for her to be more satisfied is to gain her autonomy back. However, it is these employees who are on the verge of full dissatisfaction that potential pose the most risk. As previous research has suggested it is those who become more and more dissatisfied that start to partake in devious behaviours (Christian & Ellis, 2014).

In addition this study was able to capture actual turnover through the interviews. By gaining actual turnover data, this study was able to see how quickly some employees will leave an organisation once they have decided they are not satisfied with the job. Therefore, the two cases also gives weight to turnover intentions as a strong predictor of actual turnover. In one case, the low-skilled female left within a month of looking for a new job. Her reasons for leaving included work-life balance and therefore gives strength to work-life balance as an antecedent to turnover intentions and actual turnover. In regards to the other case, a skilled female left within two weeks of setting up the interview. Her case was rather interesting, as she had job autonomy, supervisor support, and work-life balance but was still dissatisfied with her job. Her reasons for leaving were to gain an attainable career path and work for an open-minded organisation.

Therefore, while job autonomy, supervisor support, and work-life balance do influence some employees' decisions there are other factors that also play a role. Through thematic analysis this study found that additional factors such as monotony, the need for a

challenge, and career progression were present when employees' assess their job satisfaction and turnover intentions. The disdain for monotony and the need for a challenge was again present across all three skill levels. However, career progression seems to only be a factor for skilled workers. Therefore, like the quantitative results, while there are slight differences between the different low-skilled, semi-skilled, and skilled employees, many of the factors that attribute to their job satisfaction and turnover intentions are similar.

CHAPTER 8

DISCUSSION

The focus of this study was to use a multi-study approach to address the potential differences in turnover intentions among employees of differing skill levels, while at the same time adding a personal narrative to the turnover literature through qualitative interviews. Although there has been some previous research comparing blue-collar and white-collar workers, these studies have often overlooked the fact that there are differences within these broader groups. Therefore, this study divided the workforce into three different skill level groups: (1) low-skilled (2) semi-skilled (3) skilled. This enabled research to be done across various industries and organisations to find out if the antecedents to turnover intentions were the same among the different skill levels. Then, through the qualitative interviews, this study was able to see if the quantitative results held true while also using thematic analysis to identify new themes or antecedents that were emerging.

The first antecedent that was investigated was job autonomy. Initially, job autonomy was predicted to influence job satisfaction and turnover intentions, and this was confirmed with correlations of .42 and -.21 (respectively). However, it was also predicted that job autonomy's influence would vary across the different skill levels due to the nature of their jobs. It was found that job autonomy was significantly related to job satisfaction across all three skill levels. Therefore, the results from the study suggest that job autonomy is as important to low-skilled workers as it is to semi-skilled and skilled employees. It also indicates that even low-skilled employees may have similar *perceptions* of job autonomy as other employees. They also seem to have a desire for a sense of control over their job, even though much of their tasks can be repetitive. Interestingly, low-skilled employees were more like skilled workers in the way they viewed job autonomy in relation to work-life balance.

Both low-skilled and skilled employees had job autonomy as a significant predictor of work-life balance, however this relationship did not hold for the semi-skilled employee group.

Therefore, this finding suggests that it is the semi-skilled workers who are the skill group that differs from the other two skill groups. As previously mentioned semi-skilled workers have often been over-looked in regards to turnover intentions literature and thus these results suggests that more research may need to be done on semi-skilled employees to better understand how they view their jobs. The results for autonomy were also confirmed through the qualitative interviews.

Through the interviews, this study was able to get a sense of how employees view autonomy. Overwhelming, people viewed autonomy as the ability to make decisions about their work and what tasks they work on. This view of autonomy echoes past literature that characterises autonomy as giving people choice and encouragement, providing discretion in regards to the scheduling of work, freedom to determine procedures to carry out job related tasks (Hackman and Oldham, 1976; Gagné, 2003). As one of the low-skilled interviewees stated, “The role itself is pretty standard, but the time you get there and you know if you want to take a break that is completely free. So I can basically rock up whenever I want to and as long as I do the job that is fine. There is no time limits, there is no schedules”. She went on to say that was what she liked most about her job.

Therefore, job autonomy is something that makes employees more satisfied with their jobs and also is a factor that they look for when searching for other jobs. Job autonomy is one aspect of job design and thus, organisations might benefit from looking throughout all levels of their organisations to make sure jobs are designed to give employees a level of autonomy within their roles. This corresponds with the notion of getting the job done rather than simply clocking in and out, which is often associated with low-skilled jobs. Therefore, jobs should be assessed individually to see if autonomy can be given. By giving employees the autonomy

to decide how best to get the job done, it creates a win-win for everyone. If employees feel empowered to make decisions around their work they may find more efficient ways of doing their jobs (Gagné, 2003). However within the interviews, this study found that while organisations may think they are providing autonomy, the employees actually don't feel as though they have autonomy. Therefore, it seems that it may come down to the supervisor to provide the necessary autonomy. As noted by one of the skilled employee, a change in management resulted in her losing her job autonomy, which in return, made her less satisfied with her job. Therefore the interviews echoed the quantitative results, that job autonomy is related to job satisfaction.

Similar to job autonomy, supervisor support was also predicted to influence job satisfaction and turnover intentions, and this was also confirmed with significant correlations of .28 ($p < .01$) towards job satisfaction and $-.27$ ($p < .01$) towards turnover intentions. Also like job autonomy, supervisor support's influence on work-life balance and job satisfaction was predicted to be different among the different skill level groups. The results indicate that there are differences among the different skill level groups, with the semi-skilled employee group being the only group that had supervisor support influencing job satisfaction. Much like job autonomy, low-skilled employees and skilled employees were similar in that with supervisor support influenced work-life balance in both groups. Semi-skilled employees were again the group that differed with supervisor support not influencing work-life balance.

