

**FLEXIBLE WORK PRACTICES AND EMPLOYEE  
OUTCOMES: THE ROLE OF GENDER, SOCIAL  
SUPPORT AND FLEXIBILITY STIGMA**

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## **Keywords**

Flexible work practices; career consequences; ecological systems theory; employee performance; flexibility stigma; gender; gender role theory; perceived availability of FWPs; signalling theory; social exchange theory; social support; turnover intentions; usage of FWPs; wellbeing; work-life balance; work-life literature.

## **Abstract**

Flexible work practices (FWPs) are employer-provided benefits that assist employees to choose the time, location, amount and pace of work to balance both professional and personal life commitments. Prior empirical studies have reported inconsistent findings regarding employee outcomes, owing partly to the divergence between perceived availability of FWPs and actual usage of FWPs. To address these inconsistent findings, this study uses social exchange theory and signalling theory to explore the impact of perceived availability of FWPs and usage of FWPs on five employee outcomes: performance, wellbeing, work-life balance, turnover intentions and career consequences. Derived from gender role theory and ecological systems theory, this study also investigates the moderating effects of gender, social support and flexibility stigma on these relationships: i) perceived availability of FWPs and employee outcomes; and ii) usage of FWPs and employee outcomes. Survey data were collected from 293 employees of a for-profit Australian organisation and analysed using hierarchical multiple regression. The findings suggest positive impacts of both perceived availability of FWPs and usage of FWPs on employee wellbeing, work-life balance and negative impacts on employee turnover intentions. No moderation effects were found for gender, social support and flexibility stigma. Together with the limitations, theoretical, research and practical contributions of this study are discussed.

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## **List of Abbreviations**

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
AWALI	Australian Work and Life Index
FWPs	Flexible Work Practices
HR	Human Resource
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
RTR	Right to Request
WERS	Workplace Employment Relations Study
WGEA	Workplace Gender Equality Agency

Note: This thesis uses validated scales for all the variables from high ranking journals. Therefore, there will be a difference in spelling for a few words (for example: ‘organization’ instead of ‘organisation’).

## Statement of Original Authorship

The work contained in this thesis has not been previously submitted to meet requirements for an award at this or any other higher education institution. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made.

Signature: [QUT Verified Signature](#)

Date: November, 2019

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# Chapter 1 Flexible Work Practices: An Introduction

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Workplace practices, designed to assist employees to balance various domains of their lives, have become a topic of considerable interest to both researchers and practitioners. Among various work-life practices (e.g. flexible work schedule, maternity leave, unpaid and paid paternal leave, on-site childcare, adoption assistance, childcare resource and referral), flexible work practices (FWPs) are increasingly used by employers to assist workers in integrating their work and personal life commitments (Bourdeau, Ollier-Malaterre, & Houlfort, 2019; Brough & O’Driscoll, 2010; Galinsky, Bond, Sakai, Kim, & Giuntoli, 2008; Hill, Grzywacz, et al., 2008).

The concept of flexible working was first introduced by the Kellogg Company in the United States in December 1930 when they offered four 6-hours shifts in place of traditional three 8-hours shift to employ laid-off workers during the great depression. This alternative work model was welcomed by government, businesses and workers. Kellogg’s initiative of alternative working schedule has pioneered the concept of FWPs and has gradually been adopted by organisations all over the world. Over time, organisations were interested in FWPs as part of designing and implementing “family responsive human resource policies” (Grover & Crooker, 1995, p. 272) with a view to adapt to the economic, demographic and social changes (Kossek & Michel, 2011).

FWPs have become a global phenomenon since the 1990s to better manage the challenges of globalization, technological advancement and workforce demographic changes (de Menezes & Kelliher, 2011; Kossek & Michel, 2011; Mattis, 1990). Globalization has changed traditional working hours to incorporate specialised knowledge of both onshore and offshore workers to gain a comparative advantage (Burgoon & Raess, 2009). The rapid technological expansion allows work transportability and thus attracts a diverse workforce (McDonald & Cathcart, 2015;

Pitt-Catsouphe & Christensen, 2004). Demographic changes such as increased dual-earner families combined with increased female participation in the workforce and delayed retirement by mature aged workers contribute to a diverse workforce with a diverse need to manage both work and non-work demands (Chandola, Booker, Kumari, & Benzeval, 2019; Chen & Fulmer, 2018; Rubery, Keizer, & Grimshaw, 2016). Organisations thus consider flexible work practices as a strategic tool to attract, retain and motivate a diverse range of talented employees (Kossek & Lautsch, 2018; Maxwell, Rankine, Bell, & Macvicar, 2007; Olmsted & Smith, 1997).

This chapter explores the definition, forms and outcomes of FWPs used in organisations and proposes the objectives, questions and context for this study. The chapter concludes with an outline of the organisation of this thesis.

## **1.1 FLEXIBLE WORK PRACTICES**

FWPs are “working practices that allow more control with regard to where, when, and how work is done” (Avgoustaki & Bessa, 2019, p. 432). These are the work arrangements that allow employees to vary the amount, timing or location of their work and thus balance their work and non-work responsibilities (Chen & Fulmer, 2018; de Menezes & Kelliher, 2017; Glass & Estes, 1997; Kelly & Moen, 2007). FWPs are used as an umbrella term to include a variety of job arrangements such as flexitime, part-time work, casual work, part-year work, compressed workweek, annualized hours, teleworking, job sharing, purchased leave and flexible holidays (Baltes, Briggs, Huff, Wright, & Neuman, 1999; Kelliher & Anderson, 2008b; Kelliher & de Menezes, 2019). FWPs can be categorized into three distinct groups: i) flexibility in timing of work or schedule flexibility (when); ii) flexibility in the location or place of work (where); and iii) flexibility in the amount of work (how much) (Allen, Johnson, Kiburz, & Shockley, 2013; Chen & Fulmer, 2018; Kelliher & Anderson, 2008b; Kossek & Lautsch, 2018; Kossek & Michel, 2011). Details of the three forms of FWPs are discussed in the following section.

### **1.1.1 Forms of FWPs**

*Schedule flexibility* or timing of work includes flexitime, compressed workweek, shift work, contingent work etc. Flexitime refers to varying starting and finishing time of the job (e.g. 7 a.m-3 p.m. or 10 a.m-6 pm). Employees are required to work a pre-



decided number of hours during a week. Under a compressed workweek, employees work more hours in a day to compress the 38 hours work week into less than 5 days. The most common compressed work week includes a 4-day work week and a 9-day fortnight (Baltes et al., 1999; Kossek & Michel, 2011). Contingent work refers to the absence of long-term explicit or implicit job contracts or working minimum irregular hours by employees and includes freelancers, casual workers, independent contractors, seasonal workers (Connelly & Gallagher, 2004; Polivka & Nardone, 1989).

The most common form of *location flexibility* arrangement is teleworking which allows employees to perform all or some of their work outside their physical, organisational settings on a regular basis for few hours a day to few days a week using technologies (Gajendran & Harrison, 2007; Kelliher & Anderson, 2010; Kossek & Michel, 2011; Weeden, 2005). Teleworking can be categorised as i) telecommuting, ii) satellite offices, iii) neighbourhood work centres and iv) mobile working (Kurland & Bailey, 2000). The terminology used for teleworking varied from study to study and thus make it difficult to distinguish between the virtual offices and other telecommuting arrangements. This thesis uses the term *teleworking* to include telecommuting, work from home and other remote working arrangements.

Flexibility in the *number of hours* worked, or *workload* includes part-time work, part-year work, job sharing and voluntary reduced time (Hill, Jacob, et al., 2008; Kelliher & Anderson, 2010; Kossek & Lautsch, 2018; Kossek & Michel, 2011). Part-time work is the most common type of flexibility Australian employees utilise, which requires them to work on an average of fewer than 38 hours a week (Fair Work Ombudsman Australia, 2013). Job sharing involves two employees voluntarily sharing the duties responsibilities of one job where each works less than full-time (Christensen & Staines, 1990). Part-year work assists organisations to meet seasonal or short-term staffing requirements which includes tax accountants, ski resort jobs, tourism, construction and agricultural jobs (Druker, White, Hegewisch, & Mayne, 1996). Voluntary reduced time refers to working fewer hours according to a pre-arranged schedule and then returning to full time status. Purchased leave is another kind of flexibility enabling employees to fund additional periods of leave by reducing their fortnightly salary (Kossek & Michel, 2011, Fair Work Ombudsman Australia, 2017).

Flexible holidays involves working on a public holiday and swapping it for another day that best suits the employee's culture, religion or lifestyle.

### **1.1.2 Perceived Availability of FWPs and Usage of FWPs**

Research has differed in the measurement of the employee experience with FWPs and its influence on work outcomes. Information regarding the presence of FWPs in the organisation has been ascertained by asking managers whether FWPs exist in their organisation (Chen & Fulmer, 2018; Halpern, 2005). However, two different approaches have been used to measure employee experiences with FWPs. First, employees have been asked whether they perceive FWPs as available to them (Budd & Mumford, 2006; Chen & Fulmer, 2018) and, second, whether they have ever used such practices (Chen & Fulmer, 2018; Leslie, Manchester, Park, & Mehng, 2012). These two different measures capture the employee experience with FWPs, and they have different implications on employee work outcomes.

Employees may not perceive the FWPs as available to them and thus not receive any benefits by using specific practices despite organisations offering and implementing FWPs consistently among all employees (Butts, Casper, & Yang, 2013; Chen & Fulmer, 2018; Hill, Hawkins, Ferris, & Weitzman, 2001). Perceived availability or usability is an important construct as the benefits of FWPs will impact the employees beyond those who actually use such practices (Eaton, 2003; Hill et al., 2001). The term "*perceived usability*" was introduced by Eaton (2003, p. 147) and defined as "the extent to which employees feel free to use the available flexibility policies, whether formal or informal". Although the terms 'perceived availability' and 'perceived usability' were used interchangeably in the FWP literature, this study uses the more recent term 'perceived availability'. Prior research has acknowledged the divergence between the presence of formal flexible practices in the organisation and employee perceptions regarding their availability. The determinants for such divergence are discussed in detail in the next chapter (section 2.2).

## **1.2 OUTCOMES OF FWPS**

FWPs can be initiated to lower organisational cost (employer-driven) and /or to reduce work-life conflict (employee-driven). Flexible work literature has investigated the effects of FWPs on both employees and organisations. Organisational outcomes

are the focus of the studies interested in investigating organisational cost-benefit or determining the ‘business case for flexibility’. On the other hand, employee level outcomes are the centre of interest for the studies investigating the impact of FWPs on employee work and attitudinal outcomes. Very few studies have investigated both organisational and employee outcomes together (Bailyn, 1996; Bloom, Liang, Roberts, & Ying, 2014) in the same study.

### **1.2.1 Organisational Outcomes**

Increased performance, productivity, profitability, reduced employee absenteeism and turnover are the most important motivating factors for organisations to design and restructure work arrangements (Atkinson & Sandiford, 2016; de Menezes & Kelliher, 2011). FWPs are associated with increased organisational performance and productivity (Berkery, Morley, Tiernan, Purtill, & Parry, 2017; Bloom et al., 2014; Klindžić & Marić, 2019). Organisations view and adopt FWPs as a means of attracting and retaining a desirable employee pool (Berkery et al., 2017; Raghuram & Wiesenfeld, 2004) as well as to gain competitive advantage (McDonald & Cathcart, 2015; Shah & Gregar, 2019). Reducing employee absenteeism, turnover rate and thus saving labour costs have contributed to the increased use of FWPs by the organisation (Baltes et al., 1999; Klindžić & Marić, 2019; Raghuram & Wiesenfeld, 2004).

### **1.2.2 Employee Outcomes**

FWPs assist employees to balance work and non-work responsibilities. Prior studies have focused on employee work outcomes such as performance and productivity (de Menezes & Kelliher, 2017; Eaton, 2003; Gajendran & Harrison, 2007). Moreover, some studies have investigated the relationship between FWPs and employee attitudinal outcomes such as job satisfaction, commitment, work engagement and turnover intentions (Casper & Harris, 2008; Chandola et al., 2019; Chen & Fulmer, 2018; De Sivatte & Guadamillas, 2013; McNall, Masuda, & Nicklin, 2009; Thomas & Ganster, 1995; Ugargol & Patrick, 2018). Additionally, a stream of studies has explored the effects of FWPs on employee health, wellbeing and overall work-life and/or work-family balance (Chandola et al., 2019; Kröll, Doebler, & Nüesch, 2017; Shockley & Allen, 2007; Thomas & Ganster, 1995). This research

focuses on employee work, non-work and attitudinal outcomes (performance, wellbeing, work-life balance, turnover intentions and career consequences).

### **1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES & QUESTION**

This study aims to advance knowledge about the impact of FWPs on employee outcomes. Specifically, the study has two main objectives. *First*, this study endeavours to provide a better understanding of the difference in employee outcomes resulting from the difference between employee perception of availability of FWPs and the usage of FWPs. The findings of past FWPs and employee outcomes research has generally considered either the relationship between either perceived availability of FWPs and employee outcomes (Eaton, 2003; Hill et al., 2001) or the usage of FWPs and employee outcomes (Avgoustaki & Bessa, 2019; Chandola et al., 2019; de Menezes & Kelliher, 2017). However, very few studies have incorporated both perceived availability of FWPs and the usage of FWPs and explored the relationship with employee outcomes (Chen & Fulmer, 2018; Richman, Civian, Shannon, Hill, & Brennan, 2008). Taking a holistic approach to view flexibility in work arrangements, this study aims to fill the gaps identified in the extant literature by looking at both the perception of availability and the usage of FWPs at the same time. *Second*, this study aims to explain the inconsistent findings of past FWP literature by incorporating some contingent factors (e.g. employee gender, social support and flexibility stigma) that may strengthen or weaken the FWPs-employee outcomes relationship.

By conceptualising FWPs as an organisational resource and using the lens of social exchange and signalling theory, this study explores both positive and negative effects of perceived availability of FWPs and usage of FWPs on employee work, non-work and attitudinal outcomes. Adopting a quantitative approach, this study answers the overarching research question:

**“What are the impacts of perceived availability of FWPs and usage of FWPs on employee outcomes?”**

Specific hypotheses to assist in answering the overarching research question are presented in the next chapter, along with empirical evidence regarding the main and moderating effects.

## **1.4 THE RESEARCH CONTEXT**

The country and industry context of this research setting are discussed in detail in the following sections.

### **1.4.1 Country Context**

There has been a significant change in the Australian workforce in recent decades, such as an increase in dual-earner families, women's participation, workers with varied caring responsibilities and mature-aged workers (Skinner & Pocock, 2014). According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) labour force data (2017), 65% of couple families were dual-earner parents with dependent children. The labour market participation of women aged 20-74 years is 64% compared to 75% of men according to a recent survey (ABS, 2018). Despite increased labour force participation, Australian women are responsible for most of the caring and domestic work (Craig & Mullan, 2010; Craig & Powell, 2013). Part-time work has been a key strategy used by women to balance both family and work responsibilities (Hakim, 2002; Rose, Hewitt, & Baxter, 2013). 44% of Australian women are working part-time compared to 16% of males (ABS, 2018) which is one of the highest among OECD countries (3<sup>rd</sup> out of 35 OECD countries) (OECD Employment Outlook, 2018). Women are more likely to work in casual jobs than men as well which is evident from ABS (2018) data that identified that in 2018, 27% of females aged 15 years and over were employed in casual jobs compared to 23% of male employees.

Caring responsibility is another important contributing factor to seeking flexibility in work. According to 2015 ABS data, 56.3% of the employed population (aged 15 to 64 years) was responsible for primary care of someone, including children, grandchildren, elderly parents, or a person with disabilities (ABS, 2015). Further, as many older Australians are living a more active life than previous generations, a growing proportion of Australians are working beyond the official retirement age of 65 years (ABS, 2015). Labour force participation rate of older workers has almost doubled from less than 10% in 1995 to just under 18% in 2015 for men and from less than 3% to just under 10% for women in same years. Prior studies indicated that older workers prefer part-time work as a way to transition to retirement and managing work and life commitments (Chen & Scott, 2003; Gielen, 2009; Purcell, 2010). The availability of flexible work practices (e.g. part-time work, ability to work school

hours, varying start and finish times, working specific numbers of hours on specific days) is thus considered as one of the important incentives to increase labour force participation rate (ABS, 2017).

FWPs have become mainstream HR policy among organisations across developed nations like UK, USA, EU supported by government and industrial legislation (de Menezes & Kelliher, 2017). Likewise, the Australian government introduced its own Right to Request (RTR) legislation as part of the National Employment Standards under the *Fair Work Act 2009* for the parents of pre-school age children and children with a disability up to the age of 18 years. This right was extended to certain employee groups through an amendment in 2013 to include carers (as defined by the *Carer Recognition Act 2010*), workers with a disability, mature age workers (55 years or older), workers experiencing domestic violence and workers providing care or support to someone as a result of domestic violence (who must be an immediate family member or a member of the worker's household) (Fair Work Ombudsman, Best Practice Guide, 2019). To be eligible to request, employees must work for the same employer for at least 12 months, and they need to make a written request stating the reason for such request. Employers have a responsibility to consider the request and give a written response within 21 days. From 1<sup>st</sup> December 2018, new clause was introduced regarding the request for flexible working arrangements by award covered employees. This new clause requires the employer to discuss the change of work arrangement with eligible employees to reach a mutual agreement before responding to them (Fair work Ombudsman, Best Practice Guide, 2019 ). The employer has the right to refuse the request on a *reasonable business ground* and provide the employees with a written response. There are no legislated means for workers to appeal against the employer's decision.

### **1.4.2 Industry Context**

In Australia, the financial and insurance industry has been one of the pioneers in developing and implementing FWPs. Approximately 78% of the financial and insurance companies have a formal flexible working policy including practices such as flexible hours of work, compressed work-week, telecommuting, time-in-lieu, purchased leave, flexible careers and part-time work (Workplace Gender Equality Agency, 2018a). This industry also has the highest percentage of female employees

(55%) compared to other industries (Workplace Gender Equality Agency, 2018b). Moreover, the financial industry performs better compared to all other industries in terms of implementing equal opportunity policies and strategies. For instance, 84% of companies in this industry have gender equality policies compared to 74% of companies in other industries (Workplace Gender Equality Agency, 2018c). Most of the organisations in this industry have a collective enterprise agreement that encompasses the terms and conditions of employment, including the legal right for employees to request FWPs. The legislative and industry context of this research provide a setting where FWPs policy implementation and related support for successful implementations can be explored together with the constraints to such implementations.

## **1.5 THESIS OUTLINE**

This research is designed to meet the objective of explaining the inconsistent findings related to FWPs and employee outcomes. The remaining chapters of this thesis explain different stages of this research which contribute towards meeting the research objectives.

Chapter 2 incorporates a review of the findings of some past FWPs-employee outcomes studies, which provides a justification to test the linear predictions and focus on contingent factors. This chapter also presents the theoretical framework that leads to nine main and twenty-seven contingent predictions of FWPs-employee outcomes relationship. A research model based on these predictions is also proposed in this chapter.

Chapter 3 details the philosophical stance (epistemology and ontology) of the research. The research methodology used in the study is discussed, including details of the participant organisation, sample demographics and the data collection procedure. The detailed operationalisation of the variables is noted as well. This is followed by the strategy adopted for data analysis.

Chapter 4 presents the descriptive statistics followed by the results of the hierarchical multiple regression analyses performed to test the linear and contingent predictions proposed in Chapter 2.

Chapter 5 discusses the findings of this study (reported in Chapter 4). This is followed by the contributions of this study to work-life literature. Finally, the

limitations of this study are acknowledged, and suggestions for future research on FWPs-employee outcomes relationships are proposed.



# Chapter 2: Literature Review

## 2.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the literature review focusing on Flexible Work Practices (FWPs) as relevant to this study and specifically emphasises on two distinct measures of employee experience with FWPs: perceived availability and usage. In the extant literature, flexible working is conceptualised using a variety of terminology interchangeably such as ‘flexible working arrangements’ (Avgoustaki & Bessa, 2019; Chandola et al., 2019; Kelliher & de Menezes, 2019), ‘flexible working practices’ (Fleetwood, 2007; Leslie et al., 2012) ‘alternative work arrangements’ (Kimberly & Lowe, 2003), ‘alternative work schedules’ (Fallon, 1997) and ‘distributed work arrangements’ (Belanger & Collins, 1998). The term ‘flexible work practices’ is used throughout this study. Acknowledging the difference in the terminology, this study utilised broad search terms to identify relevant literature such as ‘work-life culture’, ‘family-friendly policies’, ‘flexible work arrangements’, ‘workplace flexibility’ and ‘customised working’ and included search terms pertaining to ‘social support’, ‘flexibility stigma’, ‘flexible work by gender’ and ‘employee outcomes of FWPs’. This literature review specifically encompasses relevant studies focused primarily on employee outcomes and excludes the studies entirely focused on organisational outcomes, unless necessary in understanding the context of the issues relevant to this study.

This chapter explores the definition of FWPs from the employees’ perspective while briefly discussing the difference between organisational and employee perspectives of flexibility (section 2.1); followed by an overview of the two measures of employee experience with FWPs: namely, perceived availability; and usage (section 2.2). The review then describes the theoretical framework used to predict and develop the hypotheses for the main effects of perceived availability of FWPs on employee outcomes and usage of FWPs on employee outcomes (section 2.3, 2.4 and 2.5). The limited literature on the contingent effects of gender, social support and flexibility stigma on FWPs-employee outcomes relationships to explain the inconsistent findings is also discussed (section 2.6). To answer the overarching research question concerning the impact of perceived availability of FWPs and usage of FWPs on the five identified employee outcomes (performance, wellbeing, work-life balance, turnover

intentions and career consequences); a theoretical framework of social exchange theory (Homans, 1958), signalling theory (Spence, 1973), gender role theory (Eagly, 1987; Pleck, 1977) and ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 1986) is used. Based on these theories, this chapter proposes nine direct predictions and twenty-seven contingent predictions that construct the FWPs-employee outcomes relationships model for this research.

## **2.1 FLEXIBLE WORK PRACTICES**

Flexible work literature has viewed flexibility from two distinct perspectives:

- i) from the organisational/employer perspective; and,
- ii) from the employees' perspective.

The current study conceptualises workplace flexibility explicitly from the employee perspective and emphasizes the employees' ability to choose the time, location, amount and pace of work to balance both professional and personal life commitments (Hill, Grzywacz, et al., 2008; Maxwell et al., 2007). According to Lambert, Marler, and Gueutal (2008, p. 107) FWPs are "employer-provided benefits that permit employees some level of control over when and where they work outside of the standard workday". The organisational perspective of flexibility conceptualises flexibility as focusing primarily on organisational requirements while considering employee benefits a secondary priority. Some types of FWPs such as involuntary part-time work (with loss of pay), casual work, compressed workweek, 24–7 rotating shifts, weekend work, enforced overtime, annualized hours, seasonal work are employer-driven initiatives. These initiatives are taken to reduce product and labour costs in economic instability (Atkinson & Sandiford, 2016; Fagan, 2001; Fleetwood, 2007; Kossek & Michel, 2011) as well as to adjust workforce size and employment in response to any environmental and product demand change (Hill, Jacob, et al., 2008; Huang & Cullen, 2001; Kossek & Michel, 2011).

Part-time work, term-time work, compressed workweek, job sharing, time off in lieu, sabbaticals, voluntary reduced hours and voluntary career breaks are a few examples of employee-driven FWPs (Fleetwood, 2007; Hill, Grzywacz, et al., 2008; Kossek & Michel, 2011). These practices are designed to provide employees with some degree of control over their work schedule to balance work and non-work responsibilities (Atkinson & Hall, 2009; Baltes et al., 1999; Hill, Jacob, et al., 2008). Prior research has described the positive influence of such flexible practices on both work and non-work attitudes of employees (Atkinson & Hall, 2009; Hayman, 2009; Hill, Jacob, et al., 2008; Kossek, Lautsch, & Eaton, 2006). Besides

employer and employee-friendly flexible practices, there are some practices that are initiated and beneficial for both employer and employees. Flexible start and finish time are the examples of practices that may be designed in a way to suit the employees and at the same time, be cost-effective for employers to grant them (Fleetwood, 2007).

## **2.2 PERCEIVED AVAILABILITY OF FWPS AND USAGE OF FWPS**

As discussed in section 1.1.2, prior literature has identified a divergence between the presence of FWPs in the organisational policy and employee perception regarding the availability of such practices (Budd & Mumford, 2006; Eaton, 2003). There are a few contributing factors behind this divergence. *First*, as part of the distinct HR practices designed to target different employee groups, FWPs may be offered to core employees only (Budd & Mumford, 2006; Chen & Fulmer, 2018; Eaton & Bailyn, 2000). *Second*, the nature of the job may restrict some roles in their flexibility. For example, some manufacturing jobs might not be able to be performed from an offsite location (Chen & Fulmer, 2018). *Third*, all employees might not be equally aware of the FWPs available in the organisation because such practices are perceived as irrelevant to them (Prottas, Thompson, Kopelman, & Jahn, 2007) as identified in the AWALI 2014 report (Skinner and Pocock, 2014, p. 3939). Even four years after its introduction in 2009, only 40% of employees were aware of the Right to Request (RTR) flexibility entitlement. RTR is the provision in the Fair Work Act (2009) that provides certain groups of employees (e.g. parents of school-aged children, carers, individuals with a disability and individuals aged over 55 years etc.) the right to request flexible work arrangements if they work for the same employer for a minimum of 12 months (Fair Work Ombudsman, Best Practice Guide, 2013). It is evident that employees who perceive FWPs as necessary and beneficial for them, are more likely to seek out information willingly regarding their availability in the organisation (Chen & Fulmer, 2018).

*Fourth*, employees may not feel free to use the FWP policies theoretically available to them because of a fear of negative career consequences; stigma; financial loss; lack of supervisor and/or co-worker support; and thus perceive those practices as ‘unavailable’ (Bailyn, 1993; Blair-Loy & Wharton, 2002; Budd & Mumford, 2006; Chen & Fulmer, 2018; Eaton, 2003; Fursman & Zodgekar, 2009; Leslie et al., 2012; Skinner & Pocock, 2014; Williams, Blair-Loy, & Berdahl, 2013; Williams, McDonald, & Cathcart, 2017). Few prior studies have acknowledged the difference in employee outcomes resulting from the difference in perceived availability of FWPs and the usage of FWPs ( Butts, Casper, & Yang, 2013; Chen

& Fulmer, 2018; Richman et al., 2008). Failing to distinguish between these two measures of employee experience with FWP may explain the inconsistent findings regarding FWP and employee outcomes relationships. This study seeks to address this gap by exploring both concepts to identify whether employee work outcomes varies accordingly.

### **2.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

In the FWP literature, Social Exchange Theory (Homans, 1958) is the most commonly used theoretical framework to explain the reciprocal relationship between the employee and the organisation, specifically, to understand the association between FWP and employee work outcomes (Beauregard & Henry, 2009; Chen & Fulmer, 2018; Kelliher & Anderson, 2010; McNall et al., 2009). Signalling and attributions theories were also used to explain FWP usage and employee career success, performance, commitment and turnover intentions (Casper & Harris, 2008; Leslie et al., 2012; McNall et al., 2009). Psychological contract, job characteristics theory and self-interest utility model have been used to investigate FWP and job satisfaction, affective commitment, performance and intention to turnover (Casper & Harris, 2008; de Menezes & Kelliher, 2017; Scandura & Lankau, 1997). More recently, Chen and Fulmer (2018) used both social exchange and signalling theory to explain the effects of perceived availability of FWP and usage of FWP on employee job satisfaction and commitment while using the number of FWP as a moderator.

This study uses social exchange theory (Homans, 1958) as the theoretical framework to explain the direct relationships; that is, the perceived availability of FWP and employee work outcomes including performance, wellbeing, work-life balance and turnover intentions; and, usage of FWP and employee work outcomes including performance, wellbeing, work-life balance and turnover intentions. Social exchange theory posits that there is an exchange relationship between two parties in the employment relationship and consequently, the effects of an exchange impact on the social behaviour of the individuals. As FWP are benefits provided by organisations to better balance employee work and non-work demands, this theory explains the underlying exchange mechanisms by which employees engage with the organisation in order to return such benefits. The following paragraphs provide a general discussion of social exchange theory used to predict the relationships. Sections 2.4 and 2.5 discuss extant literature to identify inconsistent findings in FWP and employee outcomes research which, in turn, lead to hypotheses development supported by empirical evidence.

Social exchange theory focuses on the relationship between the two parties expecting mutual benefits from each other. Using social and economic assumptions, Homans (1958) envisioned social behaviour as an exchange of rewards and costs to gain a profit. “Social behaviour is an exchange of goods, material goods but also non-material ones, such as the symbols of approval or prestige” (Homans, 1958, p. 606) . Later he viewed “social behaviour as an exchange of activity, tangible or intangible, and more or less rewarding or costly, between at least two persons” (Homans, 1961, p. 13). According to social exchange theory, employees engage in a constant give and take relationship with their employers where employers provide socio-emotional resources in exchange for desired work outcomes (Chen & Fulmer, 2018). Equity or fairness of the exchange is ensured when the perceived rewards are proportionate to the perceived costs incurred (Redmond, 2015). The social behaviour influences a balance of exchange between two parties where they are likely to reciprocate behaviour towards one another for mutual benefits. For example, if a reward was received repeatedly for good performance in the past, an individual is likely to expect the same in future as well. If they do not receive an expected reward, their performance will likely to decline.

Blau (1964) viewed the social exchange as a relationship as well as a source of power between people and groups. The power within a relationship is likely to dictate how one party behaves with the other and thus an imbalance in exchange results from an imbalance in power. Emerson (1976) argued that rather than the social exchange, repetitive actions create a behaviour reinforcement. Exchange theory is regarded as less of a theory and more of a process of reinforcement where the continuous flow of a resource is contingent on the value of the return placed by the parties involved. Although explained differently, theorists agreed that the interactions among individuals, groups and/or organisations can be both interdependent or contingent on the actions of each party and may oblige them to reciprocate and return the benefits received (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005).

A social exchange can be either negotiated or reciprocated (Molm, Peterson, & Takahashi, 1999). A negotiated exchange requires two parties to reach an agreement whereas a reciprocal exchange involves two parties performing separate acts with mutual benefits to the other party. A negotiated exchange includes individuals having knowledge and expectations of actions before the actions occur. However, a reciprocal exchange does not provide prior knowledge or expectations of actions. The reciprocal exchange builds over time, whereas a negotiated exchange is predetermined. The relationship between FWP and positive employee outcomes represents the reciprocal exchange where employees strive to return the favours

received from the organisation through increased efforts and commitment (Avgoustaki & Bessa, 2019; Kelliher & Anderson, 2010; McNall et al., 2009).

## **2.4 PERCEIVED AVAILABILITY OF FWPS AND EMPLOYEE OUTCOMES**

Drawing on social exchange theory (Homans, 1958), the relationship between the perceived availability of FWPs and employee outcomes (performance, wellbeing, work-life balance, and turnover intentions) can be predicted. FWPs are viewed as organizational resources used to support employees to balance their work and personal lives (Lambert et al., 2008). When employees have a positive perception regarding the availability of FWPs, they feel that the organization values their needs and as a result they will be encouraged to engage in an exchange relationship and strive to exercise additional effort as a reciprocal obligation to the employer (Avgoustaki & Bessa, 2019; Beauregard & Henry, 2009; Chen & Fulmer, 2018; McNall, Nicklin, & Masuda, 2010). According to this theory, employees try to return favourable treatment provided by the organization in the form of a favourable attitude (e.g. increased performance, reduced turnover intentions) and vice versa (Allen et al., 2013; Aryee, Srinivas, & Tan, 2005; Butts, Casper & Yang, 2013; Galinsky, Bond, & Hill, 2004; Richman et al., 2008; Wayne, Musisca, & Fleeson, 2004).

Past empirical research supports the proposition that availability of various FWPs is related to positive employee outcomes such as increased job satisfaction, affective organisational commitment and reduced turnover intentions. The availability of a flexible schedule has been found to be positively related to perceived organisational support (POS) which, in turn, increases an individual's job pursuit intentions (Casper & Buffardi, 2004), employee commitment (Casper & Harris, 2008) and organisational attachment (Grover & Crooker, 1995). McNall et al. (2009) studied two types of FWPs namely flexitime and compressed workweek, among 220 working adults and identified that the availability of these FWPs facilitated greater work to home enrichment among employees which, in turn, increased their job satisfaction and reduced their turnover intentions.

A growing number of studies have identified that the perceived ability to use flexible work practices when necessary or desired can have positive effects on employees (Chen & Fulmer, 2018; de Menezes & Kelliher, 2011; Eaton, 2003; Hill et al., 2001; Hyland, 1999; Richman et al., 2008). Employee perceptions regarding the availability of any HR practices such as FWPs significantly influence their attitude and behaviour (Chen & Fulmer, 2018; Liao,

Toya, Lepak, & Hong, 2009). The availability of FWPs positively influences job attitudes as it represents organisations' concern for employees (Batt & Valcour, 2003; Grover & Crooker, 1995). Utilizing an aggregate measure of FWPs, Casper and Harris (2008) found that it was availability, not use, that is a significant predictor of employee outcomes. Based on the above evidence, it is expected that the availability of FWPs should have a positive effect on employee attitudes. Moreover, employees who decide not to use FWPs, despite their availability, may still appreciate the organisation's support for employees' work-non work demands and thus are likely to experience additional motivation to return this favour through their own positive attitudes. The following sections discuss the prior empirical evidence about the perceived availability of FWPs and employee outcomes and propose specific hypotheses to test these relationships based on social exchange theory.

#### **2.4.1 Performance**

It is the organisation's work-life culture that affects the employees' perceptions of FWPs availability (McDonald, Pini, & Bradley, 2007). Since a strong supportive work-life culture contributes to greater employee perception of FWPs availability; perceived availability, irrespective of use, does have a direct influence on employee work outcomes including job satisfaction, organisational commitment, and employee engagement (Chen & Fulmer, 2018; Eaton, 2003; Kelliher & Anderson, 2010; Nadeem & Metcalf, 2007; Richman et al., 2008). Higher levels of organisational commitment, in turn, contribute to increased performance and lower turnover intentions (Baltes et al., 1999; Kelliher & Anderson, 2010; Meyer & Allen, 1991). There is a lack of evidence regarding the direct effects of perceived availability of FWPs on employee performance. However, empirical evidence from prior studies identifies that the existence of FWPs in an organisation positively influences self-reported productivity of all employees, irrespective of gender, and that this relationship is stronger when employees perceive those policies to be usable (Allen et al., 2013; Eaton, 2003). Thus, it is proposed:

*H1:* Perceived availability of FWPs is positively related to employee performance.

#### **2.4.2 Wellbeing**

Prior studies have found a positive impact of perceived flexibility on various health and wellbeing outcomes considering the mediating effects of work-life balance (Casey & Grzywacz, 2008; Thomas & Ganster, 1995). The self-report measure of the availability of various family-supportive work policies, including flexitime from 398 US health professionals was significantly related to improved mental and physical outcomes (Thomas & Ganster

(1995). Using a large sample of 22,451 UK employees from Workplace Employment Relations Study (WERS) 2004, Nadeem and Metcalf (2007) concluded that the perceived availability of the number of FWPs to employees was associated with reduced work stress. Using flexibility ideals and work-to-family conflict as mediators to predict the effect of perceived availability of FWPs on employee general health, a recent study by Bayazit and Bayazit (2019) found that perceived availability of FWPs improves general health by reducing work-family conflict. Thus, it is proposed:

*H2: Perceived availability of FWPs is positively related to employee wellbeing.*

### **2.4.3 Work-life Balance**

There is a lack of evidence regarding the effect of perceived availability of FWPs on employee work-life balance. Hayman (2009) and Hill et al. (2001) identified that perceived usability of FWPs, especially flexitime and flexplace, was associated directly with improved work-life balance. It is also related to reduced work-family conflict (Allen et al., 2013; Carlson, Grzywacz, & Kacmar, 2010; Hayman, 2009; Hill, Jacob, et al., 2008). Using a large sample of 24,436 employees from 75 different countries, Hill et al. (2001) found teleworking and perceived schedule flexibility to be associated with reduced work-life conflict. This reduced work-life conflict was viewed as higher work-life balance by the researchers. Allen (2001) provides further empirical evidence for such a relationship that FWP availability reduced work-family conflict when considering the mediating effect of family-supportive organisational perceptions. Thus it is proposed:

*H3: Perceived availability of FWPs is positively related to employee work-life balance.*

### **2.4.4 Turnover Intentions**

Turnover intention is one of the most researched employee work outcomes of flexible work. The turnover intention is defined as “a conscious and deliberate willingness to leave the organisation” (McNall et al., 2009, p. 65). Empirical evidence from prior studies has linked the perceived availability of FWPs with the reduction of employee turnover intention (Grover & Crooker, 1995; Richman et al., 2008). The likelihood of employee intention to remain within their current organisation is positively influenced by perceived flexibility (Richman et al., 2008). Using 731 randomly selected US employees Grover and Crooker (1995) found that the availability of schedule flexibility in an organisation reduced employee turnover intention irrespective of the personal benefit employees received from such policies. Thus, it is proposed:



*H4*: Perceived availability of FWPs is negatively related to employee turnover intentions.

## **2.5 USAGE OF FWPS AND EMPLOYEE OUTCOMES**

Drawing on social exchange theory (Homans, 1958), the relationship between the usage of FWPs and employee outcomes (performance, wellbeing, work-life balance, and turnover intentions) can be predicted. When employees use FWPs, they feel obliged to reciprocate the benefits received from their employer (Chen & Fulmer, 2018). As FWPs are organisational resources which support and promote the balance between employees' work and non-work interfaces (Lambert et al., 2008), they strive to exercise additional effort as a reciprocal obligation to the employer in the form of higher performance and lower intention to quit (Avgoustaki & Bessa, 2019; Beauregard & Henry, 2009; Chen & Fulmer, 2018; McNall et al., 2010). Employees who do not use FWPs may not be benefitted to the same extent as the users (Chen & Fulmer, 2018). Similarly, those who benefitted more would try to reciprocate more.

Usage of FWPs is associated with a range of employee outcomes as evident in prior studies that primarily found positive effects of FWPs on employee work and attitudinal outcomes. FWP usage provides employees with some control over the scheduling, location and the quantity of work they perform which will enhance job autonomy and lead to positive outcomes, both work and non-work (Greenhaus & Parasuraman, 1999; Kauffeld, Jonas, & Frey, 2004). Employees who do not utilise the available FWPs may not benefit to the same extent as the employees who use such practices for personal and professional requirements (Bailyn, 1993; Chen & Fulmer, 2018).

However, the findings are inconsistent regarding the association between FWP usage and employee outcomes where some have suggested a positive association (Baltes et al., 1999; Chen & Fulmer, 2018; de Menezes & Kelliher, 2017; Gajendran & Harrison, 2007), and others have suggested a negative or no association (Avgoustaki & Bessa, 2019; Kelliher & Anderson, 2010; McGovern, Smeaton, & Hill, 2004). Similarly, while investigating work-family conflict as an outcome, the meta-analysis by Allen et al. (2013) found inconsistent effects of availability and usage of FWPs (flexplace and flexitime). To address these inconsistent findings, this study examines the effects of FWP usage on specific employee outcomes (performance, wellbeing, work-life balance, turnover intentions and career consequences). Career consequences have been identified as related to FWPs usage but not to the perceived availability of FWPs. Several

prior studies have linked FWPs usage with negative career consequences (Fuller & Hirsh, 2019; Kirby & Krone, 2002; McDonald, Bradley, & Brown, 2008). This study aims to investigate this important employee outcome resulted from FWPs usage. The following sections discuss empirical evidence on the usage of FWPs and employee outcomes and propose specific hypotheses to test based on social exchange theory.

### **2.5.1 Performance**

Employee performance has been measured using self-reported performance ratings from employees and actual performance ratings from supervisors. Apart from performance ratings, some studies have focused on productivity, quality and efficiency of the work as indicators of individual performance (Harrick, Vanek, & Michlitsch, 1986; Kauffeld et al., 2004). Using a large sample of US professional and technical workers, Eaton (2003) found that work-family policies, including FWPs, are linked to increased employee productivity. Considering both employee and supervisor ratings in the same survey, a study by Cranfield School of Management identified that FWPs have a positive effect on employee performance (Kelliher & Anderson, 2008a). In a study using only self-reported measures, teleworking was found to be associated with higher employee productivity and performance (Bailey & Kurland, 2002; Hill, Ferris, & Martinson, 2003; Hill, Miller, Weiner, & Colihan, 1998).

However, Hill et al. (2003) in contrast, failed to find any significant improvement in productivity when they measured outcomes through actual performance appraisal. To address the inconsistent findings in using self-reported measures, Gajendran and Harrison (2007) examined both self-reported and supervisor ratings in their meta-analysis and found a positive association between remote working and individual performance although the association was stronger in the self-reported measure. While some studies found a significant positive influence of FWPs usage on performance and productivity (de Menezes & Kelliher, 2017; Kossek et al., 2006), others found negligible or no influence. Wallace and Young (2008) found no impact of FWPs on employee productivity. The impact of schedule flexibility and a compressed workweek on productivity or performance was also inconsistent such that the outcomes ranged from no effect on performance and productivity (Kopelman, 1986; Orpen, 1981) to positive effects (Hyland, Rowsome, & Rowsome, 2005; Vega & Gilbert, 1997). Thus, it is proposed:

***H5:*** Usage of FWPs is positively related to employee performance.

### 2.5.2 Wellbeing

In the work-life literature, one of the most cited advantages of FWP's usage is the positive effects on employee wellbeing. Various studies define wellbeing using aspects of physical and mental health. According to Bond, Galinsky, and Swanberg (1998, p. 58) "general wellbeing reflects employees' overall feelings of emotional health" and includes general health, life and family satisfaction. FWP's usage was viewed as a means of enhancing employee wellbeing by reducing workload, depression, chronic stress (Chandola et al., 2019; Halpern, 2005; Nadeem & Metcalf, 2007), psychological strain (Brough, O'Driscoll, & Kalliath, 2005), burnout (Sonnetag, Mojza, Binnewies, & Scholl, 2008) and thus improving general health (Thomas & Ganster, 1995). In a study using a sample of public accountants, FWP's were linked to alleviation of role conflict as well as emotional exhaustion (Almer & Kaplan, 2002). Research by Kelliher and Anderson (2008a) also concluded that employees perceive FWP's as a means of avoiding or disseminating the stress resulting from both the job and home demands. For working parents, schedule flexibility leads to higher work-life balance which in turn resulted in positive wellbeing (Jang, 2009).

Contrary to the positive findings, FWP's usage also relates to negative health and wellbeing outcomes such as increased stress (Ashforth, Kreiner, & Fugate, 2000; Kelliher & Anderson, 2010). Remote working especially could be a source of stress resulting from conflicting time and family demands (Moore, 2006; Shamir & Salomon, 1985). Flexible working hours, especially long and unsocial working hours related to work intensification, will negatively affect wellbeing (Fein, Skinner, & Machin, 2017; Piasna, 2018). However, a systematic review by Nijp, Beckers, Guerts, Tucker, and Kompier (2012) found no consistent effects of schedule control, flexitime, or compressed workweek on health and wellbeing such as stress, burnout, fatigue, sleep, sickness absence. Thus, it is proposed:

**H6:** Usage of FWP's is positively related to employee wellbeing.

### 2.5.3 Work-life Balance

The work-family literature has conceptualised 'work-family balance' as focusing only on the family; ignoring individuals without a family (e.g. childless or single workers). 'Work-life' extends beyond family and includes other domains which require proper balance (Haar, 2013). Work-life balance is defined by Haar (2013, p. 3308) 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. For some employees, this will be work and family, while for

others, this will be work and sports, or community, church etc.” Irrespective of gender, schedule flexibility is related to less work-family conflict and thus assists employees to better balance their work and family responsibilities (Anderson, Coffey, & Byerly, 2002).