Through the interviews, this study also finds that employees can view the role of their supervisor very differently and this is especially true for skilled workers, who didn't seem to place as much emphasis on supervisor support. Some have argued that as organisations have become flatter the role of the supervisor has begun to be eroded (Griffin, Patterson, & West, 2001). Team members are starting to be empowered to make their own decisions, have increasing responsibilities, and have to perform a variety of tasks. Therefore, supervisor

support has started to become less of an important source of individual job satisfaction when there is greater use of teams (Griffin et al., 2001). Supervisor support is under the umbrella of social support. Social support is defined as “an exchange of resources between at least two individuals perceived by the provider or the recipient to be intended to enhance the well-being of the recipient” (Shumaker & Brownell, 1984, p.13). Therefore, social support can come from a range of different people. Thus, for skilled employees they may receive more social support from their team members rather than from their supervisor. However, while many of the interviewees didn’t specifically mention supervisor support impacting their work-life balance, one skilled female did note that she felt it was her supervisor that was prohibiting her ability to work less days per week. Therefore, providing support for the quantitative results.

In addition, it was noted by skilled employees in the interviews that supervisors can actually be a source of frustration for some employees due to their lack of knowledge in relation to the jobs that other team members perform. For skilled employees, many want to learn from their supervisors and if they know more than their supervisors than this isn’t possible and causes more problems than benefits for the employee. As one skilled male mentioned in his interview, “It (the lack of supervisor knowledge) can be frustrating because I can end up having to repeat myself often and having to explain things that I would expect my manager to have an understanding of”. Therefore, supervisor support can be perceived differently among different employees, with some employees feeling as though they are gaining knowledge and support from their supervisors while others find their supervisor frustrating due to their lack of operational knowledge. Thus, skilled employees may not look for support per se but for instruction and mentoring from supervisors, which is something distinct from what the literature might otherwise suggest.

In regards to work-life balance this study found that it was significantly correlated to job satisfaction and turnover intentions across all skill level, therefore confirming the predicted hypothesis. Work-life balance is becoming more of a factor in many employees' life (Haar, 2013), especially as more house-holds are becoming dual-earning households. While previously women were largely confined to domestic unpaid duties, this is no longer the case and domestic duties are now shared between both parents. This was confirmed within this study's interviews, which found that work-life balance was a key factor among the participants who had young children. This study also found that all of the women who had young children noted work-life balance as essential, and those who did not feel they had it in their current job were looking for another job to gain that balance. Therefore, among this study's participants, the domestic duties were still deemed the women's responsibility. Consequently, this study seems to support the research of Keough (2003), which found that demographics factors such as marital status and those with dependents (children or aging parents) experienced more work-family conflict and consequently, this influenced their turnover intentions.

However, the need for work-life balance may change over time. Therefore, employees with young children may place a higher importance on work-life balance at this stage of their life but this may shift over time (Darcy, McCarthy, Hill, & Grady, 2012). For example, employees with young children may view work-life balance as the ability to go to kids sporting events or picking their children from school. Alternatively, work-life balance for someone whose children have left home might view work-life balance as the ability to go on extended trips for a few weeks of the year. Therefore, organisations will need to assess the work-life needs of each employee as it may vary from one employee to another.

In addition, a shift within the different generations may be attributing to more employees wanting work-life balance. Baby boomers largely live to work and are often

associated as workaholics, whereas Generation X and Generation Y work to live (Gursoy et al., 2008). Therefore, Generation X and Generation Y employees want flexibility in their scheduling and do not want their work to impinge too much on their personal life. In addition due to their lack of loyalty, if another employer is offering better working conditions or benefits (and ultimately greater work-life balance), then Generation X and Generation Y employees might be more likely to leave their jobs. Consequently, there are many factors that may impact the need for work-life balance, but what is clear is that organisations will need to focus on providing their work-life balance for all employees. The potential for work-life balance to be important for all employees aligns with the latest research (Haar, 2013; Haar et al., 2014).

Also, among all three skill levels of employees it was hypothesised that job satisfaction would be negatively related to turnover intentions. This hypothesis was confirmed with significant results for job satisfaction to turnover intentions for all three distinct groups. Therefore, the results of this study echo many of the past studies that job satisfaction is a strong predictor of turnover intentions (Tett & Meyer, 1993). However, what this study also adds to the literature is that job satisfaction is a predictor of turnover intentions across a wide range of employees. The strength of job satisfaction as a predictor of turnover intentions held across all three skill level groups within the quantitative results suggesting that job satisfaction is a key variable in the turnover process regardless of skill level.

The interviews also reiterated these results, by finding that those who were very dissatisfied with their jobs quickly left their jobs. In one case, the skilled worker left her job within two weeks of setting up the interview. Yet in another case, a low-skilled employee noted she was very dissatisfied with her job and left within a month of the interview. Those few employees who also reported both dissatisfaction and satisfaction with their job noted that they would be staying for the short term but would be looking to move within the next two year.

Therefore, across all employees job satisfaction seemed to predict not only turnover intentions but also actual turnover.

In addition, those employees that were both satisfied and dissatisfied are the hardest to capture within quantitative surveys and therefore shows the benefit of using qualitative interviews. Employees who are both satisfied and dissatisfied are the employees who pose the most threat and potential benefit for an organisation. If those employees could become more satisfied, then their work performance may increase and they may reconsider leaving their job. In contrast, as previously mentioned, dissatisfied employees are the ones who tend to partake in devious behaviours that can end up costing organisations money (Christian & Ellis, 2014). Therefore, organisations could benefit from assessing employees' satisfaction throughout their career as this may be the best way to gauge how an employee is feeling and what an organisation could do to change how they are feeling.