Considering three dimensions of work-life balance (work interference with personal life, personal life interference with work and work/personal life enhancement), Hayman (2009) identified higher levels of work-life balance among the employees who used flexitime whereas flexplace and job share arrangements had no significant influence. This outcome was consistent with other work-life balance studies which found job share and teleworking resulted in more conflict between work and non-work responsibilities (Felstead, Jewson, Phizacklea, & Walters, 2002; Tausig & Fenwick, 2001). Although FWPs usage positively influences employee work-life balance in many ways, it has negative consequences as well. Especially, teleworking is often seen to act as a ‘double-edged sword’ as it creates more imbalance in the work-life domain by blurring work and personal/family life boundaries (Hill et al., 1998; Peters, Den Dulk, & Van Der Lippe, 2009). Thus, it is proposed:

*H7: Usage of FWPs is positively related to employee work-life balance.*

#### **2.5.4 Turnover Intentions**

Prior studies have primarily identified an inverse relationship between FWPs usage and employee turnover intentions. According to McNall et al. (2009), the use of flexitime and compressed workweek assists employees to experience greater work to family enrichment and thus lowers their turnover intentions. This result is consistent with the findings of a meta-analysis conducted by Gajendran and Harrison (2007). FWPs are viewed as organisational resources to support employees and thus indirectly affect employee turnover intentions (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Perceived organisational support also fosters greater emotional attachment to the organisation that leads to lower turnover intentions (Allen, 2001; Thompson, Beauvais, & Lyness, 1999).

Considering a bundle of human resource practices, including flexible scheduling, a negative relationship was found with turnover intention and that relationship was significant irrespective of gender (Batt & Valcour, 2003). However, contrary to expectations, a few studies have observed either no effect or an insignificant effect of FWP usage on turnover intention which was explained by factors such as a lack of favourable work-family culture; perceived organizational support; and, perceived control which, in turn, influences employees propensity

to stay in the organisation (Casper & Harris, 2008; De Sivatte & Guadamillas, 2013; Thompson & Prottas, 2006; Timms et al., 2015). Thus, it is proposed:

**H8:** Usage of FWP is negatively related to employees' turnover intentions.

### **2.5.5 Career Consequences**

Signalling theory (Spence, 1973) is used in this study to explain the relationship between FWP usage and employee career consequences. This theory posits that the observable behaviours of one party are perceived by another party as a reflection of some unobservable characteristics of the first party. For example, FWPs usage is the observable behaviour of an employee which acts as a signal of their commitment and devotion (unobservable characteristics) to the job and to the organisation as a whole. These unobservable characteristics are interpreted by the receiver (the organisation or employer) who, in turn, determines whether and how FWPs usage is connected with employee career consequences- i.e. either positively or negatively.

According to Spence's classic example, educational qualifications obtained by job candidates act as a signal to the potential employers about the unobservable characteristics (i.e. quality) of the candidates (Spence, 1973, 2002). Four key elements of signalling were identified by Connelly, Certo, Ireland, and Reutzel (2011) as signaler, signal, receiver and feedback. In the management literature, signallers mostly include individuals such as recruiters, managers and employees who send primarily positive signals to outsiders to convey positive attributes of the organisation that are unavailable to receivers (outsiders such as job applicants) who, after receiving these signals, perceive some unobservable information about the organisation they are interested in (Connelly et al., 2011). Employees can be viewed as signallers when managers make assumptions about the unobservable characteristics of employees such as commitment and/ or devotion based on their (employees') observable behaviour (Leslie et al., 2012).

The current study considers employees as signallers. FWPs usage by them acts as a signal that is received and interpreted by the receiver (organisation or employer) who provides employees with feedback in the form of positive and/or negative career consequences based on the perceived motives of FWPs usage. According to Bourdeau et al. (2019) and Leslie et al. (2012), positive consequences result from employees' utilisation of FWPs for productivity purposes, and negative consequences result from employees' utilisation of FWPs for family and other non-work purposes. Research also confirms that managers interpret employee usage

of available FWPs as a signal of personal life preferences which hinders their commitment and/or devotion to the organisation (Leslie et al., 2012). As a result of the low commitment perception, employees are penalised with a reduction in salary, promotion and other career-related incentives (Glass, 2004; Judiesch & Lyness, 1999; McCloskey & Igbaria, 2003).

Empirical evidence suggests inconsistent results regarding FWPs usage and employee career consequence relationship. A few studies have identified that employees who use FWPs received higher wages than their counterparts who worked traditional working hours (Gariety & Shaffer, 2001; Weeden, 2005). This wage growth was higher for white-collar workers; while no significant difference was found based on employee gender and parental status. Contrary to the positive findings, various negative effects of FWPs were also documented in empirical literature, including wage penalty (Fuller & Hirsh, 2019; Glass, 2004), lack of promotion and training opportunities (Kirby & Krone, 2002; McDonald et al., 2008). Further, using a sample of 107 managers of a multinational accounting firm, Cohen and Single (2001) identified that participation in a flexible work arrangement hinders career progress of an employee, as perceived by the respondent's peers and supervisors. McDonald et al. (2008) identified that among all types of flexibility practices, part-time employment was associated with the largest career penalties resulting from a lack of visibility in the workplace.

The meta-analysis by Gajendran and Harrison (2007) concerning the consequences of telecommunication use and various employee work outcomes (e.g. job satisfaction, performance, turnover intention, role stress and perceived career prospects) found no adverse effect of telecommuting on employee career progress while no association between part-time work and career progress was identified by Lee, MacDermid, Williams, Buck, and Leiba-O'Sullivan (2002). Leslie et al. (2012, p. 1407) identified that employee career success is contingent on managers' FWP attribution as they stated, "managers' perception of employee commitment shape employees' career success". In summary, if employees use FWPs to accommodate personal life demands, such usage is interpreted by managers as a lack of commitment to the organization and is likely to result in career penalty. On the other hand, if employees use FWPs to increase productivity, managers interpret that desire as a signal of increased commitment which will lead to career success. Thus, it is proposed:

**H9:** Usage of FWPs is negatively related to career consequences of employees.

## **2.6 CONTINGENT FACTORS IN FWPS AND EMPLOYEE OUTCOMES RELATIONSHIP**

The mixed findings of FWPs and employee outcomes relationship in prior studies may indicate the existence of contingent factors that require further exploration to better understand this relationship. The degree of employee autonomy (control over job scheduling), HRM policies, supervisory support, gender, job level, employee and organisational characteristics, cultural context, number of FWPs are some of the contingent factors that potentially impact the association among FWPs and employee performance, commitment, job satisfaction, turnover intentions, work-life balance and wellbeing (Chen & Fulmer, 2018; de Menezes & Kelliher, 2011; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Scandura & Lankau, 1997). This study explores the moderating role of employee gender, social support and flexibility stigma on FWPs-employee outcomes relationship. The following paragraphs provide the rationale for using these variables as moderators.

Gender differences in the experience of family-supportive policies are well documented in the work-family literature. One of the motivations behind legislating FWPs as part of formal employment policy was to support women's participation and retention in the workforce by reducing work-family conflict (Hill et al., 2008; Rousseau, 1995; Schwartz, 1989). Despite a few inconsistent findings, most of the prior research concluded that antecedents and consequences of various work-family policies including FWPs significantly differ by gender (Aryee, Tan, & Srinivas, 2005; Haar & O'Driscoll, 2005). Therefore, it is expected that employee gender may strengthen or weaken these relationships: i) the perceived availability of FWPs and employee outcomes; and ii) usage of FWPs and employee outcomes.

Social support individuals receive from work and family significantly affect their attitudes and behaviours in the workplace (King, Mattimore, King, & Adams, 1995). According to House (1981), "social support is an interpersonal transaction that involves emotional concern, instrumental aid, information or appraisal" (Carlson & Perrewé, 1999, p. 514). There are two sources of social support: work-related support and non-work-related support (House, 1981; King et al., 1995). This thesis explores non-work social support that involves an informal network of support from family and friends. In the FWP and work-family literature, social support from the non-work domain is mostly examined as antecedents of various employee outcomes (Abendroth & Den Dulk, 2011; Baruch-Feldman, Brondolo, Ben-Dayan, &

Schwartz, 2002). It is argued that if family members understand and are supportive of FWPs, individuals may be encouraged to negotiate and use FWPs, which will lead to positive outcomes. Extant literature suggests both direct and buffering effects of social support on employees to balance work and non-work demands (Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, & Schaufeli, 2001; House, 1981). Therefore, it is expected that non-work social support may strengthen or weaken these relationships: i) the perceived availability of FWPs and employee outcomes; and ii) usage of FWPs and employee outcomes.

Extant literature identifies a gap between employee demand for FWPs in an organisation and actual usage by them, which is described as the 'flexibility gap' (Chung, 2018). One of the key contributing factors of this flexibility gap is the perceived stigma from co-workers and managers related to flexible working (Chung, 2018; Williams et al., 2013). Flexibility stigma is defined as the "negative sanctions toward employees who ask for or are assumed to need workplace arrangements to attend to family and personal obligations" (Cech & Blair-Loy, 2014, p. 89). The presence of flexibility stigma in the workplace influences employee attitudes, work and non-work behaviours (Cech & O'Connor, 2017). Although prior studies have considered flexibility stigma as an antecedent to FWPs usage and various work and non-work outcomes (Cech & Blair-Loy, 2014; Cech & O'Connor, 2017; Perrigino, Dunford, & Wilson, 2018), it is expected that the relationship between FWPs and employee outcomes would differ for individuals with a flexibility stigma than individuals without a flexibility stigma. Therefore, this study predicts that employees' perception of flexibility stigma may strengthen or weaken these relationships: i) the perceived availability of FWPs and employee outcomes; and ii) usage of FWPs and employee outcomes.

There is a lack of research evidence regarding the moderating effects of employee gender, social support and flexibility stigma on these relationships: i) perceived availability of FWPs and employee outcomes, and ii) usage of FWPs and employee outcomes. These gaps are addressed in this study as an attempt to address the inconsistent findings in flexible work literature. The following sections start with a general discussion of the theoretical frameworks used to predict the moderating effects of gender, social support and flexibility stigma on FWPs-employee outcomes relationships, followed by prior empirical evidence related to these relationships, and finally development of specific hypotheses to test.



### 2.6.1 Moderating Role of Gender

Gender role theory (Eagly, 1987; Pleck, 1977) is used to predict the moderating effect of employee gender difference in the FWPs-employee outcomes relationship. This theory posits that work and family responsibilities vary depending on the difference in the social role of men and women (Greenhaus, Peng, & Allen, 2012). It is perceived that women are more engaged in family and caring responsibilities while men as ‘breadwinners’ are more invested in the work domain (Chung & van der Lippe, 2018; Hill, 2005; Kim & Gong, 2017). This gender-stereotyping contributes to a division of labour between men and women in work and family life and influences their behavioural actions accordingly (Eagly, Wood, Diekmann, Eckes, & Traunter, 2000; Kim & Gong, 2017).

In line with the concept of gender role theory (Eagly, 1987; Pleck, 1977), it is argued that the traditional division of labour in work-family domain contributes to the employee’s perceptions of the workplace resources (e.g. work-family policies such as FWPs) and thus shapes their attitudinal outcomes (Eagly, Wood, Diekmann, Eckes & Traunter, 2000; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990). Socially defined gender roles suggest that women value their family identity more than their work identity and thus appreciate the availability of various work-life support policies (e.g. FWPs) to manage family needs and responsibilities (Clark, Rudolph, Zhdanova, Michel, & Baltes, 2017). Similarly, women respond more favourably to FWP usage than men as this enables them to balance the conflicting demands of work and family role (Scandura & Lankau, 1997).

A study by Catalyst (2001) identified that women value workplace flexibility significantly more than men and were more likely to use a variety of FWPs. This may explain the reason why flexitime has minimized work-family conflict (Carlson et al., 2010; Casper & Harris, 2008), and increased organisational commitment and job satisfaction (Scandura & Lankau, 1997) in women more than in men. Work-home spillover was increased by employer-oriented flexible schedule only for women but not for men (Lott, 2018). Previous studies have found that family-supportive policies such as flexible work hours were more salient to women who have various family and child-related responsibilities (Bond, Thompson, Galinsky, & Prottas, 2002; Greenhaus, Parasuraman, Granrose, Rabinowitz, & Beutell, 1989; Scandura & Lankau, 1997).

Using a random sample of 229 employees, Clark et al. (2017) examined the impact of various organisational support factors (including organisational policies such as flexitime, compressed workweek and telecommuting) on work-family outcomes (e.g. positive spillover, job satisfaction, negative spillover and intent to quit). They identified that different policies have differential effects on men and women. For example, men were more likely to utilize telecommuting than women and benefitted more as well. Telecommuting usage was significantly related to lower turnover intentions in men, but, not in women. Flexitime and the compressed workweek were more appreciated and used by women to better balance work, parental and family responsibilities.

Women consider the availability of FWP as organisational resources that signal the organisation's support to balance both work and family demands. As women emphasize the family role more than men, they will be more likely to utilise FWPs and seize the benefits. This is consistent with prior studies that found a stronger relationship between the availability of flexible work hours, job satisfaction and organisational commitment (Scandura & Lankau, 1997) where job satisfaction and commitment were higher in female managers who perceived flexible hours available in their organisation than females who did not. Furthermore, other studies also found a stronger impact of schedule flexibility and teleworking usage on work-family conflict and job satisfaction in women than in men (Carlson et al., 2010; Troup & Rose, 2012). Thus, the following hypotheses are proposed:

**H1a:** Employee gender moderates the positive relationship between perceived availability of FWPs and performance such that the positive relationship will be stronger for women than for men.

**H2a:** Employee gender moderates the positive relationship between perceived availability of FWPs and wellbeing such that the positive relationship will be stronger for women than for men.

**H3a:** Employee gender moderates the positive relationship between perceived availability of FWPs and work-life balance such that the positive relationship will be stronger for women than for men.

**H4a:** Employee gender moderates the negative relationship between perceived availability of FWPs and turnover intentions such that the negative relationship will be stronger for women than for men.

*H5a:* Employee gender moderates the positive relationship between usage of FWP and performance such that the positive relationship will be stronger for women than for men.

*H6a:* Employee gender moderates the positive relationship between usage of FWP and wellbeing such that the positive relationship will be stronger for women than for men.

*H7a:* Employee gender moderates the positive relationship between usage of FWP and work-life balance such that the positive relationship will be stronger for women than for men.

*H8a:* Employee gender moderates the negative relationship between usage of FWP and turnover intentions such that the negative relationship will be stronger for women than for men.

*H9a:* Employee gender moderates the negative relationship between usage of FWP and career consequences of employees such that the negative relationship will be stronger for women than for men.

### **2.6.2 Moderating Role of Social Support & Flexibility Stigma**

Ecological Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 1986) is used as the theoretical framework to predict the moderating effects of social support and flexibility stigma on FWP-employee outcomes relationship. Ecological systems theory was originally developed to explain how the ecological environment or system in which a child grew up influenced his/her development (Bronfenbrenner, 1974). Later, this theory was applied in work-family research to explain the behavioural choices an individual makes in response to environmental adaptation to establish an equilibrium between professional and personal lives (Hill, 2005; Lambert et al., 2008; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003; Voydanoff, 2002). According to this theory, individuals repetitively and regularly mould themselves and their surrounding environments according to their need to perform to their maximum efficiency; deal with unexpected changes; and to develop new skills (Lambert et al., 2008; Podsakoff et al., 2003).

Voydanoff (2005) applied the ecological systems theory to work-family research and proposed a conceptual framework describing the relationships among various work and family characteristics. According to Voydanoff (2005), work and family are microsystems that exist together and interact with one another through a penetrable boundary and thus create a work-family mesosystem. This mesosystem can be categorised as two types based on how it is

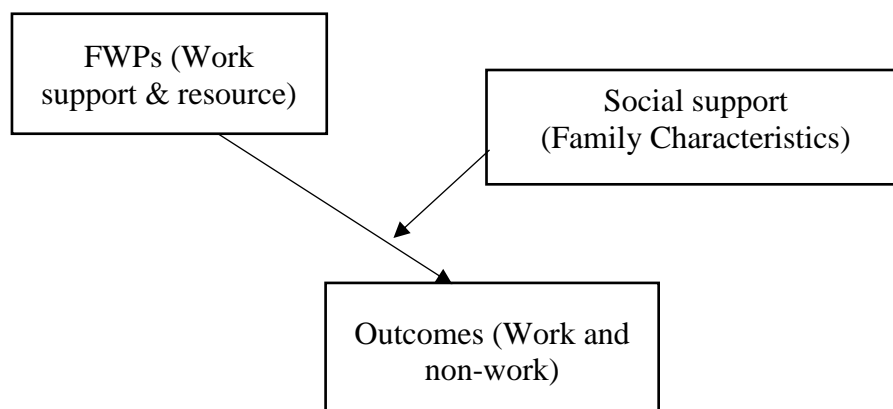
influenced by the interactions of two or more microsystems. In the first type of mesosystem, characteristics of one microsystem (e.g. family) directly relate to the characteristics of another microsystem (e.g. work) and this relationship can be unidirectional or reciprocal. In the second type, characteristics of two microsystems (e.g. family and work) conjointly influence work, family and individual outcomes in three different ways:

- i) independent and additive influence;
- ii) mediating influence; and
- iii) interactive or moderating influence (Hill, 2005; Voydanoff, 2002).

The following sections describe how the characteristics of work and family have interactive or moderating influences on employees' work, family and individual outcomes.

### ***Social Support***

Using ecological systems theory, the moderating effects of social support on these relationships: i) the perceived availability of FWPs and employee outcomes; and ii) usage of FWPs and employee outcomes, can be predicted. Social support employees receive from family members and friends are family characteristics that may have an additive as well as the interactive effect on the relationship between FWPs and employee outcomes: both work and non-work. On the other hand, FWPs are the workplace resources and supports that facilitate employees to better balance professional and personal life demands. Adapted from the conceptual frameworks of Voydanoff (2002) and Hill (2005), the following figure 2.1 is presented to clarify how characteristics of two microsystems (work and family) conjointly influence employee outcomes. In particular, the following figure presents the interactive (moderating) effects of social support on FWPs-employee outcomes relationship:



*Figure 2.1* Interactive (moderating) effects of social support on FWPs-employee outcomes relationship.

Social support relates to general life satisfaction (Brenner, Norvell, & Limacher, 1989; Hirsch & Rapkin, 1986), job satisfaction (Cummins, 1989; Kumara & Koichi, 1989) and productivity (Baruch-Feldman et al., 2002). Family support especially plays an important role in reducing both work and non-work conflict (Griggs, Casper, & Eby, 2013; Wallace, 2005), burnout (Baruch-Feldman et al., 2002), and stress resulting from work-family conflict (Holahan & Gilbert, 1979; Thomas & Ganster, 1995) and increasing life satisfaction (King et al., 1995). In assessing the effects of work-related stress on burnout among teachers, Greenglass, Fiksenbaum, and Burke (1994) found that family support has a greater buffering effect than workplace support. Especially, spousal support has been identified as important in improving performance in all areas of life and managing work-family balance (Smith, Gilmer, & Stockdale, 2019; ten Brummelhuis, Haar, & Roche, 2014), increasing the level of job satisfaction (Fusilier, Ganster, & Mayes, 1986) and psychological well-being (Henderson, 1980; Turner, 1981).

Emotional support, as well as physical support from family, friends and spouse to manage the household, are positively associated with work-life balance satisfaction (Abendroth & Den Dulk, 2011). Spousal support has both direct and moderating effects on work-family conflict, irrespective of gender difference (Behson, 2005; Matsui, Ohsawa, & Onglatco, 1995; van Daalen, Willemsen, & Sanders, 2006). Spousal support also has a moderating effect on the relationship between parental overload and family to work conflict (Aryee, Luk, Leung, & Lo, 1999). Evidence from past empirical research supports the argument that social support received from family members and friends may enhance the relationship between flexible work and employee happiness (Cobb, 1976; Dean & Lin, 1977) and moderates the relationship between employee work hours and energy (Cohen & Syme, 1985). Contrary to the positive findings, no moderating effect of social support was found in the relationships between stressors and wellbeing (Parasuraman, Greenhaus, & Granrose, 1992). Thus, the following hypotheses are proposed:

**H1b:** Social support moderates the positive relationship between perceived availability of FWPs and performance such that the positive relationship will be stronger for employees with high levels of social support than those with low levels of social support.

**H2b:** Social support moderates the positive relationship between perceived availability of FWPs and wellbeing such that the positive relationship will be stronger for employees with high levels of social support than those with low levels of social support.

**H3b:** Social support moderates the positive relationship between perceived availability of FWP and work-life balance such that the positive relationship will be stronger for employees with high levels of social support than those with low levels of social support.

**H4b:** Social support moderates the negative relationship between perceived availability of FWP and turnover intentions such that the negative relationship will be stronger for employees with low levels of social support than those with high levels of social support.

**H5b:** Social support moderates the positive relationship between usage of FWP and performance such that the positive relationship will be stronger for employees with high levels of social support than those with low levels of social support.

**H6b:** Social support moderates the positive relationship between usage of FWP and wellbeing such that the positive relationship will be stronger for employees with high levels of social support than those with low levels of social support.