This study also aimed to test a new mediation model for turnover intentions in which work-life balance acted as a mediator of job autonomy and supervisor support, which then led to job satisfaction, which then acted as a mediator of work-life balance towards turnover intentions. While exploratory in nature, it seems there is merit in this model as it was confirmed to be a superior fit to the data using SEM. Due to the limited research to date on the links between work-life balance and turnover intentions, this study adds to the turnover literature by showing the strength of work-life balance as an antecedent. Specifically, work-life balance is significantly linked to turnover intentions but this direct effect is fully mediated by job satisfaction. As was highlighted by one of the interview participants, one of the main reasons for her looking for another job was to gain more flexibility and achieve a better balance between her work life and her family life. This suggests also that work-life balance might work directly towards turnover intentions, albeit the current empirical studies suggested a path approach of work-life balance to job satisfaction to turnover intentions.

Also, this study shows that factors such as job autonomy and supervisor support influence an employee's ability to achieve work-life balance. For example, Brannen and Lewis (2000) found that while there can be organisational policies in place, unless an employee's manager is supportive of those policies employees may not follow them. Therefore, it may not be as simple as creating work-life balance policies, it is creating a company culture that embodies these ideals (Thompson & Prottas, 2006). However, as previously discussed, the need for work-life balance is becoming of an issue for employees. Therefore, this study shows that factors, such as job autonomy and supervisor support, that help to facilitate are important when investigating work-life balance.

As mentioned above, the qualitative research largely confirmed the quantitative results. However, through thematic analysis of the interviews, additional themes were identified. The first of the themes was the dislike for repetitive or monotonous tasks. In the past, repetitive jobs were often viewed as being performed by low-skilled employees and was therefore deemed an issue only for that group of employees. However, now repetition and monotonous tasks seem to be an issue among all skill levels of employees. Many of the skilled and semi-skilled workers in the interviews mentioned their distain or "loathing" for repetitive tasks. Therefore, this will be an issue that many organisations will need to take into account when they are designing employee's roles. It may be beneficial for both the organisation and the employee if jobs are designed with a variety of different tasks. Not only will it potentially keep the employee from experiencing repetition but it also allows more people to be trained in different areas of the business which could be advantageous if an employee decided to leave.

Another theme that coincided with the dislike for repetitive tasks was the need to be challenged. As one of the interviewees stated "I try to get moved and nothing happens". If employees are willing to move within an organisation than it may be a cost effective way for

an organisations to challenge their employees. Jackofsky and Peters (1983) found that it may be important to look at both intra-organisational movement as well inter-organisational movement, as this might provide employees considering leaving their job the chance to stay with their organisation still. Therefore, if an employee is bored or disengaged in their current role, a change within the organisations might be enough to keep them as the new role would give them a challenge.

This becomes especially important with regard to the older generations that are in the workforce. This study found through its qualitative interviews that people no matter what stage in life want to be challenged and want to continue to learn. It is not good enough to side-line those employees who are nearing retirement age, but rather, organisations need to use these employees to their advantage. With the growth in an ageing workforce (Brougham, 2011), it is something that organisations are going to have to take more seriously. Older employees who have been with a company for a number of years not only have great organisational knowledge but they are able to communicate the culture and the processes to the younger employees. Older employees might be able to be used in a mentoring type of role which could help to develop the younger employees. The findings within the qualitative interviews reaffirm other studies that have looked at the turnover of older employees, in particular, that older employees want to be challenged and that they want to feel as though they are contributing to the organisation (Armstrong-Stassen & Ursel, 2009).

Additionally, skilled employees need to have career progression and organisations will need to be upfront with employees possibly during the recruitment stage as to what their potential within the organisation is. In addition, organisations may benefit from having a career management tool to tap into how employees are feeling about their career path and how it is progression. This may enable organisations to intervene with employees who are dissatisfied with their job due to the feelings of a lack of career plan or growth opportunities.

This becomes especially important with organisations now having flatter structures. As previously mentioned, in the past organisations were largely hierarchical and employees had a sense of where they were heading within the organisations (Gursoy et al., 2008). However, with organisations having less hierarchies, employees do not have a clear sense as to where the next step within the company is. A number of the skilled employees who were interviewed mentioned the need for career progression or an attainable career path. However, as one skilled male mentioned that progression can be recognised by an increase in responsibilities. Therefore, while career progression has often been associated with a promotion or change in title, some participants see it as the ability to make more decisions and have more responsibility. If organisation continue to empower employees and create flatter organisations they will need to figure out how to fulfil the need of their skill employees for career progression. Hence, career progressions may not have to consider new positions per se, but more complex tasks and responsibilities.

CHAPTER 9

LIMITATIONS, FUTURE RESEARCH, AND CONCLUSION

9.1 Limitations

One of the main aims of this study was to provide a comparison among different skill levels of employees. However, to achieve this, this study had a reliance on self-reported surveys even though there are potential problems associated with self-reporting. These limitations also hold for the interviews conducted. Podsakoff and Organ (1986) noted that a critical problem with self-reports is “identifying the potential causes of artifactual covariance between self-report measures of what they are presumed to be two distinctly different variables” (p.534). This goes hand in hand with the argument that self-reporting methods bring in common method bias. However, as Spector (2006) notes, self-reporting alone may not account for common method bias but rather there may be other biasing factors. For example, in self-reporting questionnaires participants must recall information and this can cause errors and bias within the results (Bradburn, Rips, & Shevell, 1987). Another potential bias that creeps into self-reporting surveys is availability bias. Availability bias occurs when participants are asked to simply recall information and often times they report what comes to mind the quickest (Bradburn et al, 1987). Similar to availability bias is telescoping which is where respondents mistakenly import into the reference period events that happened prior (Bradburn et al, 1987).