**H7b:** Social support moderates the positive relationship between usage of FWP and work-life balance such that the positive relationship will be stronger for employees with high levels of social support than those with low levels of social support.

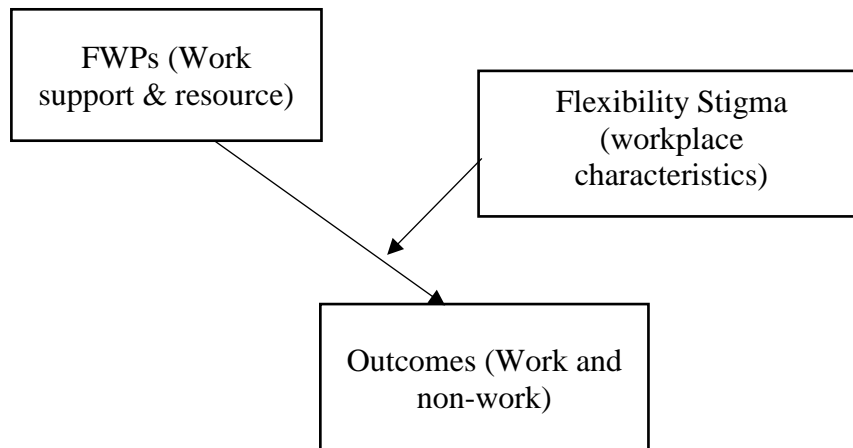
**H8b:** Social support moderates the negative relationship between usage of FWP and turnover intentions such that the negative relationship will be stronger for employees with low levels of social support than those with high levels of social support.

**H9b:** Social support moderates the negative relationship between usage of FWP and career consequences such that the negative relationship will be stronger for employees with low levels of social support than those with high levels of social support.

### ***Flexibility Stigma***

Using ecological systems theory, the moderating effects of flexible stigma on these relationships: i) the perceived availability of FWP and employee outcomes; and ii) usage of FWP and employee outcomes, can be predicted. Flexibility stigma refers to the workplace characteristics embedded in individual employees that may have an additive as well as an interactive effect on the relationship between FWP and employee outcomes: both work and

non-work. FWPs are the workplace resources and supports that facilitate employees to better balance professional and personal life demands. Adapted from the conceptual framework of Voydanoff (2002) and Hill (2005), the following figure 2.2 is presented to clarify the interplay between individual and work characteristics and their influence on employee outcomes. In particular, the following figure presents the interactive (moderating) effects of flexibility stigma on FWPs-employee outcomes relationship:



*Figure 2.2.* Interactive (moderating) effects of flexibility stigma on FWPs-employee outcomes relationship.

Evidence from prior research has identified that employees might not always feel free to use various work-life policies formally written in organisational documents (Blair-Loy, 2003; Blair-Loy, Wharton, & Goodstein, 2011). Prior studies found that the usage of FWPs was viewed as a violation of ‘ideal worker norm’ (Perrigino et al., 2018; Williams, 2000) and thus subject to stigmatisation. Moreover, researchers found that ideal workers were expected to work long hours with total allegiance to the organisation and minimal interference from family responsibilities (Blair-Loy, 2003; Coltrane, Miller, Dehaan, & Stewart, 2013; Williams, 2000). Extant literature suggests that employees are stigmatised for using various FWPs and experience penalties such as negative performance appraisals, lack of career progress (Blair-Loy, 2003; Blair-Loy & Wharton, 2004; Casper, Weltman, & Kwesiga, 2007; Fuller & Hirsh, 2019; Hoobler, Wayne, & Lemmon, 2009; Vandello, Hettinger, Bosson, & Siddiqi, 2013), hiring discrimination (Acker, 1990) and co-worker dissatisfaction (Golden, 2007). The use of various work-life policies and schedule control by an individual itself is not stigmatised.

However, Individuals who seek work-life accommodations for family reasons are stigmatized more than for managing individual needs, such as personal health (Berdahl & Moon, 2013).

Empirical evidence suggests that men who request work-life accommodations (e.g. family leave, take a career break, reduce their hours, move out of the labour force for family reasons or take a sick day to care for a child) are stigmatized as more feminine. Being ‘more feminine’ relates to the belief that caregiving is solely women’s responsibility while men are the ‘breadwinners’. As a result of this stigma, men are penalized by reduced pay, and fewer organisational rewards such as promotions, raises and organisational opportunities (Berdahl & Moon, 2013; Blair-Loy & Wharton, 2004; Coltrane et al., 2013; Rudman & Mescher, 2013; Vandello et al., 2013; Wayne et al., 2004). On the other hand, women, particularly mothers, who requested schedule accommodation are perceived by their co-workers as time deviants (Epstein, Seron, Oglensky, & Sauté, 1999); less committed and less competent (Correll, Benard, & Paik, 2007; Williams et al., 2013).

All the above-mentioned empirical studies explored flexibility stigma as an antecedent to predict FWP’s usage and various employee outcomes. However, the moderating role of flexibility stigma on the relationship between FWPs and employee outcomes has not been empirically examined. The following hypotheses are proposed in making this empirical link:

**H1c:** Flexibility stigma moderates the positive relationship between perceived availability of FWPs and performance such that the positive relationship will be stronger for employees with low levels of stigma than those with high levels of stigma.

**H2c:** Flexibility stigma moderates the positive relationship between perceived availability of FWPs and wellbeing such that the positive relationship will be stronger for employees with low levels of stigma than those with high levels of stigma.

**H3c:** Flexibility stigma moderates the positive relationship between perceived availability of FWPs and work-life balance such that the positive relationship will be stronger for employees with low levels of stigma than those with high levels of stigma.

**H4c:** Flexibility stigma moderates the negative relationship between perceived availability of FWPs and turnover intentions such that the negative relationship will be stronger for employees with high levels of stigma than those with low levels of stigma.



**H5c:** Flexibility stigma moderates the positive relationship between usage of FWPs and performance such that the positive relationship will be stronger for employees with low levels of stigma than those with high levels of stigma.

**H6c:** Flexibility stigma moderates the positive relationship between usage of FWPs and wellbeing such that the positive relationship will be stronger for employees with low levels of stigma than those with high levels of stigma.

**H7c:** Flexibility stigma moderates the positive relationship between usage of FWPs and work-life balance such that the positive relationship will be stronger for employees with low levels of stigma than those with high levels of stigma.

**H8c:** Flexibility stigma moderates the negative relationship between usage of FWPs and turnover intentions such that the negative relationship will be stronger for employees with high levels of stigma than those with low levels of stigma.

**H9c:** Flexibility stigma moderates the negative relationship between usage of FWPs and career consequences such that the negative relationship will be stronger for employees with high levels of stigma than those with low levels of stigma.

## **2.7 PROPOSED FWPS-EMPLOYEE OUTCOMES MODEL**

The following research model displayed in Figure 2.3 presents nine direct predictions and twenty-seven contingent predictions of the flexible work practices and employee outcomes relationships. As this study focuses on exploring complex constructs of FWPs from the employee perspective, two measures of FWPs are included in this study. These two measures are perceived availability of FWPs and usage of FWPs. Multiple employee outcomes (both positive and negative) are included in this study to explore the holistic effect of FWPs on employees.

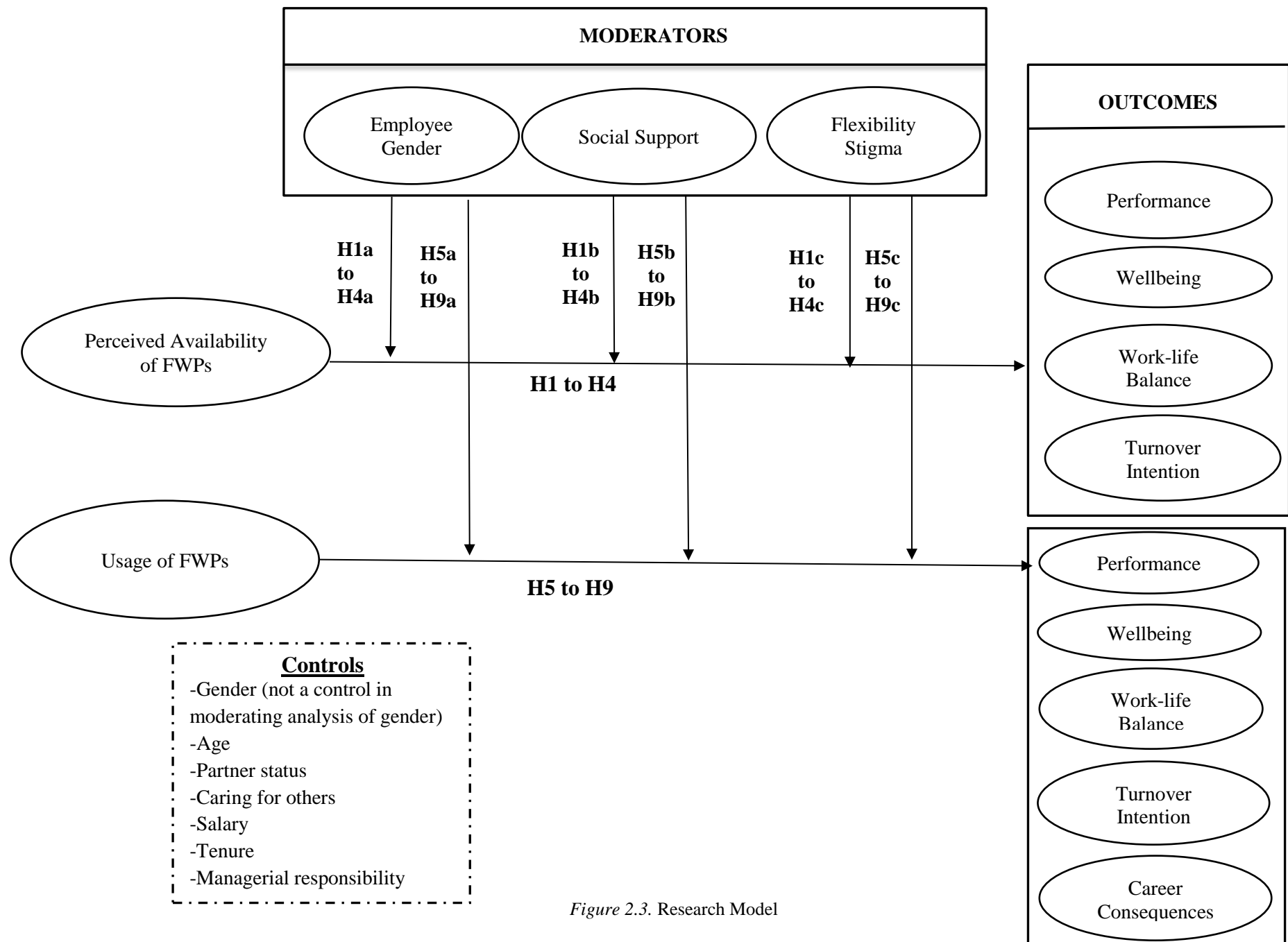


Figure 2.3. Research Model

## **2.8 CONCLUSION**

This chapter summarised the extant studies pertaining to the effects of both perceived availability of FWPs and usage of FWPs on various employee outcomes along with the effects of contingent factors. Specifically, this chapter proposed positive linear predictions of perceived availability of FWPs and employee performance, wellbeing, work-life balance and negative linear prediction of perceived availability of FWPs and employee turnover intentions. Additionally, this chapter also proposed positive linear predictions of usage of FWPs and employee performance, wellbeing, work-life balance and negative linear prediction of usage of FWPs and employee career consequences and turnover intentions. The contingent predictions related to the moderating effects of gender (woman vs man), social support (low vs high) and flexibility stigma (low vs high) were also presented. The next chapter details the research methods of the study.

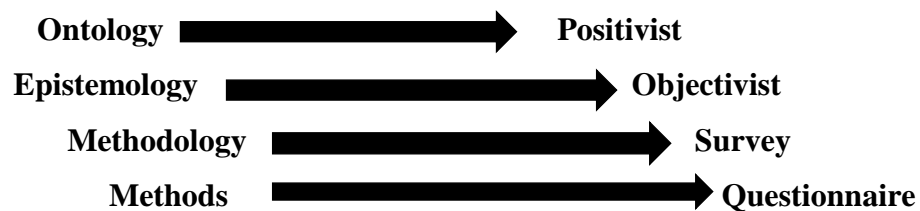
# Chapter 3: Methodology

## 3.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents details of the design and methodology of the study. It specifically includes the research philosophy guiding the study, research design, details of the population and sample, data collection procedure, materials used for data collection including operationalisation of the variables as well as a brief description of the analytical strategy adopted to test the hypotheses.

## 3.1 RESEARCH PHILOSOPHY

The philosophical stance of a study influences the research practice, assists in measuring the quality of research and it is important to be identified (Creswell, 2018; Fossey, Harvey, McDermott, & Davidson, 2002). Ontology is concerned with the existence of facts and objects in the social world while epistemology is concerned with the ways of knowing them-either objectively or subjectively. According to Crotty (1998), ontology and epistemology exist side by side to inform the theoretical perspective of the research (p.10). The basic framework guiding this research is as follows:



*Figure. 3.1.* Elements of Research Philosophy of the Study.

This study combines objectivist epistemology with positivist ontology. According to objectivist epistemology, reality exists irrespective of peoples' knowledge and includes objective social facts that can be measured (Crotty, 1998). Based on this epistemological position, this research utilises a positivist stance to explore the relationship between FWPs and employee outcomes. FWPs are organisational practices that exist as part of the organisational culture and influence employee behaviour that is quantifiable and thus can be measured. Consistent with the

positivist paradigm, this study adopts a ‘scientific method’ to identify “objective, valid and generalizable conclusions” (Crotty, 1998, p. 13) to explain the underlying associations among the availability and usage of FWPs and employee outcomes (Creswell, 2014; Greene, Kreider, & Mayer, 2005). Using the positivist lens, employee responses to workplace practices can be predicted based on prior knowledge and empirically interrogated to explore reality (Creswell, 2014; Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

## **3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN**

### **3.2.1 Methodology**

Quantitative approaches such as experiments and surveys are useful tools for positivists to explore the social phenomena from a representative sample and then generalise the findings to the population (Babbie, 2015). Consistent with the quantitative approach, this study aims to test existing theories regarding the relationship between FWPs and employee outcomes by collecting data using predetermined instruments that produce statistical data (Creswell, 2014). This study utilizes a survey design because it is a time saving and cost-effective way of collecting information from a sample of participants about facts, opinions and behaviours and then to generalise the findings to a population which is too large to observe directly (Babbie, 2015). The survey used is cross-sectional where data is collected at one point of time using a structured questionnaire (Creswell, 2014). As the participant organisation already has FWPs in place, collecting systematic data about the employee experience with FWPs and various outcome measures using a structured questionnaire allows systematic comparison between the individuals on the same characteristics (performance, wellbeing, work-life balance, turnover intentions, and career consequences). This comparison, in turn, will assist in understanding the causes of variation in outcomes and in drawing inferences (De Vaus, 2002, pp. 4-6). Key survey software was used to design and distribute an online survey among employees of the participating organisation. The survey link was emailed to the Human Resource official to forward to employees. Employee participation was completely voluntary. Only completed responses were included in the analysis. Data were analysed using SPSS version 23.

### **3.2.2 Participant Organisation**

The participants are recruited from one of the pioneering private sector organisations in Queensland, Australia, which operates in the financial service industry. To maximise the anonymity of the participants and the organisation, a pseudonym, 'FinCo' is used for the organisation throughout the thesis. FinCo has multiple business divisions and is supportive of workplace flexibility for its employees to balance their work and life commitments and to attract new talent. As the organisation is moving forward to 'all eligible roles flexible' as part of their Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan, it makes the organisation ideal to explore employee perception of FWPs and factors affecting their willingness to work flexibly and ultimately the impact on various employee outcomes. The participating organisation has a positive reputation in the financial service sector as a supportive employer of FWPs.

FinCo has a formal 'Flexible Working Arrangements Policy' which has been in place for 10 years and stipulates the types of arrangements available, the procedure to request and the process of approving or declining a request. Organisation-specific FWPs were identified through the HR contact of the organisation, and include flexitime, job sharing, part-time work, purchased leave, working from home, casual employment and the transition to retirement. It also includes paid parental leave and cash out of annual and/or long service leave under FWPs. The policy also has the provision for ad hoc or temporary arrangements made between the employee and their supervisor to accommodate informal needs. This ad hoc arrangement is recorded formally only in the case of 'work from home'. Informal or ad hoc agreements (such as varying start and finish time, irregular work from home arrangements) agreed between supervisors and employees are predominant in FinCo and not recorded formally. FinCo was selected for this study as the HR leader expressed interest in taking part in the research to identify the impact of the existing FWPs on employee outcomes, and barriers in uptake to facilitate decision making for "all eligible roles flexible" initiative.

### **3.2.3 Sample**

The online survey link was sent to all 2300 employees of all 11 divisions of FinCo. The survey link was open for three weeks from mid-January to early February

2019. All current employees were eligible to participate. The final sample comprises 293 employees who provided the completed response within the specific time frame. 198 employees partially completed the survey which were not included in the data analysis. The response rate was 12.74%. Most of the respondents are female (n = 206), working full-time (n = 219), and a small proportion worked part-time or as casual. Approximately 18.47% had managerial responsibilities (n = 54). The following Table 3.1 presents demographic characteristics of the sample.

Table. 3.1

*Demographic Characteristics of Participants (n=293)*

<b>Variables</b>	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	82	27.99%
Female	206	70.31%
Other	5	1.71%
<b>Age</b>		
Less than 35 years	90	30.72%
36 to 55 years	173	59.62%
Over 55 years	30	10.24%
<b>Salary</b>		
Less than \$55,000	46	15.7%
\$55,000 to \$100,000	157	53.59%
Over \$100,000	90	30.71%
<b>Partner Status</b>		
With a partner	237	80.89%
No partner	56	19.11%
<b>Managerial responsibility</b>		
Yes	54	18.47%
No	239	81.53%

### **3.3 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE**

Data collection was facilitated by **Key Survey** online survey software. Survey questions were designed, accommodating the organisation specific questions from the HR contact of FinCo. After receiving the ethics approval from QUT, the survey was

pilot-tested by sending the link to the supervisors of the researcher, the HR contacts at FinCo and a few co-researchers from various disciplines at the QUT Business School to ensure the clarity of questions, timing of completion, layout of the survey and ease of access. Based on their responses, the survey layout was modified to ensure ease of access using various devices such as desktop, laptop, tablet and mobile phone. The final survey link was sent to the HR contact and internal communication officer who circulated the link through internal emails and also posted it on the internal organisational bulletin along with a brief description of the study. A reminder email was sent to all employees after one week.

Employees who chose to participate accessed the survey by clicking the link which took them to the Participation Information and Consent Form. A brief overview and objectives of the study as well as the research team's contact information were provided on this page. This page also highlighted the voluntary and anonymous nature of the study, and the risks and benefits of participation were also clearly described. Interested participants clicked the 'Next' button to continue the survey. Participants who chose not to take part in the survey had the option to close the browser to exit. Those who agreed to participate in the study answered questions on their perceptions of the availability of flexible work practices within the context of their current jobs, their actual use of FWPs, various work-related outcomes and some demographic questions (see Appendix A). During the survey, participants had the option to end the survey at any time by closing their web browsers. In addition, participants were informed that a summary of the results would be made available to the interested participants as per their request. They could request the summary by clicking on the email link provided at the end of the survey.

### **3.3.1 Survey Content**

The survey questionnaire comprises questions to measure the aspects of flexible work practices (perceived availability and usage), self-rated performance, wellbeing, work-life balance, turnover intentions, perceived career consequences, social support, flexibility stigma and demographic questions. The full survey questionnaire is provided in Appendix A. Following Figure. 3.2 illustrates an overview of the variables collected:



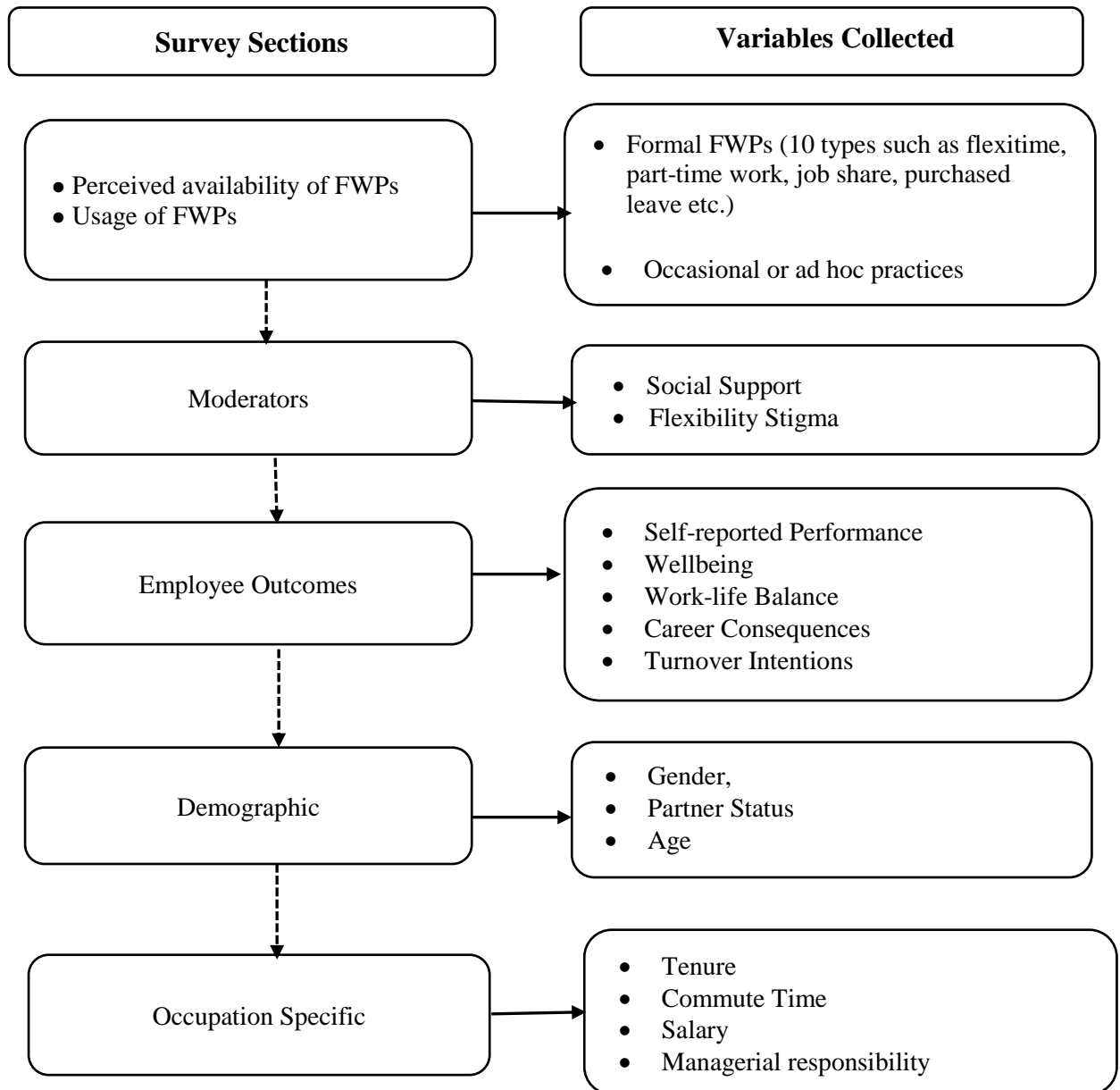


Figure 3.2. Overview of the survey

### 3.4 MEASURES

The following sections describe detailed measures of predictor, outcome and control variables used in the study. All variables were measured using previously validated scales from the top-ranking journals. Cronbach's alpha is also noted for each scale as a measure of internal consistency.

### **3.4.1 Predictors**

#### ***3.4.1.1 Perceived availability of Flexible work practices***

Perceived availability of FWPs was measured using 12 items. Eight items (flexitime, part-time work, casual work, compressed work-week, part-year work, job sharing, teleworking, voluntary reduced time) were borrowed from Kossek and Michel (2011). Four items (flexible holidays, purchased leave, ad hoc flexibility and time off in lieu) were added as per the participating organisation's FWP policy which was designed according to the national policy. Respondents selected the types of practice(s) they perceived as available to them in the past 12 months. The response options were yes (1) or no (0). An FWP perception score was calculated by adding the total number of 'yes' responses for each item. The maximum score for availability is 9, and the minimum is 0. Cronbach's alpha for 12 items is .405. The low alpha is acceptable as the scale is of formative nature where responses to items are added to create the final index score for the predictor (Ali, 2016; Armstrong et al., 2010; Liao et al., 2009). The final score does not reflect an underlying construct as in the case of a reflective scale (Ali, 2016).

#### ***3.4.1.2 Usage of Flexible work practices***

Usage of FWPs was measured in the same way as the perceived availability of FWPs mentioned above. Respondents selected the types of practice (s) they have used in the past 12 months. The response options were yes (1) or no (0). An FWP usage score was calculated by adding the total number of 'yes' responses for each item. The maximum score for usage is 5, and the minimum is 0. Cronbach's alpha for 12 items is .115.

### **3.4.2 Outcomes**

#### ***3.4.2.1 Performance***

Self-reported employee performance was measured using a three items scale with reported reliability of .83 (Farh, Dobbins, & Cheng, 1991) (see Appendix B for a list of items). Participants were asked to evaluate their job performance using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (*very low*) to 5 (*excellent*). The mean of the responses to the three items indicated the level of self-reported performance by a respondent where higher score refers to higher performance. The Cronbach's alpha for this study is 0.82.

### **3.4.2.2 Wellbeing**

Employee wellbeing was measured using a three items scale to represent *distress* developed by Nomaguchi, Milkie, and Bianchi (2005) (see Appendix B for a list of items). Responses were categorized on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1(*very often*) to 5 (*never*). Cronbach's alpha for these three items was 0.74 for the original study. The mean of the responses to three items indicated the level of wellbeing of a respondent where a higher score refers to greater wellbeing. The Cronbach's alpha for this study is 0.78.

### **3.4.2.3 Work-life Balance**

Employee work-life balance was measured using a four items scale used by Brough et al. (2014) with a reported reliability of 0.84 (see Appendix B for a list of items). Responses were categorized on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*) where a higher score represented the perception of higher balance. The second item in the scale was: "I have difficulty balancing my work and non-work activities" that was reverse coded to align with the responses of other items in the scale where a higher score indicates a higher work-life balance. The mean of the responses to the four items indicated the level of work-life balance demonstrated by the respondents. The Cronbach's alpha for this study is 0.93.

### **3.4.2.4 Turnover Intentions**

Employee turnover intentions was measured using a three items scale used by Brough et al. (2014) with a reported reliability of 0.85 (see Appendix B for a list of items). Responses were measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*never*) to 5 (*almost always*). The second item of the scale is "how likely are you to leave your job in the next six months?" which was coded using 1(*very unlikely*) to 5 (*very likely*). The mean of the responses to the three items indicated the level of turnover intentions where the higher score demonstrated higher levels of turnover intentions in respondents. The Cronbach's alpha for the current study is 0.89.

### **3.4.2.5 Career Consequences**

Employee perception of career consequences was measured using a five items scale (see Appendix B for a list of items) with a reported reliability of 0.74 (Thompson et al., 1999). Responses were measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1

(*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). Negatively worded items (items 1, 2 and 4 in the scale) were reverse coded so that higher score reflects the perception of higher career consequences. The mean of the responses to the four items indicated the level of perceived career consequences in respondents. The Cronbach's alpha for the current study is 0.39.

### **3.4.3 Moderators**

#### ***3.4.3.1 Social Support***

A six items scale developed by Lambert et al. (2008) to measure spousal support was used and adapted for this study to measure social support which includes support from spouse, parents and other family members (see Appendix B for a list of items). The reported reliability of the original study was 0.86. Responses were reported on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). The mean of the responses to the six items indicated the level of social support perceived by respondents where the higher score demonstrated higher levels of support. The Cronbach's alpha for the current study is 0.82.

#### ***3.4.3.2 Flexibility Stigma***

Flexibility stigma was measured using three items scale developed by Cech and Blair-Loy (2014) with reported reliability of 0.66 (see Appendix B for a list of items). Although reliability is not high, this scale was used because there was no other scale available to measure 'flexibility stigma' at the time of data collection. Responses were reported on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). The mean of the responses to the three items indicated the level of perception of perceived stigma in respondents where the higher score demonstrated higher levels of stigma. The Cronbach's alpha for the current study is 0.67.

#### ***3.4.3.3 Gender***

Gender was measured using three categories 'male', 'female' and 'other'. As the response to 'other' is approximately 2%, it is included in the male category. A dummy variable was created to represent the dichotomous gender variable with '1' representing 'Female' and '0' representing 'Male'. Dummy variables are created to

include a categorical or non-metric independent variable in multivariate analysis as this analysis requires continuous or metric variables only.

#### **3.4.4 Controls**

The analyses controlled for the effects of several demographic variables related to employee experience with flexible work and/or various work outcomes. These variables are identified in previous studies and include age, gender, salary, tenure, partner status, care for others, disability, commute time and managerial responsibility (Chen & Fulmer, 2018; Lambert et al., 2008; Leslie et al., 2012; Richman et al., 2008). Dummy variables are created for gender (0=male, 1=female), partner status (0=no partner, 1=with a partner), managerial responsibility (0=no managerial responsibility, 1=with managerial responsibility), caring responsibility for anyone other than own children (0=no, 1=yes) and whether respondent has any kind of disability restricting their day to day activities(0=no, 1=yes). Tenure was a continuous variable measured in years. Commuting time was also a continuous variable measured in minutes. Age was measured as categories. Two dummy variables were created: age under 25 years and age over 45 years. The reference group is 35 to 45 years. Two dummy variables for salary were also created for a salary under 55k and salary over 100k while 55k to 100k was the reference group.

### **3.5 ANALYTICAL STRATEGY**

Statistical analysis was conducted using SPSS (version 23) software. Preliminary data cleaning and screening of raw data were performed to identify missing value and outliers. Missing value analysis found no missing data in the data set. Cronbach's alpha was calculated to test the internal reliability of the items. Common-method bias is a potential problem for the validity of the research when data on both predictors and outcomes are collected from the same respondents at one point in time. Harman's single-factor test was performed to assess common method bias for all the predictor and outcome variables (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Results indicated that common-method bias is not an issue as only 17.45% of the variance was explained by a single factor (less than 50% is acceptable). The descriptive analysis of the data assisted in identifying the frequencies, mean and standard deviation. The inter-correlations among focal variables were identified to assess the effect of multicollinearity (Tabachnick, 2013).

Hierarchical multiple regression analysis was used to test the hypotheses. In hierarchical regression, predictors are entered in the model based on their importance in predicting the outcomes. The general rule is to enter the known predictors from past research (controls) first, followed by any new predictors relevant to the current study (Field, 2009). To prepare the data set for the analysis, assumptions for multivariate regression analysis such as normality, linearity, independence and homogeneity of focal variables were explored and corrected. Normality of the data was tested using the Shapiro-Wilks and Kolmogorov-Smirnov test (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010). Boxplots revealed outlier values in two cases. Outliers are extreme values which distort the finding if not treated properly. These outliers were related to organisational tenure, and the values were replaced with the mean tenure value. Data preparation for moderated regression consists of two steps: 1) mean-centring all the continuous predictor variables including moderators 2) generating an interaction term for the moderation effect. Mean-centring the predictors and moderators reduces the multicollinearity between these variables as well as with the interaction terms (Aiken, West, & Reno, 1991). As gender was a categorical variable, it was not mean-centred but dummy-coded to include in the analysis. A three-step sequential data entering process was followed. Control variables were used to eliminate alternative explanations of the findings (Mitchell & Jolley, 2010) and entered in the first step of the analysis followed by main effects and interaction terms to explore the moderating effects.

### **3.6 CONCLUSION**

This chapter has reported the philosophical stance of this study which includes the epistemological and ontological position. This is followed by the methods used to collect the data along with details of the participant organisation and sample size. Details of the survey contents, measures of the variables are also discussed, followed by the analysis strategy. The next chapter will discuss the result of the analysis in detail.

# Chapter 4: Results

## 4.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the descriptive statistics along with the results of the hierarchical multiple regression analysis carried out to test the hypotheses. Results of the multiple regression analysis to test the hypotheses (H1 to H9) for the main effects of perceived availability of FWPs and usage of FWPs on employee outcomes are presented alongside the moderating effects of employee gender (H1a to H9a), non-work social support (H1b to H9b) and flexibility stigma (H1c to H9c). Significant interaction effects are plotted to examine whether the results support the predictions related to the moderating effects of gender, social support and flexibility stigma on these relationships: perceived availability of FWPs and employee outcomes; usage of FWPs and employee outcomes.

## 4.1 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS AND CORRELATIONS COEFFICIENTS

Table 4.1 presents the descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) along with the correlation coefficients for all variables. Descriptive statistics assist in understanding the characteristics of the sample (Tharenou, 2007). Most of the participants are female (70%), with a partner (81%) and, on average, working for the organisation for 6.72 years. Further, the means for perceived availability of FWPs and usage of FWPs are 2.21 and 1.24, respectively that means, on average, that participants perceive 2 practices available and use 1 practice from 12 various FWPs.

The most important correlations are those involving the predictors (perceived availability of FWPs and usage of FWPs) and outcomes (performance, wellbeing, work-life balance, turnover intentions and career consequences). The results in Table 4.1 show that the perceived availability of FWPs and usage of FWPs were not significantly associated with any of the five outcome variables. Overall, the correlations for the variables range between low to moderate ( $\pm .1$  to  $\pm .3$ ) for all the variables except managerial responsibilities and salary over 100k ( $r = .41$ ) and usage of FWPs and perceived availability of FWPs ( $r = .65$ ). Table 4.1 particularly reveals

that FWPs usage and FWPs availability ( $r = .65$ ) are strongly correlated but these two variables were not included in the same regression analyses. Two age variables (controls) are also strongly correlated ( $r = -.50$ ) but the correlation is far below the benchmark of the alarming level of multicollinearity ( $r = .90$ ) (Cohen, 1988).

To further rule out the possible multicollinearity between predictors, variance inflation factor (VIF) and tolerance statistics related to VIF were checked and found no significant collinearity based on Myer's (1990) 'rule of thumb'. According to him, a VIF value of more than 10 may bias the regression model. Similarly, the value for tolerance statistics (which is  $1/\text{VIF}$ ) below 0.1 (Field, 2009) or 0.2 (Menard, 1995) suggests a higher-level of multicollinearity between predictors. VIF values for the variables used in the analyses ranged from 1 to 2. Tolerance statistics are more than 0.1 for all the variables. Hence, multicollinearity is not biasing the regression analysis (Field, 2009; Menard, 1995 & Myers, 1990)



Table 4. 1  
Means, Standard Deviations and Correlations <sup>a</sup>

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
<b>Controls</b>																			
1. Partner status	.81	.39																	
2. Age under 35 years	.31	.46	.06																
3. Age over 45 years	.35	.48	.05	-.50**															
4. Caring for others	.08	.28	-.01	.02	.12*														
5. Salary under 50k	.16	.36	-.12*	.06	.08	.15*													
6. Salary Over 100k	.31	.46	.02	-.26**	.07	-.06	-.29**												
7. Managerial responsibility	.18	.39	.19**	-.15*	.07	-.05	-.21**	.41**											
8. Tenure	6.72	6.62	.08	-.26**	.40**	-.03	-.10	-.09	.06										
<b>Predictors</b>																			
9. Perceived availability of FWP	2.21	1.61	-.02	-.02	-.09	-.21**	-.04	.25**	.12*	-.12*									
10. Usage of FWP	1.24	1.01	-.06	-.01	-.12	-.18**	-.13*	.33**	.13*	-.07	.65**								
<b>Moderators</b>																			
11. Gender (1= female, 0=male)	.70	.46	-.01	.01	-.02	.00	.08	-.23**	-.06	.02	-.03	.05							
12. Social support (High vs Low)	3.84	.72	.16**	.05	-.04	.04	.17**	.07	.04	-.10	.12*	.14*	.03						
13. Flexibility stigma (High vs Low)	2.55	.81	-.02	.01	-.05	.02	.02	-.06	-.04	.05	-.17**	-.13*	.01	-.14*					
<b>Outcomes</b>																			
14. Performance	3.88	.56	.14*	-.01	.01	-.03	-.18**	.05	.05	-.07	-.06	.01	.01	.18**	-.02				
15. Wellbeing	2.98	.89	.07	-.13*	.14*	.04	-.04	.13*	.07	-.08	.25**	.15**	-.18**	.03	-.14*	.14*			
16. Work-life balance	2.91	1.00	-.06	-.11	.12*	-.08	-.07	.14*	.03	.08	.30**	.23**	-.09	.09	-.23**	.10	.34**		
17. Turnover intentions	2.59	1.07	-.01	.12	-.09	-.11	.06	-.12*	-.12*	.01	-.26**	-.23**	-.07	-.16**	.15**	-.13*	-.38**	.33**	
18. Career consequences	3.15	.50	-.02	.09	-.02	.08	.15*	-.15**	-.06	-.02	.04	-.06	-.01	.11	.39**	-.03	.01	.12*	-.052

<sup>a</sup> 2-tailed; \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ .

## **4.2 MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS - MAIN EFFECTS**

To test the hypotheses relating to the main effects of perceived availability of FWPs and usage of FWPs on employee outcomes (performance, wellbeing, work-life balance, turnover intentions and career consequences), a series of (nine) hierarchical multiple regression analyses were performed separately for each predictor. In Step 1, control variables (age, gender, partner status, caring for others, salary, tenure, managerial responsibility) were entered followed by the predictor of interest (either perceived availability of FWPs or usage of FWPs) in Step 2. The following sections (4.2.1 and 4.2.2) present the results of multiple regression analysis for these relationships, respectively: perceived availability of FWPs and employee outcomes; and usage of FWPs and employee outcomes.

### **4.2.1 Perceived availability of FWPs and employee outcomes - H1 to H4**

H1 proposed that perceived availability of FWPs would be positively associated with employee self-rated performance. H2 proposed that perceived availability of FWPs would be positively associated with employee wellbeing, H3 proposed that perceived availability of FWPs would be positively associated with work-life balance, and H4 proposed that perceived availability of FWPs would be negatively associated with employee turnover intentions. To test H1, H2, H3 and H4, performance, wellbeing, work-life balance and turnover intentions were separately regressed on perceived availability of FWPs (see Table 4.2) The relevant control variables were entered in Step 1 (see Model 1 column in Table 4.2), followed by perceived availability of FWPs in Step 2 (see Model 2 columns in Table 4.2).

Table 4.2

*Hierarchical Regression Analysis for the Effects of Perceived Availability of FWPs on Employee Outcomes - H1, H2, H3 and H4*

	<b>Performance</b>		<b>Wellbeing</b>		<b>Work-life Balance</b>		<b>Turnover Intentions</b>	
	$\beta$ (Model1)	$\beta$ (Model 2)	$\beta$ (Model 1)	$\beta$ (Model 2)	$\beta$ (Model 1)	$\beta$ (Model 2)	$\beta$ (Model 1)	$\beta$ (Model 2)
<b>Controls</b>								
Partner status	.12*	.12*	.07	.07	-.07	-.06	.01	-.00
Age under 35 years	-.01	-.01	-.10	-.10	-.02	-.02	.05	.06
Age over 45 years	.07	.06	.15*	.16*	.10	.11	-.07	-.08
Caring for others	-.01	-.02	.03	.08	-.08	-.02	-.12*	-.18**
Salary under 55k	.19**	-.19**	-.04	-.05	-.04	-.06	.05	.07
Salary Over 100k	-.02	-.00	.03	-.03	.11	.04	-.08	-.01
Managerial responsibility	-.00	.00	.01	.00	-.03	-.04	-.08	-.06
Tenure	-.13*	-.14*	-.17**	-.15*	.05	.08	.06	.03
Gender	.02	.02	-.16**	-.17**	-.06	-.07	-.10	-.09
<b>Predictor</b>								
Perceived availability of FWPs		-.08		<b>.26***</b>		<b>.30***</b>		<b>-.29***</b>
$R^2$	.06	.07	.09	.15	.05	.13	.06	.13
$F$	2.05*	2.02*	2.98**	4.81***	1.68	4.31***	1.82	4.12***
$\Delta R^2$	.06	.01	.09	.06	.05	.08	.06	.07
$F$ for $\Delta R^2$	2.05*	1.64	2.98**	19.51***	1.68	26.60***	1.82	23.57***

$n = 293$ , Standardised coefficients are reported, \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

The results revealed that entering control variables in Step 1 accounted for a significant amount of variance on employee performance  $R^2 = .06$ ,  $F(9,283) = 2.05$ ,  $p < .05$ . It was also revealed that in Step 2 the predictor variable (perceived availability of FWPs) did not have a significant effect on employee self-rated performance as identified from the standardised coefficient ( $\beta = -.08$ , n.s.). As shown in Model 2, perceived availability did not significantly explain any increase in the variance in performance ( $\Delta R^2 = .07$ ,  $F(1, 282) = 1.64$ , n.s.). Therefore, H1 was not supported.

The results revealed that entering control variables in Step 1 accounted for a significant amount of variance on employee wellbeing ( $R^2 = .09$ ,  $F(9,283) = 2.98$ ,  $p < .01$ ). It was also revealed that in Step 2 the predictor variable (perceived availability of FWPs) had a significant positive effect on employee wellbeing as identified from the standardised coefficient ( $\beta = .26$ ,  $p < .001$ ). As shown in Model 2, perceived availability accounted for a significant increase in variance in wellbeing ( $\Delta R^2 = .06$ ,  $F(1,282) = 19.51$ ,  $p < .001$ ) which indicated that perceived availability of FWPs positively related to higher levels of employee wellbeing. Therefore, H2 was supported.

The results revealed that entering control variables in Step 1 did not account for a significant amount of variance on employee work-life balance ( $R^2 = .05$ ,  $F(9,283) = 1.68$ , n.s.). It was also revealed that in Step 2 the predictor variable (perceived availability of FWPs) had a significant positive effect on employee work-life balance as identified from the standardised coefficient ( $\beta = .30$ ,  $p < .001$ ). As shown in Model 2, perceived availability accounted for a significant increase in variance in work-life balance ( $\Delta R^2 = .08$ ,  $F(1,282) = 26.60$ ,  $p < .001$ ) which indicated that perceived availability of FWPs positively related to higher levels of work-life balance for employees. Therefore, H3 was supported.

The results revealed that entering control variables in Step 1 did not account for a significant amount of variance on employee turnover intentions ( $R^2 = .06$ ,  $F(9,283) = 1.82$ , n.s.). It was also revealed that in Step 2 the predictor variable (perceived availability of FWPs) had a significant negative effect on employee turnover intentions as identified from the standardised coefficient ( $\beta = -.29$ ,  $p < .001$ ). As shown in Model 2, perceived availability accounted for a significant increase in variance in turnover intentions ( $\Delta R^2 = .07$ ,  $F(1,282) = 23.57$ ,  $p < .001$ ) which indicated that perceived availability of FWPs related to lower turnover intentions among employees. Therefore, H4 was also supported.