Another bias that can occur within self-reports that could have potentially influenced this study’s interviews is that respondents can bring into their answers their knowledge of normative expectations and this can lead to social desirability. Social desirability is “the tendency on behalf of the subjects to deny socially undesirable traits and to claim socially desirable ones, and the tendency to say things which place the speaker in a favourable light” (Nederhof, 1985, p.264). Therefore, respondents do not always answer exactly how they would

like due to the fear of what people might think. In particular, in our interviews the respondents may have not wanted to open up fully about their dissatisfactions with their job. Furnham (1985) suggested that when a dimension that is being measured has almost exclusively negative associations there is a high tendency for faking the responses. However, through the use of both surveys and interviews the study tried to negate some common method variance. In addition, what was gained through this study far outweighed the potential biases that could have occurred.

Additional limitations for this study is the lack of other antecedents being tested and the use of a single organisation for Study One. Although previous research has suggested additional antecedents to turnover intentions, this study selected job autonomy, supervisor support, work-life balance, and job satisfaction due to these factors encompassing much of the different aspects of an employee's day. However, future research could benefit from additional antecedents being included, which will be discussed in the next section. In addition, Study One was only based on a single organisation and therefore the results could have been slightly biased towards the policies or culture of that particular organisation. However, the low-skilled employees from different organisations were included the qualitative interviews to help confirm that the quantitative results from the low-skilled sample was not due to the organisation itself. Furthermore, being able to target low-skilled workers is exceptionally hard because this is a group of employees who are typically working outside and thus not easily able to complete a survey, for example, through having no desk to work at.

Overall, while there are limitations in the present research these are typical of current employee research. Importantly, the current study conducted four studies – three empirical and one qualitative, hence there is much replication of data to provide strong generalizability of the findings. For example, job satisfaction was found to directly influence turnover intentions consistently. As such, while the present study uses self-reported data, the use of multiple data

sets does respond to calls from Nuzzo (2014) who argued the need for greater replication. Similarly, other authors have urged greater replication to promote scientific advancement (Tsang & Kwan, 1999). In addition, the use of mixed methods where a forth sample of interviews were conducted to further explore these themes and reinforce the findings from the empirical studies, further enhances the confidence of the overall findings and their generalizability. Furthermore, the use of higher level analysis, specifically CFA in SEM provides greater confidence in the items measuring distinct constructs, as does using a multi-group analysis for comparing the combined sample.

9.2 Future Research

Often, much of the turnover intention literature is based on a snapshot in time (Mitchell, Burch, & Lee, 2014), and the present study is no different. Therefore, this study would have benefitted by using multiple time intervals. As noted by Kammeyer-Mueller, Wanberg, Glomb, and Ahlburg (2005), only a few studies have investigated attitudinal, behavioural and contextual antecedents and outcomes over time. So while some factors may be present today those same factors may have changed three to six months down the track. Liu, Mitchell, Lee, Holtom, and Hinkin, (2012) found that individuals' job satisfaction does vary over time, while Holtom, Tidd, Mitchell, and Lee (2013) found, "the predictive effect of embeddedness and satisfaction on turnover increased with tenure" (p. 1346). Kammeyer-Mueller et al. (2005) used a dynamic model of turnover rather than a static model when looking at the turnover intentions of employees. They found that leavers became less satisfied and less committed over time. However, they also found that several of the predictors of turnover that were present in the first few months of tenure with an organisation were predictive of later turnover. Therefore, turnover literature could be enhanced by having more studies that assess the changes in behaviour and attitudes of employees over time. For example, a longitudinal design including actual turnover data provides useful directions for future turnover studies.

Another area for research would also be multi-level analysis. The present study used individual level responses rather than at a team or a collective level and thus, this study also reiterates Mitchell et al. (2014) call for more research to be done on different levels within an organisation, especially at the team level. Liu et al. (2013) found that unit level satisfaction could influence an individual's job satisfaction. Hence, more research is needed to understand team dynamics and how they influence both individual and team level job satisfaction and turnover intentions. By doing so, organisations may be able to gauge more effectively how much of turnover intentions or actual turnover is strictly based on an individual's perspective and how much is influenced by team members' perspectives. Godthelp and Glunk (2003) found that executives that were dissimilar to their team members in terms of age, and team tenure were more likely to leave the team. However, it may not only be surface level attributes that affects a team's satisfaction but also attitudes and values. Therefore, future turnover research could benefit from more emphasis placed on team level dynamics.

Team member support and team dynamics may become even more important as some authors have argued that as organisations become flatter in structure, the role of the supervisor is slowly being eroded (Griffin, Patterson, & West, 2001). Team members are starting to be empowered to make their own decisions and organisations are increasing the responsibilities of their employees and letting them take ownership of their tasks. The interviews also suggested the strength of team member support, as six out of 16 interviewees stated that the people they worked with were one of their main sources of contentment within their job. One participant noted that she looked to her team members more so than her supervisor for daily work support. In addition, many of the participants also stated that they would in fact look at the team they would be entering into at a new job. Therefore, team members, rather than the supervisor, may actually provide more of the necessary support that team members need.