#### **4.2.2 Usage of FWPs and employee outcomes - H5 to H9**

H5 proposed that the usage of FWPs would be positively associated with employee self-rated performance. H6 proposed that the usage of FWPs would be positively associated with the employee wellbeing, H7 proposed that the usage of FWPs would be positively associated with employee work-life balance, H8 proposed that the usage of FWPs would be negatively associated with employee turnover intentions, and H9 proposed that the usage of FWPs would be negatively associated with career consequences. To test H5, H6, H7, H8 and H9, performance, wellbeing, work-life balance, turnover intentions and career consequences were separately regressed on usage of FWPs (see Table 4.3). The relevant control variables were entered in Step 1 (see Model 1 column in Table 4.3) followed by usage of FWPs in Step 2 (see Model 2 column in Table 4.3).

Table 4.3.

*Hierarchical Regression Analysis for the Effects of Usage of FWPs on Employee Outcomes - H5, H6, H7, H8 and H9*

	<u>Performance</u>		<u>Wellbeing</u>		<u>Work-life Balance</u>		<u>Turnover Intentions</u>		<u>Career Consequences</u>	
	$\beta$ (Model 1)	$\beta$ (Model 2)	$\beta$ (Model 1)	$\beta$ (Model 2)	$\beta$ (Model 1)	$\beta$ (Model 2)	$\beta$ (Model 1)	$\beta$ (Model 2)	$\beta$ (Model 1)	$\beta$ (Model 2)
<b>Controls</b>										
Partner status	.12*	.12*	.07	.08	-.07	-.06	.01	-.01	-.01	-.01
Age under 35 years	-.01	-.01	-.10	-.10	-.02	-.03	.05	.06	.06	.06
Age over 45 years	.07	.07	.15*	.16*	.10	.12	-.07	-.09	.00	.01
Caring for others	-.01	-.01	.03	.05	-.08	-.05	-.12*	-.16**	.05	.05
Salary under 55k	-.19**	-.19**	-.04	-.03	-.04	-.04	.05	.05	.11	.11
Salary Over 100k	-.02	-.02	.03	-.04	.11	.03	-.08	.01	-.13	-.13
Managerial responsibility	-.00	-.00	.01	.01	-.03	-.03	-.08	-.08	.03	.03
Tenure	-.13*	-.13*	-.17**	-.17**	.05	.05	.06	.06	-.00	-.00
Gender	.02	.02	-.16**	-.18**	-.06	-.09	-.10	-.07	-.04	-.05
<b>Predictor</b>										
Usage of FWPs		-.00		<b>.18**</b>		<b>.23***</b>		<b>-.25***</b>		.01
$R^2$	.06	.06	.09	.12	.05	.09	.06	.11	.04	.04
$F$	2.05*	1.84*	2.98**	3.66***	1.68	2.97**	1.82	3.23***	1.44	1.29
$\Delta R^2$	.06	.00	.09	.03	.05	.04	.06	.05	.04	.00
$F$ for $\Delta R^2$	2.05*	.00	2.98**	8.99**	1.68	13.86***	1.82	16.01***	1.44	.02

$n = 293$ , Standardised coefficients are reported, \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

The results revealed that entering control variables in Step 1 accounted for a significant amount of variance on employee performance ( $R^2 = .06$ ,  $F(9,283) = 2.05$ ,  $p < .05$ ). It was also revealed that in Step 2 the predictor variable (usage of FWPs) did not have a significant effect on employee self-rated performance as identified from the standardised coefficient ( $\beta = -.00$ , n.s.). As shown in Model 2, the usage of FWPs did not significantly explain any increase in the variance in performance ( $\Delta R^2 = .00$ ,  $F(1, 282) = .00$ , n.s.). Therefore, H5 was not supported.

The results revealed that entering control variables in Step 1 accounted for a significant amount of variance on employee wellbeing ( $R^2 = .09$ ,  $F(9,283) = 2.98$ ,  $p < .01$ ). It was also revealed that in Step 2, the predictor variable (usage of FWPs) had a significant positive effect on employee wellbeing as identified from the standardised coefficient ( $\beta = .18$ ,  $p < .01$ ). As shown in Model 2, usage of FWPs accounted for a significant increase in variance in wellbeing ( $\Delta R^2 = .03$ ,  $F(1,282) = 8.99$ ,  $p < .01$ ) which indicated that usage of FWPs positively related to higher levels of employee wellbeing. Therefore, H6 was supported.

The results revealed that entering control variables in Step 1 did not account for a significant amount of variance on employee work-life balance ( $R^2 = .05$ ,  $F(9,283) = 1.68$ , n.s.). It was also revealed that in Step 2 the predictor variable (usage of FWPs) had a significant positive effect on employee work-life balance as identified from the standardised coefficient ( $\beta = .23$ ,  $p < .001$ ). As shown in Model 2, usage of FWPs accounted for a significant increase in variance in work-life balance ( $\Delta R^2 = .04$ ,  $F(1, 282) = 13.86$ ,  $p < .001$ ) which indicated that usage of FWPs positively related to higher levels of work-life balance for employees. Therefore, H7 was supported.

The results revealed that entering control variables in Step 1 did not account for a significant amount of variance on employee turnover intentions ( $R^2 = .06$ ,  $F(9,283) = 1.82$ , n.s.). It was also revealed that in Step 2 the predictor variable (usage of FWPs) had a significant negative effect on employee turnover intentions as identified from the standardised coefficient ( $\beta = -.25$ ,  $p < .001$ ). As shown in Model 2, usage of FWPs accounted for a significant increase in variance in turnover intentions ( $\Delta R^2 = .05$ ,  $F(1, 282) = 16.01$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Therefore, H8 was supported.

The results revealed that entering control variables in Step 1 did not account for a significant amount of variance on employee career consequences ( $R^2 = .04$ ,  $F(9,283) = 1.44$ , n.s.). It was also revealed that in Step 2 the predictor variable (usage of FWPs) did not have a significant effect on employee career consequences as identified from the standardised coefficient ( $\beta = .01$ , n.s.). As shown in Model 2, usage of FWPs did not account for a significant increase in variance in career consequences ( $\Delta R^2 = .00$ ,  $F(1, 282) = .02$ , n.s.). Therefore, H9 was not supported.

### **4.3 MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSES - MODERATING EFFECTS**

To test the moderating effects of gender, social support and flexibility stigma on these relationships: perceived availability of FWPs and employee outcomes; and usage of FWPs and employee outcomes, a series of (twenty-seven) hierarchical multiple regressions were conducted. For all analyses, relevant control variables were entered in Step 1, followed by the predictor variable of interest (either perceived availability of FWPs or usage of FWPs) in Step 2. Moderator of interest (e.g. gender/social support/ flexibility stigma) and relevant interaction term were entered together in Step 3 to test the moderating effects. Interaction terms were created by multiplying the mean-centred variables (predictor x moderator). MODPROBE was used to generate data for plotting (Hayes & Matthes, 2009) to assist in calculating the simple slope to visualise and clarify whether the relationships were consistent with the study's predictions.

The continuous predictors (perceived availability of FWPs and usage of FWPs) and the continuous moderating variables (social support and flexibility stigma) were mean centred to reduce multicollinearity between main effects and two-way interactions (Aiken et al., 1991; Field, 2009; Jaccard, 2003). As gender was a categorical variable, it was not centred. The following six interaction terms were created: 'Perceived availability of FWPs x Gender', 'Perceived availability of FWPs x Social Support', 'Perceived availability of FWPs x Flexibility Stigma', 'Usage of FWPs x Gender', 'Usage of FWPs x Social Support', 'Usage of FWPs x Flexibility Stigma'.



### **4.3.1 Moderating role of gender on perceived availability of FWPs and employee outcomes relationship - H1a, H2a, H3a and H4a**

Hypotheses H1a, H2a, H3a and H4a pertain to the moderating effects of employee gender on perceived availability of FWPs and employee outcomes (performance, wellbeing, work-life balance and turnover intentions). H1a, H2a and H3a proposed that employee gender moderates the positive perceived availability of FWPs and employee outcomes (performance, wellbeing and work-life balance) relationships such that the positive relationship would be stronger for women than for men. H4a proposed that employee gender moderates the negative perceived availability of FWPs and employee turnover intentions relationship such that the negative relationship would be stronger for women than for men.

Table 4.4 presents the result of the moderating effects of gender. In Step 1 (see Model 1 column in Table 4.4) relevant controls (age, partner status, salary, tenure, managerial responsibility, caring for others) were entered followed by the predictor variable (perceived availability of FWPs) in Step 2 (see Model 2 column in Table 4.4). The moderating variable (Gender) and the interaction term (Perceived availability of FWPs x Gender) were entered in Step 3 (see Model 3 column in Table 4.4).

Table 4.4

*Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Perceived Availability of FWP's and Employee Outcomes with the Moderating Effects of Gender- H1a, H2a, H3a & H4a*

	Performance			Wellbeing			Work-life Balance			Turnover Intentions		
	$\beta$ (Model 1)	$\beta$ (Model 2)	$\beta$ (Model 3)	$\beta$ (Model 1)	$\beta$ (Model 2)	$\beta$ (Model 3)	$\beta$ (Model 1)	$\beta$ (Model 2)	$\beta$ (Model 3)	$\beta$ (Model1)	$\beta$ (Model 2)	$\beta$ (Model 3)
<b>Controls</b>												
Partner status	.12*	.12*	.13*	.07	.08	.07	-.07	-.06	-.07	.01	.00	.03
Age under 35 years	-.01	-.01	-.01	-.08	-.08	-.09	-.01	-.02	-.27	.06	.06	.06
Age over 45 years	.07	.06	.06	.15*	.17*	.16*	.10	.11	.11	-.07	-.08	-.09
Caring for others	-.01	-.02	-.03	.03	.08	.08	-.08	-.02	-.02	-.12*	-.18**	-.18**
Salary under 55k	-.19**	-.19**	-.19**	-.04	-.05	-.05	-.04	-.06	-.05	.05	.07	.07
Salary Over 100k	-.03	-.01	-.02	.07	.01	-.02	.13	.06	.05	-.06	.01	-.01
Managerial responsibility	.00	.03	.00	.00	-.01	-.00	-.03	-.05	-.04	-.08	-.07	-.06
Tenure	-.13*	-.14*	-.14*	-.17*	-.15*	-.15*	.05	.08	.08	.06	.03	.03
<b>Predictor</b>												
Perceived availability of FWP's		-.08	-.26*		.26***	.41***		.30***	.40***		-.29***	-.30**
<b>Moderator</b>												
Gender			.02			-.16**			-.07			-.09
<b>Interaction term</b>												
Perceived availability of FWP's x Gender			<b>.22*</b>			<b>-.18</b>			<b>-.12</b>			<b>.01</b>
$R^2$	.06	.07	.08	.06	.12	.16	.05	.13	.14	.05	.12	.13
$F$	2.30*	2.23*	2.26*	2.36**	4.28**	4.71***	1.75	4.62***	4.05***	1.71	4.28***	3.74***
$\Delta R^2$	.06	.01	.01	.06	.06	.04	.05	.08	.01	.05	.07	.01
$F$ for $\Delta R^2$	2.30*	1.63*	2.32*	2.36*	18.48***	5.94**	1.75	26.30***	1.43	1.71	23.78***	1.25

$n = 293$ , Standardised coefficients are reported, \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

The results indicate that ‘Perceived availability of FWPs x Gender’ had a significant effect on employee self-rated performance ( $\beta = .22, p < .05$ ) but not on wellbeing ( $\beta = -.18, n.s.$ ), work-life balance ( $\beta = -.12, n.s.$ ) and turnover intentions ( $\beta = .01, n.s.$ ). The relationship between perceived availability of FWPs and performance is plotted for two categories of employees- women vs men- in Figure 4.1. The relationship was negative and significant for men ( $b = -.09, p < .05$ ) and positive but non-significant for women ( $b = .00, n.s.$ ). Thus, no support was found for H1a, H2a, H3a and H4a.

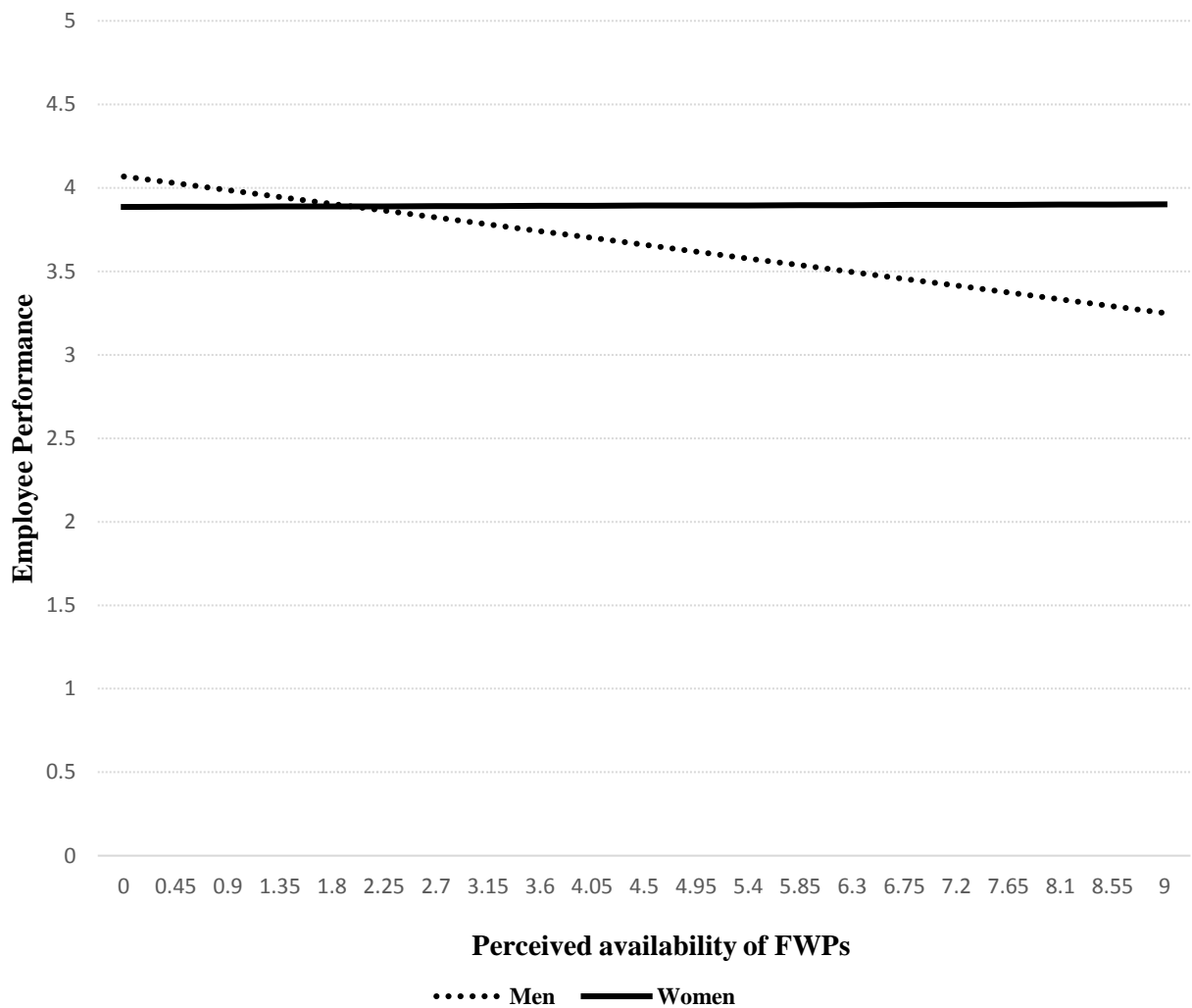


Figure 4. 1. Interaction effects of perceived availability of FWPs and gender on employee performance.

### **4.3.2 Moderating role of gender on usage of FWPs and employee outcomes relationships - H5a, H6a, H7a, H8a and H9a**

Hypotheses H5a, H6a, H7a, H8a and H9a pertain to the moderating effects of employee gender on usage of FWPs and employee outcomes (performance, wellbeing, work-life balance, turnover intentions and career consequences). H5a, H6a and H7a proposed that employee gender moderates the positive FWPs usage and employee outcomes (performance, wellbeing and work-life balance) relationships such that the positive relationship would be stronger for women than for men. H8a and H9a proposed that employee gender moderates the negative of FWPs usage and employee outcomes (turnover intentions and career consequences) relationships, such that the negative relationship would be stronger for women than for men.

Table 4.5 presents the results of the moderating effects of gender usage of FWPs and employee outcomes. In Step 1 (see Model 1 column in Table 4.5) relevant controls (age, partner status, salary, tenure, managerial responsibility, caring for others) were entered followed by the predictor variable (Usage of FWPs) in Step 2 (see Model 2 column in Table 4.5). The moderating variable (Gender) and the interaction term (Usage of FWPs x Gender) were entered in Step 3 (see Model 3 column in Table 4.5).

Table 4.5

*Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Usage of FWP's and Employee Outcomes with the Moderating Effects of Gender- H5a, H6a, H7a, H8a and H9a*

	Performance			Wellbeing			Work-life Balance			Turnover Intentions			Career Consequences		
	$\beta$ (Model 1)	$\beta$ (Model 2)	$\beta$ (Model 3)	$\beta$ (Model 1)	$\beta$ (Model 2)	$\beta$ (Model 3)	$\beta$ (Model 1)	$\beta$ (Model 2)	$\beta$ (Model 3)	$\beta$ (Model 1)	$\beta$ (Model 2)	$\beta$ (Model 3)	$\beta$ (Model 1)	$\beta$ (Model 2)	$\beta$ (Model 3)
<b>Controls</b>															
Partner status	.12*	.12*	.13*	.07	.08	.08	-.07	-.05	-.06	.01	-.01	-.01	-.01	-.01	-.01
Age under 35 years	-.01	-.01	-.01	-.08	-.09	-.10	-.01	-.02	-.03	.06	.07	.06	.07	.07	.06
Age over 45 years	.07	.07	.07	.15*	.17*	.16*	.10	.12	.12	-.07	-.09	-.09	.01	.01	.01
Caring for others	-.01	-.01	-.01	.03	.05	.06	-.08	-.05	-.05	-.12*	-.16**	-.16**	.05	.05	.05
Salary under 55k	-.19**	-.19**	-.19**	-.04	-.04	-.03	-.04	-.04	-.04	.05	.05	.05	.11	.11	.11
Salary Over 100k	-.03	-.03	-.02	.07	.02	-.04	.13	.06	.03	-.06	.03	.01	-.11	-.11	-.13
Managerial responsibility	.00	.00	-.00	.00	.00	.01	-.03	-.04	-.03	-.08	-.08	-.08	.03	.03	.03
Tenure	-.13*	-.13*	-.13*	-.17*	-.17*	-.17**	.05	.05	.05	.06	.06	.06	.00	.00	-.00
<b>Predictor</b>															
Usage of FWP's		.00	-.16		.16*	.35**		.22***	.27*		-.26***	-.27*		.00	-.04
<b>Moderator</b>															
Gender			-.09			-.06			-.07			-.08			-.08
<b>Interaction term</b>															
Usage of FWP's x Gender			.22			-.24			-.05			.03			.07
$R^2$	.06	.06	.07	.06	.08	.12	.05	.09	.10	.05	.10	.11	.04	.04	.04
$F$	2.30*	2.04*	1.91*	2.36*	2.87**	3.63***	1.75	3.00**	2.70**	1.71	3.55***	3.02**	1.55	1.37	1.19
$\Delta R^2$	.06	.00	.01	.06	.02	.04	.05	.04	.01	.05	.06	.00	.04	.00	.00
$F$ for $\Delta R^2$	2.30*	.00	1.32	2.36*	6.54*	6.56**	1.75	12.48***	1.31	1.71	17.54***	.64	1.55	.001	.411

$n = 293$ , Standardised coefficients are reported, \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

The results indicate that ‘Usage of FWPs x Gender’ did not have a significant effect on employee self-rated performance ( $\beta = .22$ , n.s.), wellbeing ( $\beta = -.24$ , n.s.), work-life balance ( $\beta = -.05$ , n.s), turnover intentions ( $\beta = .03$ , n.s.) and career consequences ( $\beta = .07$ , n.s.). Thus, no support was found for H5a, H6a, H7a, H8a and H9a.

### **4.3.3 Moderating role of social support on perceived availability of FWPs and employee outcomes relationships - H1b, H2b, H3b and H4b**

H1b, H2b, H3b and H4b pertain to the moderating effects of non-work-related social support on perceived availability of FWPs and employee outcomes. H1b, H2b and H3b proposed that social support from family members and friends moderates the positive relationship between perceived availability of FWPs and employee outcomes (performance, wellbeing and work-life balance) such that the positive relationship would be stronger for employees with high levels of social support than those with low levels of social support. H4b proposed that the social support from family members and friends moderates the negative relationship between perceived availability of FWPs and employee turnover intentions such that the relationship would be stronger for employees with low levels of social support than those with high levels of social support.

Table 4.6 presents the results of the moderating effects of social support. In Step 1 (see Model 1 column in Table 4.6) relevant controls (age, gender, partner status, salary, tenure, managerial responsibility, caring for others) were entered followed by the predictor variable (Perceived availability of FWPs) in Step 2 (see Model 2 column in Table 4.6). The moderating variable (Social Support) and the interaction term (Perceived availability of FWPs x Social Support) were entered in Step 3 (see Model 3 column in Table 4.6).

Table 4.6

*Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Perceived Availability of FWPs and Employee Outcomes with the Moderating Effects of Social Support- H1b, H2b, H3b and H4b*

	Performance			Wellbeing			Work-life Balance			Turnover Intentions		
	$\beta$ (Model 1)	$\beta$ (Model 2)	$\beta$ (Model 3)	$\beta$ (Model 1)	$\beta$ (Model 2)	$\beta$ (Model 3)	$\beta$ (Model 1)	$\beta$ (Model 2)	$\beta$ (Model 3)	$\beta$ (Model 1)	$\beta$ (Model 2)	$\beta$ (Model 3)
<b>Controls</b>												
Partner status	.12*	.12*	.08	.07	.07	.08	-.07	-.06	-.08	.01	.00	.03
Age under 35 years	-.01	-.01	-.01	-.10	-.10	-.10	-.02	-.02	-.03	.05	.06	.06
Age over 45 years	.07	.06	.07	.15*	.16*	.16*	.10	.11	.12	-.07	-.08	-.09
Caring for others	-.01	-.02	-.03	.03	.08	.08	-.09	-.02	-.03	-.12*	-.18***	-.17**
Salary under 55k	-.19**	-.19**	-.23***	-.04	-.05	-.05	-.04	-.06	-.08	.05	.07	.10
Salary Over 100k	-.02	-.00	-.03	.03	-.03	-.03	.11	.04	.02	-.08	.01	.00
Managerial responsibility	-.00	.00	-.00	.01	.00	.00	-.03	-.04	-.04	-.08	-.06	-.06
Tenure	-.13*	-.14*	-.13	-.17**	-.15*	-.15*	.05	.08	.07	.06	.03	.02
Gender	.02	.02	.01	-.16**	-.17*	-.16**	-.06	-.07	-.07	-.10	-.09	-.08
<b>Predictor</b>												
Perceived availability of FWPs		-.08	-.11		.26***	.26***		.30***	.31***		-.29***	-.27***
<b>Moderator</b>												
Social Support			.22***			-.01			.08			-.15
<b>Interaction term</b>												
Perceived availability of FWPs x Social Support			.04			-.03			-.07			-.04
$R^2$	.06	.07	.11	.09	.15	.15	.05	.13	.14	.06	.13	.15
$F$	2.05*	2.02*	2.84*	2.98**	4.81***	4.01***	1.68	4.31***	3.95***	1.82	4.12***	4.02***
$\Delta R^2$	.06	.01	.04	.09	.06	.00	.05	.08	.01	.06	.07	.02
$F$ for $\Delta R^2$	2.05*	1.64	6.58**	2.98**	19.51***	.17	1.68	26.60***	1.98	1.82	23.57***	3.17**

$n = 293$ , Standardised coefficients are reported, \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

The results indicate that ‘Perceived availability of FWPs x Social Support’ did not have a significant effect on employee self-rated performance ( $\beta = .04$ , n.s.), wellbeing ( $\beta = -.03$ , n.s.), work-life balance ( $\beta = -.07$ , n.s) and turnover intentions ( $\beta = -.04$ , n.s.) .Thus, no support was found for H1b, H2b, H3b and H4b.

#### **4.3.4 Moderating role of social support on usage of FWPs and employee outcomes relationships - H5b, H6b, H7b, H8b and H9b**

H5b, H6b, H7b, H8b and H9b pertain to the moderating effects of non-work related social support on the usage of FWPs and employee outcomes. H5b, H6b and H7b proposed that social support from family members and friends moderate the positive relationship between FWPs usage and employee outcomes (performance, wellbeing and work-life balance) such that the positive relationship would be stronger for employees with high levels of social support than those with low levels of social support. H8b and H9b proposed that the social support from family members and friends moderates the negative relationship between FWPs usage and employee outcomes (turnover intentions and career consequences) such that the relationship would be stronger for employees with low levels of social support than those with high levels of social support.

Table 4.7 presents the result of the moderating effects of social support. In Step 1 (see Model 1 column in Table 4.7) relevant controls (age, gender, partner status, salary, tenure, managerial responsibility, caring for others) were entered followed by the predictor variable (Usage of FWPs) in Step 2 (see Model 2 column in Table 4.7). The moderating variable (Social Support) and the interaction term (Usage of FWPs x Social Support) were entered in Step 3 (see Model 3 column in Table 4.7).



Table 4.7.

*Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Usage of FWP and Employee Outcomes with the Moderating Effects of Social Support-H5b, H6b, H7b, H8b and H9b*

	Performance			Wellbeing			Work-life Balance			Turnover Intentions			Career Consequences		
	$\beta$ (Model 1)	$\beta$ (Model 2)	$\beta$ (Model 3)	$\beta$ (Model 1)	$\beta$ (Model 2)	$\beta$ (Model 3)	$\beta$ (Model 1)	$\beta$ (Model 2)	$\beta$ (Model 3)	$\beta$ (Model 1)	$\beta$ (Model 2)	$\beta$ (Model 3)	$\beta$ (Model 1)	$\beta$ (Model 2)	$\beta$ (Model 3)
<b>Controls</b>															
Partner status	.12*	.12*	.08	.07	.08	.08	-.07	-.05	-.07	.01	-.01	.02	-.01	-.01	-.03
Age under 35 years	-.01	-.01	-.01	-.10	-.10	-.10	-.02	-.03	-.03	.05	.06	.07	.06	.06	.06
Age over 45 years	.07	.07	.08	.15*	.16*	.16*	.10	.12	.12	-.07	-.09	-.10	.00	.01	.01
Caring for others	-.01	-.01	-.02	.03	.05	.05	-.08	-.05	-.05	-.12*	-.16**	-.15**	.05	.05	.05
Salary under 55k	-.19**	-.19**	-.24***	-.04	-.03	-.03	-.04	-.04	-.06	.05	.05	.08	.11	.11	.08
Salary Over 100k	-.02	-.02	-.04	.03	-.04	-.04	.11	.03	.02	-.08	.01	.02	-.13	-.13	-.14
Managerial responsibility	-.00	-.00	-.01	.01	.01	.01	-.03	-.03	-.03	-.08	-.08	-.07	.03	.03	.03
Tenure	-.13*	.01*	-.12	-.17**	-.17**	-.17**	.05	.05	.06	.06	.06	.05	-.00	-.00	.00
Gender	.02	.02	.02	-.16**	-.18**	-.18**	-.06	-.09	-.10	-.10	-.07	-.06	-.04	-.05	-.05
<b>Predictor</b>															
Usage of FWPs		-.00	-.04		.18**	.18**		.23***	.22**		-.25***	-.23***		.01	-.01
<b>Moderator</b>															
Social support			.21**			.00			.10			-.14*			.11
<b>Interaction term</b>															
Usage of FWPs x Social Support			.03			-.00			.00			-.01			-.05
$R^2$	.06	.06	.10	.09	.12	.12	.05	.09	.10	.06	.11	.12	.04	.04	.05
$F$	2.05*	1.84	2.60**	2.98**	3.66***	3.03**	1.68	2.97**	2.68**	1.82	3.32***	3.26***	1.44	1.29	1.40
$\Delta R^2$	.06	.00	.04	.09	.03	.00	.05	.04	.01	.06	.05	.01	.04	.00	.01
$F$ for $\Delta R^2$	2.05*	.00	6.03**	2.98**	8.99**	.00	1.68	13.86***	1.24	1.82	16.01***	2.72	1.44	.02	1.89

$n = 293$ , Standardised coefficients are reported, \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

The results indicate that ‘Usage of FWPs x Social Support’ did not have a significant effect on employee self-rated performance ( $\beta = .03$ , n.s.), wellbeing ( $\beta = -.00$ , n.s.), work-life balance ( $\beta = .00$ , n.s.), turnover intentions ( $\beta = -.01$ , n.s.) and career consequences ( $\beta = -.05$ , n.s.). Thus, no support was found for H5b, H6b, H7b, H8b and H9b.

#### **4.3.5 Moderating role of flexibility stigma on perceived availability of FWPs and employee outcomes relationships - H1c, H2c, H3c and H4c**

H1c, H2c, H3c and H4c pertain to the moderating effects of flexibility stigma on perceived availability of FWPs and employee outcomes. H1c, H2c and H3c proposed that flexibility stigma moderates the positive relationship between perceived availability of FWPs and employee outcomes (performance, wellbeing and work-life balance) such that the positive relationship would be stronger for employees with low levels of stigma than those with high levels of stigma. H4c proposed that flexibility stigma moderates the negative relationship between perceived availability of FWPs and employee turnover intentions such that the negative relationship would be stronger for employees with high levels of stigma than those with low levels of stigma.

Table 4.8 presents the result of the moderating effects of flexibility stigma. In Step 1 (see Model 1 column in Table 4.8) relevant controls (age, gender, partner status, salary, tenure, managerial responsibility, caring for others) were entered followed by the predictor variable (Perceived availability of FWPs) in Step 2 (see Model 2 column in Table 4.8). The moderating variable (Flexibility Stigma) and the interaction term (Perceived availability of FWPs x Flexibility Stigma) were entered in Step 3 (see Model 3 column in Table 4.8).

Table 4.8

*Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Perceived Availability of FWPs and Employee Outcomes with the Moderating Effects of Flexibility Stigma -H1c, H2c, H3c and H4c.*

	Performance			Wellbeing			Work-life Balance			Turnover Intentions		
	$\beta$ (Model 1)	$\beta$ (Model 2)	$\beta$ (Model 3)	$\beta$ (Model 1)	$\beta$ (Model 2)	$\beta$ (Model 3)	$\beta$ (Model1)	$\beta$ (Model 2)	$\beta$ (Model 3)	$\beta$ (Model 1)	$\beta$ (Model 2)	$\beta$ (Model 3)
<b>Controls</b>												
Partner status	.12	.12*	.12*	.07	.07	.07	-.07	-.06	-.07	.01	.00	.00
Age under 35 years	-.01	-.01	-.01	-.10	.08	-.11	-.02	-.02	-.03	.05	.06	.05
Age over 45 years	.07	.06	.06	.15*	-.10*	.15*	.10	.11	.09	-.07	-.08	-.07
Caring for others	-.01	-.02	-.02	.03	.08	.08	-.08	-.02	-.02	-.12*	-.18**	-.18**
Salary under 55k	-.19**	-.19**	-.19**	-.04	-.05	-.05	-.04	-.06	-.05	.05	.07	.06
Salary Over 100k	-.02	-.00	-.00	.03	-.03	-.04	.11	.04	.04	-.08	-.01	-.02
Managerial responsibility	-.00	.00	.00	.01	.00	-.01	-.03	-.04	-.05	-.08	-.06	-.07
Tenure	-.13*	-.14*	-.14*	-.17**	-.15*	-.15*	.05	.08	.08	.06	.03	.02
Gender	.02	.02	.03	-.16	-.17**	-.17**	-.06	-.07	-.08	-.10	-.09	-.10
<b>Predictor</b>												
Perceived availability of FWPs		-.08	-.08		.26***	.25***		.30***	.28***		-.29***	-.26***
<b>Moderator</b>												
Flexibility stigma			-.01			-.09			-.19**			.10
<b>Interaction term</b>												
Perceived availability of FWPs x Flexibility Stigma			<b>-.01</b>			<b>.07</b>			<b>.05</b>			<b>.05</b>
$R^2$	.06	.07	.07	.09	.15	.16	.05	.13	.17	.06	.13	.14
$F$	2.05*	2.02*	1.67	2.98**	4.81***	4.35***	1.68	4.31***	4.72***	1.82	4.12***	3.81***
$\Delta R^2$	.06	.01	.00	.09	.06	.01	.05	.08	.04	.06	.07	.01
$F$ for $\Delta R^2$	2.05*	1.64	.03	2.98**	19.51***	1.90	1.68	26.60***	5.98**	1.82	23.57***	2.08

$n = 293$ , Standardised coefficients are reported, \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

The results indicate that ‘Perceived availability of FWPs x Flexibility Stigma’ did not have a significant effect on employee self-rated performance ( $\beta = -.01$ , n.s.), wellbeing ( $\beta = .07$ , n.s.), work-life balance ( $\beta = .05$ , n.s.) and turnover intentions ( $\beta = .05$ , n.s.). Thus, no support was found for H1c, H2c, H3c and H4c.

#### **4.3.6 Moderating role of flexibility stigma on usage of FWPs and employee outcomes relationships - H5c, H6c, H7c, H8c and H9c**

H5c, H6c, H7c, H8c and H9c pertain to the moderating effects of flexibility stigma on the usage of FWPs and employee outcomes. H5c, H6c and H7c proposed that flexibility stigma moderates the positive relationship between usage of FWPs and employee outcomes (performance, wellbeing and work-life balance) such that the positive relationship would be stronger for employees with low levels of stigma than those with high levels of stigma. H8c and H9c proposed that flexibility stigma moderates the negative relationship between usage of FWPs and employee outcomes (turnover intentions and career consequences) such that the negative relationship would be stronger for employees with high levels of stigma than those with low levels of stigma.

Table 4.9 presents the result of the moderating effects of flexibility stigma. In Step 1 (see Model 1 column in Table 4.9) relevant controls (age, gender, partner status, salary, tenure, managerial responsibility, caring for others) were entered followed by the predictor variable (Usage of FWPs) in Step 2 (see Model 2 column in Table 4.9). The moderating variable (Flexibility Stigma) and the interaction term (Usage of FWPs x Flexibility Stigma) were entered in Step 3 (see Model 3 column in Table 4.9).

Table 4.9.

*Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Usage of FWPs and Employee Outcomes with the Moderating Effects of Flexibility Stigma -H5c, H6c, H7c, H8c and H9c*

	Performance			Wellbeing			Work-life Balance			Turnover Intentions			Career Consequences		
	$\beta$ (Model 1)	$\beta$ (Model 2)	$\beta$ (Model 3)	$\beta$ (Model 1)	$\beta$ (Model 2)	$\beta$ (Model 3)	$\beta$ (Model 1)	$\beta$ (Model 2)	$\beta$ (Model 3)	$\beta$ (Model 1)	$\beta$ (Model 2)	$\beta$ (Model 3)	$\beta$ (Model 1)	$\beta$ (Model 2)	$\beta$ (Model 3)
<b>Controls</b>															
Partner status	.12*	.12*	.12*	.07	.08	.08	-.07	-.05	-.06	.01	-.01	-.00	-.01	-.01	-.02
Age under 35 years	-.01	-.01	-.01	-.10	-.10	-.11	-.02	-.03	-.04	.05	.06	.07	.06	.06	.05
Age over 45 years	.07	.07	.07	.15*	-.16*	.15*	.10	.12	.09	-.07	-.09	-.08	.00	.01	-.04
Caring for others	-.01	-.01	-.01	.03	.05	.05	-.08	-.05	-.05	-.12*	-.16**	-.16**	.05	.05	.06
Salary under 55k	-.19**	-.19**	-.19**	-.04	-.03	-.03	-.04	-.04	-.03	.05	.05	.05	.11	.11	.11
Salary Over 100k	-.02	-.02	-.02	.03	-.04	-.04	.11	.03	.03	-.08	.01	.01	-.13	-.13	-.12
Managerial responsibility	-.00	-.00	-.01	.01	.01	-.01	-.03	-.03	-.05	-.08	-.08	-.07	.03	.03	.03
Tenure	-.03*	-.13*	-.13*	-.17**	-.17**	-.16*	.05	.05	.07	.06	.06	.05	-.00	-.00	.03
Gender	.02	.02	.02	-.16**	-.18**	-.18**	-.06	-.09	-.09	-.10	-.07	-.07	-.04	-.05	-.04
<b>Predictor</b>															
Usage of FWPs		-.00	.00		.18**	.18**		.23***	.23**		-.25***	-.23***		.01	-.05
<b>Moderator</b>															
Flexibility stigma			.00			-.09			-.19**			.12*			-.42***
<b>Interaction term</b>															
Usage of FWPs x Flexibility Stigma			.04			.11			.10			.00			-.06
$R^2$	.06	.06	.06	.09	.12	.14	.05	.09	.14	.06	.11	.12	.04	.04	.21
$F$	2.05*	1.84	1.56	2.98**	3.66***	3.67***	1.68	2.97**	3.91***	1.82	3.32***	3.14***	1.44	1.29	6.26***
$\Delta R^2$	.06	.00	.00	.09	.03	.02	.05	.04	.05	.06	.05	.01	.04	.00	.17
$F$ for $\Delta R^2$	2.05*	.00	.22	2.98**	8.99**	3.42*	1.68	13.86***	7.91***	1.82	16.01***	2.09	1.44	.02	29.80***

$n = 293$ , Standardised coefficients are reported, \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

The results indicate that ‘Usage of FWPs x Flexibility Stigma’ did not have a significant effect on employee self-rated performance ( $\beta = .04$ , n.s.), wellbeing ( $\beta = .11$ , n.s.), work-life balance ( $\beta = .10$ , n.s), turnover intentions ( $\beta = .00$ , n.s.) and career consequences ( $\beta = -.06$ , n.s.). Thus, no support was found for H5c, H6c, H7c, H8c and H9c.

#### 4.4 SUMMARY OF RESULTS

Table 4.10 presents a summary of the results for hypotheses H1 to H9 (main effects) and H1a to H9a (moderating effects of gender), H1b to H9b (moderating effects of social support) and H1c to H9c (moderating effects of flexibility stigma).

Table 4.10

*Summary of Support for Hypotheses H1 to H9, H1a to H9a, H1b to H9b and H1c to H9c*

	<b>Performance</b>	<b>Wellbeing</b>	<b>Work-life balance</b>	<b>Turnover intentions</b>	<b>Career Consequences</b>
<b>Main Effects</b>					
Perceived Availability of FWPs	<b>H1</b> No Support	<b>H2</b> Support	<b>H3</b> Support	<b>H4</b> Support	
Usage of FWPs	<b>H5</b> No Support	<b>H6</b> Support	<b>H7</b> Support	<b>H8</b> Support	<b>H9</b> No Support
<b>Moderating Effects</b>					
<b>1. Gender</b>					
Perceived Availability of FWPs	<b>H1a</b> No Support	<b>H2a</b> No Support	<b>H3a</b> No Support	<b>H4a</b> No Support	
Usage of FWPs	<b>H5a</b> No Support	<b>H6a</b> No Support	<b>H7a</b> No Support	<b>H8a</b> No Support	<b>H9a</b> No Support
<b>2. Social Support</b>					
Perceived Availability of FWPs	<b>H1b</b> No Support	<b>H2b</b> No Support	<b>H3b</b> No Support	<b>H4b</b> No Support	
Usage of FWPs	<b>H5b</b> No Support	<b>H6b</b> No Support	<b>H7b</b> No Support	<b>H8b</b> No Support	<b>H9b</b> No Support
<b>3. Flexibility Stigma</b>					
Perceived Availability of FWPs	<b>H1c</b> No Support	<b>H2c</b> No Support	<b>H3c</b> No Support	<b>H4c</b> No Support	
Usage of FWPs	<b>H5c</b> No Support	<b>H6c</b> No Support	<b>H7c</b> No Support	<b>H8c</b> No Support	<b>H9c</b> No Support

## 4.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter has reported the results of the main effects of perceived availability of FWPs and usage of FWPs on employee outcomes (performance, wellbeing, work-life balance, turnover intentions and career consequences). No relationship with employee performance was found for both perceived availability of FWPs and usage of FWPs. No relationship was found with career consequences for usage of FWPs. However, significant relationships were found between perceived availability of FWPs and wellbeing, work-life balance, turnover intentions, as well as usage of FWPs and wellbeing, work-life balance, turnover intentions as predicted. There was no support for moderating effects of gender, social support and flexibility stigma on these relationships: i) perceived availability of FWPs and employee outcomes; and ii) usage of FWPs and employee outcomes. These results are discussed in the next chapter.

# Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion

## 5.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the findings of this study pertaining to the FWPs and employee outcomes relationships in comparison with past empirical research, to explain the inconsistent findings. Findings of this study provide evidence of the main effects of both perceived availability of FWPs and usage of FWPs on employee wellbeing, work-life balance and turnover intentions. There is no evidence of any moderating effects. Furthermore, this chapter discusses the contributions of this study along with limitations and future research directions.

## 5.1 SUMMARY OF THE RESULTS

This study empirically investigated the impact of FWPs on five employee outcomes (performance, wellbeing, work-life balance, turnover intentions and career consequences). Moreover, this study provides a comprehensive understanding of the FWPs and employee outcomes relationship coupled with the effects of contingent factors that either strengthen or weaken this relationship. Prior empirical studies generally focused on the relationship between FWPs usage and employee outcomes (Avgoustaki & Bessa, 2019; de Menezes & Kelliher, 2017) while some studies also focused on perceived availability of FWPs and employee outcomes (Richman et al., 2008). However, very few prior research studies have incorporated both measures of employee experience with FWPs within the same study and identified very different effects these two measures have on employee outcomes. (Chen & Fulmer, 2018; Eaton, 2003; Jones et al., 2008).

Using cross-sectional employee-level data, this study sought to examine whether usage of FWPs influences employee outcomes above and beyond the perception of FWPs. Furthermore, the moderating effects of gender, social support and flexibility stigma on the FWPs and employee outcomes relationship were examined to explain the inconsistent findings in prior studies. The findings from this study assist in answering the overarching research question: **“What are the impacts of perceived**



**availability of FWPs and usage of FWPs on employee outcomes?”** The main effects of perceived availability of FWPs and usage of FWPs have a positive impact on employee outcomes. The following sections discuss the findings of this study based on main effects and moderating effects.

## **5.2 MAIN EFFECTS**

This study investigated nine main effects of perceived availability of FWPs and usage of FWPs on employee outcomes. Among these nine effects, four were related to the effects of perceived availability of FWPs on employee performance, wellbeing, work-life balance and turnover intentions and five were related to the effects of FWPs usage on employee performance, wellbeing, work-life balance, turnover intentions and career consequences.

### **5.2.1 Perceived availability of FWPs and employee outcomes**

Contrary to expectations, the findings of this study suggested that the perceived availability of FWPs did not influence employee self-rated performance. Therefore, this result did not support the social exchange theory (Homans, 1958) used to derive linear FWPs-employee outcomes predictions. One plausible explanation of such finding is that usage of practices are necessary to receive the full benefits of FWPs (Chen & Fulmer, 2018). There is a lack of empirical evidence regarding the direct and/or indirect relationship between perceived availability of FWPs and self-reported performance. Considering the effects of perceived availability of five types of FWPs on employee self-rated productivity, Eaton (2003) found a positive association as opposed to the findings of this study. The finding of this study provides insights into the knowledge of the relationship between perceived availability of FWPs and employee performance.