Future research might benefit from the inclusion of organisational commitment when comparing job satisfaction and turnover intentions across different skill levels. As noted by Allen et al. (2010), organisational commitment and job satisfaction are two of the most notable factors that can predict as well as negate voluntary turnover. Organisational commitment is often defined by a strong belief and acceptance of the organisations goals and values, a strong desire to maintain a relationship in the organisation, and the willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organisations (Billingsley & Cross, 1992). Most studies conclude that the more committed an employee is to an organisation the more likely that employee will continue to work for the organisation (Billingsley & Cross, 1992; Meyer & Allen, 1991). The present study focused on job satisfaction as many researchers have found that job satisfaction was the strongest predictor of turnover intentions (Lambert et al., 2001; Tutuncu & Kozak, 2007; Griffeth, Hom, & Gaertner, 2000). However, future research on comparing antecedents across different skill level groups could assess both job satisfaction and organisational commitment.

In addition, job mobility and job security were not included in this study but could play a potential role in how employees assess their current job. Studies have found that external factors such as the labour market and the unemployment rate can impact on how employees view their jobs (Pollmann-Schult, 2005). For example, during the financial crisis many employees stayed within their jobs regardless of how little their pay went up or how dissatisfied they were with their job. In addition, there has been overwhelming data to suggest that when there are tough economic times, organisations tend to let go those who are low-skilled rather than their skilled workers (Pollmann-Schult, 2005; Mukoyama, & Şahin, 2006). Knowing that this might be the case, low-skilled workers may look for job security compared to skilled workers who may have more confidence when it comes to job alternatives. This has become especially true with globalisation. Organisations are now moving to vertical specialisation,

which is the completion of different production stages of a good in different countries (Strauss-Kahn, 2004). Vertical specialisation enables an organisation to move its low-skilled portion of the production line to developing countries where labour is cheaper and retain the highly specialised portion on the production line. This in turn decreases the offering of low-skilled jobs. Hence, low-skilled employees may be willing to put up with more than their semi-skilled or skilled counterparts due to the lack of alternatives. Similarly, low-skilled employees may view job security as a factor which influences their job satisfaction and turnover intentions. Therefore, future research could benefit from including organisational commitment, job mobility, and job security as possible antecedents within the turnover model.

Additionally, the results of this study seem to suggest that there are differences among different skill level groups and therefore more research may be needed to explore these groups in more depth. As mentioned previously, semi-skilled employees were the group that differed the most in the quantitative results, which was slightly contrary to what was initially thought. While the relationships of work-life balance to job satisfaction to turnover intentions did hold across the samples, the functioning of the antecedents did vary. Semi-skilled have often been omitted from turnover research and therefore, not much is known about how they view their jobs or what influences their decisions to stay or leave. Therefore, while this study was an initial starting point, more research could be done. Also, through the interviews, skilled workers mentioned their need for career progression while low-skilled and semi-skilled did not, suggesting that potentially more differences could be present among the skill levels that have yet to be explored.

Some new areas for research were discovered through the interviews; with many of the employees disliking the parts of their job that were boring and repetitive, and therefore boredom levels may need to be tested. While past research has investigated boredom levels through scales such as the boredom proneness scale (BPS) and job boredom scale (JBS) much

of the research has been based on students or on production line workers (Kass, Vodanovich, and Callander, 2001). However, what emerged from this study's interviews is that repetitive or monotonous jobs are not confined to low skilled jobs, but rather, can be present across all skill levels job. Therefore, it seems necessary for organisations to assess boredom levels during the recruitment stage for all jobs. Kass et al. (2001) found a significant negative relationship between job boredom and job satisfaction. However, again the sample used was employees at a manufacturing company. Hence, boredom has not been adequately explored within the semi-skilled or skilled employee domain. If the advertised job is based on very routine type of tasks then that job might not be best suited for someone with a low tolerance of boredom. At the recruitment stage, organisations could assess the levels of boredom proneness of potential employees. If organisation knows that a certain employee likes a challenge and a variety of tasks, than it may be that employee that is best suited for projects or one-off types of jobs. In addition, it could be beneficial for organisations to assess job boredom throughout an employee's career, as this may signal when a change in tasks may be needed to retain the employee. Therefore, turnover literature could also benefit from studies assessing boredom at an organisational level to see, for example, whether it moderates the influence of antecedents (and job satisfaction) on turnover intentions.

Lastly, the need for a challenge was present among all employees regardless of age in the interviews. Therefore, with many countries experiencing an aging population, more research needs to be done around the aging population and how organisations react to these employment changes. The aging population will continue to impact organisations in many ways. For example, older people are staying in the work place longer. While most meta-analyses have stated that there is no real correlation between age and turnover intentions, the interviews of this study suggests otherwise. Through the interviews, the study found that people of all ages want to be challenged and those who are close to retirement still want to learn new

things and that the lack of challenge for the older workers makes them less satisfied with their job and more likely to think about leaving. Future research could explore how organisations manage those who are nearing retirement. The worldwide population is growing older and in many countries the retirement age is being increased (United Nations, 2007). Therefore, organisations will need to understand how to best position their older workforce. Manpower (2007) reported out of 28,000 employers in 25 countries, only 14% had any policies relating to recruiting older workers and only 21% have any retention policies implemented to keep their older work force. In addition, previous research has largely focused on antecedents to retirement decisions rather than turnover (Armstrong-Stassen & Ursel, 2009). Through this study's interviews, this study learnt that the older workforce doesn't want to be side-lined but rather they want to learn different areas of the business and be challenged, and this does influence their turnover intentions. Therefore, more research needs to be done to explore organisational policies in regards to the ageing workforce.

9.3 Conclusion

In conclusion, this study's aim was to add to the turnover literature by providing a multi-study comparison of the turnover intentions of different skill levels of employees, while using samples from outside the United States. It also responded to the calls for more qualitative studies within the turnover literature by providing an additional study (Study four) that was based on qualitative interviews.

The present study found that many of the antecedents to turnover intentions were similar among different skill levels of employees, in particular, job satisfaction was a good predictor of turnover intentions. Although, there were limitations to this research, such as, being based on self-reports, not being able to test a number of antecedents, and study one being based on a single organisations, this study still provided valuable insight into how employees

from differing skill levels view their job and how aspects of their job influences their turnover intentions. This study found that overall the effects of work-life balance to job satisfaction and job satisfaction to turnover intentions held true across low-skilled, semi-skilled, and skilled employees. Therefore, providing support to the work-life balance literature and adding to the turnover literature, that not only is work-life balance an antecedent to job satisfaction and turnover intentions but it can also play a mediating role within in the turnover process. However, the results also suggest that low-skilled and skilled employees are more similar in how they assess job autonomy and supervisor support in comparison to semi-skilled employees. These results appear contrary to what might be initially thought. Therefore, while this study provides an initial study into the turnover intentions of the semi-skilled worker, this study's results suggests that more research is needed on semi-skilled workers to better understand their turnover intentions.

In addition, through the use of qualitative interviews, this study was able to provide confirmation of the quantitative results as well as depth. Through the interviews, this study found that most employees regardless of skill level had job autonomy and work-life and these impacted their job satisfaction. With regards to supervisor support, there were some variations as to how people viewed supervisor support. Many of the skilled employees found their supervisor's lack of operational knowledge as source of frustration, while others thought their supervisor was very supportive. However, one skilled employee believed that their supervisor was the reason why they weren't given the ability to work less days per week, which also gives weight to the quantitative results, of the links between supervisor support and work-life balance. The interviews also echoed the quantitative results in regards to job satisfaction, as job satisfaction was confirmed to be a good predictor of turnover intentions and in two cases actual turnover. Therefore, this study was able to capture actual turnover, which is rare, hence, providing valuable knowledge about how employees view their jobs and how quickly they will

move once they have become dissatisfied. The interviews also helped to understand the complexities within the turnover process by capturing those employees who are both satisfied and dissatisfied at the same time. Furthermore, through the use of the interviews, this study was able to explore new emerging themes such as the dislike of repetitive jobs, the need for a challenge (regardless of age), and the need for career progression. These themes now provide new areas for future research.

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APPENDIX 1

Name of Journal	Title of Study	Year published	Sample Size	Type of Sample
Journal of Organizational Behavior	How does spouse career support relate to employee turnover? Work interfering with family and job satisfaction as mediators	2014	5505	US Army
Journal of Organizational Behavior	Analytical mind sets in turnover research	2014	conceptual paper	
Academy of Management Journal	Executive departures without client losses: the role of multiplex ties in partner retention	2014	past data set-making relationships between different data sets and relationships	advertising agency
Academy of Management Journal	The need to consider time, level, and trends: A turnover perspective	2013	review of turnover research	
Journal of Organizational Behavior	How career orientation shapes the job satisfaction–turnover intention link	2013	255 employees	35% held bachelor degree or higher, spread over range of industries
Academy of Management Journal	When does voice lead to exit? It depends on leadership	2013	3388-qualitative responses 58% hourly employees	restaurant workers
Academy of Management Journal	No place like home? An identity strain perspective on repatriate turnover	2012	112	4% high school diploma-96% bachelor degree or higher

Name of Journal	Title of Study	Year published	Sample Size	Type of Sample
Journal of Organizational Behavior	Perceived organizational support and embeddedness as key mechanisms connecting socialization tactics to commitment and turnover among new employees	2012	310 completed Surveys 1 and 2 only; 231 completed Surveys 1–3; and 145 completed all four surveys.	entertainment and gaming organisation- all different levels within the organisation
Academy of Management Journal	When employees are out of step with co-workers: how job satisfaction trajectory and dispersion influence individual-and unit-level voluntary turnover	2012	5243 employees and 175 different business units	Hospitality and recreation – found no evidence of variation between business units; therefore did not focus on the different jobs performed by each unit
Academy of Management Journal	No place like home? An identity strain perspective on repatriate turnover	2012	112 repatriates	4% didn't hold a bachelor degree or higher- didn't give a breakdown of level or particular industry
Academy of Management Journal	Perceived organizational membership and the retention of older worker	2011	study 1-236; study 2-420 nurses	nurses and other workers 23% in customer service or admin jobs

Name of Journal	Title of Study	Year published	Sample Size	Type of Sample
Journal of Organizational Behavior	Work and personal role involvement of part time employees: implications for attitudes and turnover intentions	2011	2235	Staff at universities- varied in roles and performed an ANOVA was performed between work role involvement and job classification and work status. Found that work involvement did not sign differed across eight job class or work status
Academy of Management Journal	An employment systems approach to turnover: human resource practices, and performance	2011	97 in the longitudinal survey 339 in the 2003 Sample	Call centre workers but only interviewed director is or managers in each call centre
Academy of Management Journal	The power of momentum: a new model of dynamic relationships between job satisfaction change and turnover intentions	2011	study 1 sample one – 725 soldiers Sample 2-64 new employees in consulting firm Sample3- 800 US Army study 2 85 participants-low to mid-level management	Soldiers, consulting firm – no distinction in the level of job but assume entry-level, MBA students – full time working but all in some sort of management level and no industry noted.

APPENDIX 2

EMPLOYEE SURVEY

Dear employee

I am conducting a survey on employee attitudes and behaviours. Participation involves you completing the survey below. It is expected to take most people approximately 5-10 minutes to complete. Naturally, your participation in the research is completely voluntary, and please be assured that any responses will be treated with the utmost confidentiality. This means that you will never be individually identified and you are not required to provide your name! All surveys will be kept in a safe and secure location for a period of 3 years, after which they will be destroyed. At no stage will any data be seen by any organisation – and information on where you work is not required. If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please contact Professor Jarrod Haar at j.haar@massey.ac.nz. Thank you very much for your help in this important project.

The following questions relate to your organisation:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree or Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I am satisfied with my work-life balance, enjoying both roles	1	2	3	4	5
2. Nowadays, I seem to enjoy every part of my life equally well	1	2	3	4	5
3. I manage to balance the demands of my work and personal/family life well	1	2	3	4	5
My supervisor...					
4. Is concerned about me as a person	1	2	3	4	5
5. Is helpful when I have a family or personal emergency	1	2	3	4	5
6. Feels each of us is important as an individual	1	2	3	4	5
7. Is helpful when I have a routine family or personal matter to attend to	1	2	3	4	5
8. Is concerned about how employees think and feel about things	1	2	3	4	5
9. Is understanding when I have personal or family problems which interfere with my work	1	2	3	4	5
10. I am enthusiastic about my work	1	2	3	4	5
11. I feel satisfied with my present job	1	2	3	4	5
12. Each day at work seems like it will never end	1	2	3	4	5
13. I find real enjoyment in my work	1	2	3	4	5
14. I consider my job rather unpleasant	1	2	3	4	5
15. I have a lot of say over what happens on my job	1	2	3	4	5
16. I take part in job decisions that affect me	1	2	3	4	5
17. I can decide how I do my work	1	2	3	4	5
18. I make a lot of decisions on my own	1	2	3	4	5
19. I am thinking about leaving my	1	2	3	4	5

organization	1	2	3	4	5
20. I am planning to look for a new job	1	2	3	4	5
21. I intend to ask people about new job opportunities	1	2	3	4	5
22. I don't plan to be at my organisation much longer	1	2	3	4	5

*Finally, please provide a few details about yourself. Remember we do **not** require your name and this information will not be used to identify you.*

1. Age: 2. Sex: Male Female

3. Married/Defacto Single

4. Highest completed education _____

5. What is your ethnicity (put as many as you like)

6. **Total** number of hours worked in a typical week (as per your contract)?

7. Number of years in present organization?

8. Industry you work in? (choose from private, public, not-for-profit)? _____

9. Current job title? _____

Thank You For Your Time!! 😊

Thank you for participating!! 😊
Please be assured that all times your replies will remain confidential and you will not be identified in anyway.

Professor Jarrod Haar

APPENDIX 3



MASSEY UNIVERSITY ALBANY

28 May 2014

Lindsay Eastgate
409 Upper Waiwera Road
RD 1 Silverdale
Auckland 0994

Dear Lindsay

Re: A multi-study of the turnover intentions of New Zealand employees

Thank you for your Low Risk Notification which was received on 22 May 2014.

Your project has been recorded on the Low Risk Database which is reported in the Annual Report of the Massey University Human Ethics Committees.

You are reminded that staff researchers and supervisors are fully responsible for ensuring that the information in the low risk notification has met the requirements and guidelines for submission of a low risk notification.

The low risk notification for this project is valid for a maximum of three years.

Please notify me if situations subsequently occur which cause you to reconsider your initial ethical analysis that it is safe to proceed without approval by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees.

Please note that travel undertaken by students must be approved by the supervisor and the relevant Pro Vice-Chancellor and be in accordance with the Policy and Procedures for Course-Related Student Travel Overseas. In addition, the supervisor must advise the University's Insurance Officer.

A reminder to include the following statement on all public documents:

"This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. The researcher(s) named above are responsible for the ethical conduct of this research.

If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you wish to raise with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact Professor John O'Neill, Director (Research Ethics), telephone 06 350 5249, e-mail humanethics@massey.ac.nz".

Please note that if a sponsoring organisation, funding authority or a journal in which you wish to publish requires evidence of committee approval (with an approval number), you will have to provide a full application to one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. You should also note that such an approval can only be provided prior to the commencement of the research.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "J. O'Neill".

John G O'Neill (Professor)
**Chair, Human Ethics Chairs' Committee and
Director (Research Ethics)**

cc Prof Jarrod Haar
School of Management
ALBANY

Prof Sarah Leberman, HoS
School of Management
PN214

Massey University Human Ethics Committee
Accredited by the Health Research Council

APPENDIX 4A



School of Management

Massey University Albany

Gate 1, South Highway 17, Albany or

Private Bag 102 904

North Shore City

Auckland, New Zealand

Internal: extn 43393

Phone: +64 (09) 414-0800 extn 43393

A multi-study of the turnover intentions of New Zealand employees, a diversity management approach

INFORMATION SHEET

Introduction

The above project is led by Lindsay Eastgate (School of Management) and supervised by Professor Jarrod Haar (School of Management) and Professor Jane Parker (School of Management).

Ms Eastgate is currently undertaking a management research project for her Masters studies at Massey (Albany) after several years of working in both the private and public sector. She is the MPOWER Coordinator and has also worked as a research assistant on other research projects. Professor Haar of Ngati Maniapoto and Ngati Mahuta descent, is a Professor of Management. Jarrod received his PhD in Organisational Behaviour/Human Resource Management from the University of Waikato. He lectures on organisational behaviour and his research areas include employee well-being and job outcomes, Maori leadership, and work-family practices. Professor Parker lectures and researches in employment relations (ER) and human resource management (HRM). She is a co-Director of the Massey People, Organisation, Work and Employment Research (MPOWER) group. She holds a PhD (Industrial Relations) from the University of Warwick (England).

This research project aims at exploring New Zealand employees' turnover intentions through the analysis of multiple studies. The use of multiple studies enables the researcher to understand employee's turnover intentions from a number of different perspectives. In addition, the research project will also be investigating how diversity management and cultural factors may impact on employee's job satisfaction and turnover intentions.

The project involves three different studies 1) survey on blue collar workers; 2) a survey on skilled and unskilled workers; and 3) interviews with a number of New Zealand employees. This Information Sheets details aspects of the case study investigation.

Project Invitation

The research team requests your assistance with the above study because you are working in an organisation located in New Zealand.

Your participation in this project is voluntary. If you do agree to participate, you can withdraw at any time during the project without comment or consequence. Your decision to participate will in no way affect your current or future relationship with Massey University.

Participant Identification and Recruitment

- **Recruitment method.** *You have been asked to participate in the project via a semi-structured (face-to-face) interview.*
- **Selection criteria.** *The research project is interested in amassing the viewpoints of a diverse array of individuals (e.g. in terms of seniority, and demographics such as age, gender and ethnicity).*
- **Exclusion criteria** *(where relevant). Not relevant.*

- **Number of participants to be involved and the reason for this number.** 15-20 participants will be involved. This number has been selected as it should give us enough information to gain saturation within the data.

There is a potential risk that you will say something that you do not want reported. If, after the interview process, you decide that you do not want a particular comment reported, you can email us and let us know and we will remove it.

Project Procedures

- **The procedures in which participants will be involved.** Semi-structured interviews will be conducted in locations and at times that best suit the interviewee. The questions will seek open-ended comments. No individuals will be identified by name or position. The questions will take about 30-40 minutes to complete. Interviewees will be asked if their interview can be digitally recorded. Only members of the research team will have access to the interview responses. The researcher may contact a study participant to clarify an interview response and/or seek additional information pertaining to a response(s).

We would like to ask you to sign a written consent form (attached) to confirm your agreement to participate.

- **Any conflict of financial interest and/or role.** Nil.
- **Any support processes in place to deal with adverse physical or psychological risks (where relevant).** Not relevant; the participants are informants who will be discussing issues concerning their turnover intentions and job satisfaction.

Data Management

- **Use of data.** Findings will be disseminated within Massey University and possibly in academic publications.
- **What will happen to the data when they are obtained.** The interview data will be analysed using manual thematic coding techniques (content analysis).
- **Storage and disposal of data.** Interview responses will be stored on researchers' PCs, to which only they will have access. Signed consent forms will also be stored in the researchers' offices at the University.
- **Method for accessing a summary of the project findings.** All informants will be offered a copy of academic outputs from the study.

All comments and responses are anonymous and will be treated confidentially. The names of individual persons are not required in any of the responses. No individual comments will be able to be attributed to an individual unless that individual indicates that he or she would prefer to be identified. Only the members of the research team at Massey University (Albany) will have access to the interview responses from informants.

Participant's Rights

You are under no obligation to accept this invitation. If you decide to participate, you have the right to:

- *decline to answer any particular question;*
- *withdraw from the study at any time;*
- *ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;*
- *provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give permission to the researchers; and*
- *be given access to agreed academic outputs from the project.*

Project Contacts

Lindsay Eastgate

Massey University (Albany)

Ph. +64 (27) 355 8235

Email: lindsayeastgate@hotmail.com

Please contact the above researcher if you have any questions about the project.

Statement

“This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University’s Human Ethics Committees. The researcher(s) named above are responsible for the ethical conduct of this research.

If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you wish to raise with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact Professor John O’Neill, Director, Research Ethics, telephone 0064 (0)6 350 5249, email humanethics@massey.ac.nz”.

APPENDIX 4B



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A multi-study of the turnover intentions of New Zealand employees, a diversity management approach

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM - INDIVIDUAL

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

Please circle the appropriate response:

I agree/do not agree to the interview being sound recorded.

I wish/do not wish to have my recordings returned to me.

I wish/do not wish to have data placed in an official archive.

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

Signature:

Date:

.....

Full Name - printed

.....

This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. The researcher(s) named above are responsible for the ethical conduct of this research.

If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you wish to raise with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact Professor John O'Neill, Director (Research Ethics), telephone 0064 (0)6 3505249, email humane

APPENDIX 5

Interview Questions:

Background information:

1. How many hours per week do you work? Are you permanent, casual,
2. What best describes your ethnic group?
3. What is your highest level of education?
4. How old are you?
5. Are you married, in a relationship, or single?
6. Do you have any children?

Questions about your job:

7. How would you describe the work that you do?
8. How long have you been with your current employer; how long have you been in your current role?
9. How many years of experience do you have in working in similar lines of work or roles?
10. How would you describe your level within the organisation? i.e. entry level, middle management, senior management
11. Do you work within a team or do you work independently?
12. Do you feel as though you have autonomy within your current role? If yes, how? And if not, why is that?
13. How satisfied are you with your job?
14. What do you like most about your job and why?
15. What do you like least about your job and why?
16. Are you planning on staying at your job or will you be looking for another job?
17. If you are staying, what is keeping you?
18. If you are leaving, what are you looking for within a new job?
19. Do you feel you have good supervisor support in your current role? If yes, how? If no, why not?
20. Do you think your current role gives you work/life balance? If yes, how? If no, why not?
21. Is there anything you would like to add?