The result of the study supported the predicted positive effect of perceived availability of FWPs on employee wellbeing. The finding suggested that the availability of FWPs in an organisation increased physical and psychological aspects of employee wellbeing. Therefore, results of the study supported the social exchange theory (Homans, 1958) used to derive linear FWPs-employee outcomes predictions. Most of the prior studies also found a positive relationship between perceived availability of FWPs and employee wellbeing. For instance, Nadeem and Metcalf

(2007) identified a direct relationship between the perceived availability of FWPs and employee stress which was used as a proxy for wellbeing. Considering an indirect relationship, a recent study by Bayazit and Bayazit (2019) found positive association between perceived availability of FWPs (flexitime, part-time work, telecommuting, time off in lieu, rostered days off) and general health. This relationship was mediated by successful negotiation of flexibility i-deals that affected work to family conflict and, in turn, general health of employees. The positive impact of perceived availability of FWPs on employee wellbeing strengthens the evidence provided by literature. Specifically, it adds to a small body of literature that supports the importance of perceived availability of workplace practices by employees whether they use them or not.

The result of this study found support for a positive effect of perceived availability of FWPs on employee work-life balance. The finding provides empirical evidence that the perceived availability of FWPs assists employees to balance work and non-work demands. Therefore, the results of this study supported the social exchange theory (Homans, 1958) used to derive the positive linear FWPs-employee outcomes predictions. The finding is consistent with prior empirical research that also demonstrated a positive relationship between perceived availability of FWPs (e.g. flexitime and flexiplace) and employee work-life balance (Hayman, 2009; Hill, Hawkins, Ferris, & Weitzman, 2001). Since a significant number of prior studies conceptualised “work-life balance” as the absence of “work-life conflict”, not as a separate concept, the finding of this study refines current work-life literature by confirming the positive impact of the perceived availability of FWPs on employee work-life balance.

The results of this study found support for a negative association between perceived availability of FWPs and employee turnover intentions. Perceived availability of FWPs in the organisation is interpreted by employees as a support for their work and non-work demands that reduces their intention to leave the organisation. This result supported the social exchange theory (Homans, 1958) used to derive the positive linear FWPs-employee outcomes predictions. This finding is consistent with prior empirical studies that also identified a negative relationship between perceived flexibility and employees’ intention to stay in the current organisation (Richman et al., 2008). The same study found that perceived flexibility

increased employee engagement that, in turn, resulted in reduced intention to quit the organisation. However, the result of the above study was inconsistent with prior research that found no effect of FWPs availability (e.g. part-time work, job sharing flexitime, telecommuting, compressed work week) on turnover intentions (Casper & Harris, 2008). The negative effect of perceived availability of FWPs on employee turnover intentions strengthens the evidence provided in work-life literature.

### **5.2.2 Usage of FWPs and employee outcomes**

The result did not support the predicted positive relationship between usage of FWPs and employee self-rated performance. This finding suggested that employee performance was not influenced by their usage of FWPs. Therefore, social exchange theory (Homans, 1958) used to derive the positive linear FWPs-employee outcomes predictions is not supported. However, the lack of support is consistent with some past empirical studies. For instance, Hill et al. (2003) did not find a significant relationship between teleworking and employee performance appraisal ratings among virtual workers, home workers and traditional office workers. Similarly, Wallace and Young (2008) identified no effect of job flexibility on the productivity of female lawyers and a negative effect on male lawyers.

In contrast, the lack of support for a positive relationship between FWPs usage and employee performance is inconsistent with past empirical research that suggested that FWPs usage has a positive influence on employee performance. For instance, a meta-analysis of the relationship between FWPs (flexitime and compressed workweek) and various employee work outcomes by Baltes et al. (1999) found a significant positive relationship between FWPs usage and productivity using supervisor rating but did not find any effect when performance was self-rated by employees. Likewise, considering telecommuting usage in their meta-analysis of telecommuting and employee outcomes, Gajendran and Harrison (2007) also did not find an improvement in employee performance when such performance was self-rated compared to supervisor's performance rating. Moreover, formal flexible work practices (e.g. remote working and flexible working hours) were identified to have a direct negative effect on employee performance but an indirect positive effect on employee performance via job satisfaction (de Menezes & Kelliher, 2017).

The inconsistent findings regarding the relationship between FWPs usage and employee self-reported performance can be explained as follows: length of employee's FWPs usage may affect their performance as it may take time to adjust to a new pattern of work and subsequently there may be a time lag before any impact on performance to take effect (de Menezes & Kelliher, 2011). Likewise, when FWPs become a norm and are available to all, they are not considered as a special entitlement to employees that, in turn, demotivates them to perform better as a reciprocal obligation (de Menezes & Kelliher, 2011; de Menezes & Kelliher, 2017). Moreover, as self-reporting of performance was found to be more lenient than objective rating by others (e.g. managers), there is not much scope for exhibiting further improvement in performance rating (Baltes et al., 1999; Farh et al., 1991). The finding of this study adds to a small body of literature that does not support a positive linear relationship between FWPs usage and employee performance.

The result of the study supported the predicted positive effect of FWPs usage on employee wellbeing. Employee wellbeing (physical & psychological) increased by the usage of various FWPs in the organisation, which supports the social exchange theory (Homans, 1958) used to derive the positive linear FWPs-employee outcomes predictions. This finding is consistent with prior empirical research that used general health outcomes, psychological strain depression, stress, burnout etc. as the measures of employee wellbeing and found that FWPs usage (e.g. flexitime, compressed workweek, schedule control) had a positive direct and indirect influence on employee wellbeing (Costa, Sartori, & Åkerstedt, 2006; Jang, 2009; Kattenbach, Demerouti, & Nachreiner, 2010; Thomas & Ganster, 1995). On the other hand, quite a significant number of studies have identified that FWP usage, particularly, remote working, reduced-hour work, long and unsocial work hours increased employee stress and work intensification (Fein et al., 2017; Kelliher & Anderson, 2010; Piasna, 2018). The positive impact of FWPs usage on employee wellbeing strengthens the evidence provided by work-life literature.

The result of this study supported the predicted positive effect of FWPs usage on employee work-life balance. Usage of FWPs assists employees in balancing their work, and non-work life demands which supported the social exchange theory (Homans, 1958) used to derive the positive linear FWPs-employee outcomes predictions. This finding is consistent with some past empirical studies that also found

a positive influence of FWP usage (e.g. flexitime and part-time work) on the work-life balance of office-based and administration employees (Hayman, 2009; Peters et al., 2009; Saltzstein, Ting, & Saltzstein, 2001; Tausig & Fenwick, 2001). Contrary to the positive findings, a few studies found that certain FWPs (e.g. teleworking and job share arrangements) did not enhance employee work-life balance but rather increased conflict between work and non-work lives by allowing work responsibilities to invade family life (Felstead et al., 2002; Hayman, 2009; Saltzstein et al., 2001). The positive impact of FWPs on employee wellbeing strengthens the evidence provided by work-life literature.

The result of this study supported the predicted negative effect of FWP usage on employee turnover intentions. If employees can use FWPs to balance work-life demands, the likelihood to stay in the organisation for long-term increases, which supports the social exchange theory (Homans, 1958) used to derive the positive linear FWP-employee outcomes predictions. This finding is consistent with prior empirical research that also found a negative relationship between FWP usage (e.g. flexitime teleworking and compressed work-week) and employee turnover intentions (Gajendran & Harrison, 2007; McNall et al., 2009; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). In contrast, FWP usage (e.g. flexitime, compressed work-week, telecommuting) was found to have no significant effect on employee turnover intentions as identified by Timms et al. (2015). This non-significant result was attributed to lack of supportive organisational culture and lack of employee control over their work schedule (Behson, 2005; Straub, Vinkenburg, van Kleef, & Hofmans, 2018; Timms et al., 2015). The negative impact of FWP usage on employee turnover intentions strengthens the evidence provided by work-life literature.

The result of this study did not support the predicted negative effect of FWP usage on employee perceived career consequences. The finding suggested that employees perceive no career consequences resulting from the use of FWPs. Therefore, the findings did not support the signalling theory used to derive the negative linear FWP-employee outcomes predictions. This result is consistent with some prior empirical research that also found no adverse effect of telecommuting usage on employee career progress (Boreham, Lafferty, & Whitehouse, 2002; Gajendran & Harrison, 2007; McCloskey & Igarria, 2003). However, a significant number of

studies found that FWPs usage (e.g. telecommuting, part-time work, job sharing) did lead to negative career consequences such as reduced salary, lack of promotion, training and developmental opportunity (Bourdeau et al., 2019; Chung, 2018; Kirby & Krone, 2002; McDonald et al., 2008).

The inconsistent findings of the past research related to FWPs usage and employee career consequences can be explained as follows: the presence of formal FWPs in an organisation as per legislative requirement (e.g. in Australia, UK and USA) acts as a signal of support and encourages employees to utilise such practices without any negative repercussions. Moreover, as FWPs are used extensively in the participating organisation, they become normalised and not considered as an impediment to career progress (Hill et al., 2003). The non-significant findings of this study pertaining to the relationship between FWPs usage and employee career consequences refines empirical evidence provided by work-life literature.

### **5.3 MODERATING EFFECTS**

This study investigated whether the moderating effects of employee gender, non-work social support and flexibility stigma strengthen or weaken these relationships: perceived availability of FWPs and employee outcomes (performance, wellbeing, work-life balance and turnover intentions); and usage of FWPs and employee outcomes (performance, wellbeing, work-life balance, turnover intentions and career consequences). The findings did not support the predicted moderating effects of gender on the relationship between perceived availability of FWPs and employee self-rated performance. No support was found for the moderating effect of social support and flexibility stigma. The following sections explain the findings for each moderator in details.

#### **5.3.1 Moderating role of gender**

The study hypothesised that employee gender moderated these linear relationships: i) perceived availability of FWPs and employee outcomes; and ii) usage of FWPs and employee outcomes such that the relationships would be stronger for women than for men. The result did not support the moderating effects of gender (Women vs Men) on the relationship between perceived availability of FWPs and three employee outcomes (wellbeing, work-life balance and turnover intentions) and thus

did not find any support for the gender role theory (Eagly, 1987; Pleck, 1977) used to derive the predictions. The difference in organisation and country context may explain the overall non-significant moderating effect of gender on perceived availability of FWP and usage of FWP and employee outcomes (Chung & van der Lippe, 2018). If organisations have formal FWPs available and the organisational culture (e.g. supportive policies, supervisors, co-workers) is also supportive in the participating organisation, gender difference in outcomes of FWPs may not be salient (van der Lippe & Lippényi, 2018).

Similarly, the gender difference in FWPs and employee outcomes may be evident in more traditional gender cultures than gender-egalitarian countries as identified by Kurowska (2018) when exploring the effect of teleworking (work from home) on employee work-life balance. Contrary to the expectations, the relationship between perceived availability of FWPs and performance is non-significant for women and negative and significant for men. An explanation for this may be that, in an organisation where 60% of employees are female, availability of formal FWPs may elevate unfairness perception among male employees regarding the allocation of such practices. This perceived unfairness may lead to counterproductive behaviour that results in reduced performance (Beauregard, 2014; de Menezes & Kelliher, 2017).

### **5.3.2 Moderating role of social support**

The result of this study did not support the moderating effects of social support on any of these relationships: i) perceived availability of FWPs and employee outcomes; and ii) usage of FWPs and employee outcomes. Therefore, this study's results did not support the ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 1986). These non-significant results can be explained by the study of Parasuraman et al. (1992) who did not find any moderating or buffering effects of spousal support (non-work social support) on employee role stressors-wellbeing relationships. Utilising the explanation provided by Cohen and Syme (1985), Parasuraman et al. (1992) suggested that spousal support buffers the negative effects of role stress on employee wellbeing only when there is a lack of workplace resources available to manage multiple work-family demands. Therefore, it can be suggested that organisational resources such as the availability of formal FWPs are deemed as an organisation's support for employees

to balance both work and non-work responsibilities. This workplace resource may be sufficient to undermine the buffering role of non-work social support.

### **5.3.3 Moderating role of flexibility stigma**

The result of this study did not support the moderating effects of flexibility stigma on any of these relationships: i) perceived availability of FWP and employee outcomes; and ii) usage of FWP and employee outcomes. Therefore, this study's results did not find support for the ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 1986). The reason can be that the participating organisation has formal FWPs available and employees are encouraged to utilise such practices. Approximately 85% of employees perceive FWPs as available to them, while 87% of employees used at least one type of practice. As organisational culture is supportive of FWPs, perception of stigma related to working flexibly may not have a strong effect (Cech & O'Connor, 2017; Chung, 2018).

## **5.4 CONTRIBUTIONS**

The findings of this study provide several theoretical, research and practical contributions as discussed in the following sections.

### **5.4.1 Theoretical contributions**

This study contributes to the existing FWP literature by utilising social exchange theory (Homans, 1958) and signalling theory (Spence, 1973) to explore how employee experience with FWPs (perceived availability and usage) affect their work and non-work outcomes. Social exchange theory suggests that employees feel reciprocal obligation when they receive any benefits or rewards from the organisation. FWPs are organisational benefits or resources that assist employees to balance the responsibilities of both work and non-work domains. When employees perceive and/or exercise a flexible work practice, they feel obliged to return the benefit to the organisation in the form of positive attitudes (Chen & Fulmer, 2018; de Menezes & Kelliher, 2011; de Menezes & Kelliher, 2017). This study supports the reciprocal relationship between employees and the organisation by identifying the positive effect of both perceived availability of FWPs and usage of FWPs on employee outcomes: wellbeing, work-life balance and turnover intentions. The non-significant direct



relationship between FWP (perceived availability and usage) and employee performance needs further exploration to consider the role of contextual factors such as length and extent of FWP usage, supervisory support, co-worker use, training opportunities (de Menezes & Kelliher, 2017).

The findings of this study did not support the signalling perspective of FWP usage and career consequences relationships. This finding may have implications for further in-depth exploration of signalling theory to better explain how FWP usage influences employee career consequences. According to Leslie et al. (2012), the consequence of FWP usage is contingent on managers' FWP attributions. If employees use FWPs for family purposes, managers interpret such use as a signal of low commitment that leads to negative career consequences. In contrast, when employees use FWPs for productivity purpose, such usage leads to positive career consequences. This study did not identify the motives behind employee usage of FWPs that may suggest why the signalling perspective is not supported to explain the effect of FWPs on employee career.

The findings of this study did not find any support for the influence of contingent factors (employee gender, social support and flexibility stigma) on these relationships: perceived availability of FWPs and employee outcomes; and usage of FWPs and employee outcomes. Therefore, the results did not support the gender role theory (Eagly, 1987; Pleck, 1977) and ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 1986). In an organisation where both formal and informal FWPs are available, and all eligible employees are encouraged to utilise such practices, employee gender, social support and flexibility stigma are unlikely to have any role in influencing FWPs-employee outcomes relationship.

#### **5.4.2 Research contributions**

This study contributes to the work-life scholarship in several ways. *First*, the findings of this study contribute to the FWP literature by exploring how differences in employee experience with FWPs affect employee work and non-work outcomes. Specifically, the findings strengthen the evidence provided by prior research that employee perception of FWP availability is as important a determinant of employee work and non-work outcomes as actual usage of FWPs (Chen & Fulmer, 2018;

Richman et al., 2008). *Second*, this study advances the understanding of the complex relationships between availability and usage of FWP bundles (both formal and ad hoc FWPs) and a range of employee outcomes (both work and non-work) as most of the prior studies ignored the synergies between practices and the associated effects on a variety of employee outcomes (Chen & Fulmer, 2018; Eaton, 2003).

*Third*, the findings of this study contribute to the research related to the positive impact of FWPs on employee wellbeing by capturing a comprehensive approach to individual wellbeing that combines both physical and psychological aspects of wellbeing. Prior research was inconsistent in measuring individual wellbeing, which contributed to different findings of the FWPs-wellbeing relationship. Despite a few exceptions (e.g. Jang, 2009), most of the studies used either physical health, psychological health, stress, or depression etc. (Brough et al., 2005; Casey & Grzywacz, 2008; Thomas & Ganster, 1995) as a proxy for wellbeing whereas a holistic measurement of wellbeing should consider physical as well as psychological health.

*Fourth*, this study addressed one of the most researched contextual factors on FWP-employee outcomes relationships- employee gender. A large number of studies have found that the effects of FWPs on employee outcomes were stronger in women than in men (Carlson et al., 2010; Clark et al., 2017; Lott, 2018; Scandura & Lankau, 1997). This study did not find a significant effect of perceived availability of FWPs on women's performance and surprisingly, found a negative effect of perceived availability on men's performance. This negative relationship can be explained by the unfairness perception among male employees working in a female dominant workplace (Beauregard, 2014; de Menezes & Kelliher, 2017). More in-depth research can shed light on this unexpected pattern of relationship.

### **5.4.3 Practical implications**

This study has some practical implications for organisations. *First*, the findings suggest that employee perception of availability is as important as the usage of FWPs. To achieve desired outcomes from employees, organisations are required to create a supportive environment for them to encourage flexible working. When employees perceive their organisation as supportive for their work and non-work demands, employees strive to return the benefits received (FWPs) through increased

commitment and effort (Chen & Fulmer, 2018; Kelliher & Anderson, 2010). To demonstrate the support for a flexible workplace, supervisors and senior executives can encourage employees to use FWPs, can use such practices themselves and can make specific public disclosure in the organisation's websites, corporate documents and job advertisements to attract new talent (Cathcart, McDonald, & Grant-Smith, 2014; Eaton, 2003; Williams et al., 2017; Williams, 2017). As a lack of infrastructural support for FWPs at FinCo is pointed out by a few participants (in the form of comments provided at the 'comments' section of the survey), organisations can demonstrate their willingness for a flexible workplace through office redesign, job restructuring and technological investment.

*Second*, the current study has identified that ad hoc or informal FWPs are the highest used practice in FinCo. As ad hoc arrangements depend on managers' discretion and are not required to be recorded formally, organisations require clear HR policy and training for managers to guide the strategic implementation of ad hoc FWPs while considering the business benefits (Williams, 2017; de Menezes & Kelliher, 2017). *Third*, as this study found a negative effect of both availability and usage of FWPs on employee turnover intentions, organisations can design and implement practices to retain current employees and attract new talent and thereby gain long term competitive advantage (Rubery et al., 2016). *Fourth*, this study found a negative relationship between perceived availability of FWPs and men's performance. As some practices may be more valuable for men than women, the finding of this study provides insights for organisations to offer specific practices to specific employee groups to maximise organisational and employee outcomes (Chen & Fulmer, 2018).

The findings of this study also have several practical implications for employees. *First*, this study did not find any negative career consequences related to FWPs usage like prior studies (Fuller & Hirsh, 2019; Kirby & Krone, 2002; McDonald et al., 2008). It may encourage employees to request and utilise FWPs to balance their work and non-work lives. *Second*, a diverse range of employees (e.g. mothers of young children, individuals with disabilities, young students) can enter and remain in the workforce as FWPs enable them to balance work and non-work responsibilities (Rubery et al., 2016).

The findings of this study also have several policy implications. *First*, the positive outcomes strengthen government initiatives to initiate and implement employment policies to increase workforce participation of older workers, women with caring responsibilities, individuals with disabilities and other diverse groups (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2017). Increased participation of these employee groups in the paid workforce helps reduce welfare dependency and welfare costs (Purcell, 2010; Rubery et al., 2016). *Second*, as ad hoc (informal) FWP are the most used practices by employees, this study's findings may assist policy makers to incorporate specific regulations to existing flexible work arrangement legislation that ensure equal employee access to informal policies.

## **5.5 LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS**

This section summarises the limitations of this study and provides suggestions for future research avenues. As with most research, there are a few limitations of this study. *First*, this study examined the hypotheses using cross-sectional data collected from Australian employees which makes it difficult to eliminate alternative explanation of the cause-effect relationship and thus limits the possibility to make causal inferences (Chen & Fulmer, 2018; Eaton, 2003; Zikmund, Babin, Carr, & Griffin, 2009). For instance, it is likely that employees with higher work-life balance and wellbeing may perceive FWPs as available to them. Future research is encouraged to use longitudinal data to explore the influence of FWPs usage on employee outcomes to pinpoint the direction of causality (McNall et al., 2009). Longitudinal data will be useful to determine the effect of FWPs usage on employee performance as any impact of HR practices may take several years to affect performance (de Menezes & Kelliher, 2017).

*Second*, this study utilises self-reported data to measure employee performance which may contribute to response bias and thus inflate the relationship between FWPs and employee performance (Podsakoff et al., 2003). However, prior studies did not find a significant difference between self-reported performance ratings from employees and actual performance ratings from employers (Hill et al., 2003). Future studies can combine both measures (subjective and objective) to refine and strengthen the findings related to the effects of FWPs usage on employee performance.

*Third*, the study did not take into account the parental status of the respondents which is one of the primary motivations behind an individual's use of FWP (Allen, 2001; De Sivatte & Guadamillas, 2013; Thompson et al., 1999). However, there is a strong counter-argument that all employees appreciate and get benefit from FWP usage irrespective of parental status or family responsibilities (Haar, 2013; Lambert et al., 2008).

*Fourth*, the survey response rate is 12.74% which is quite low for an online survey. This low response rate can be attributed to several factors. While forwarding the survey link to employees, the organisation specified voluntary participation of 'at least 250 staffs' which may have discouraged a large number of employees. Additionally, as the participation was voluntary, only the respondents who find the topic interesting or relevant to them were likely to participate. However, a low response rate is a widely recognised limitation of self-report surveys which would not necessarily influence substantive conclusions (Timms et al., 2015).

To increase the generalisability of the results of this study, more in-depth research is required to investigate FWP and employee outcomes relationships in different settings than this study. These relationships can be explored using a large heterogeneous sample from different contextual settings such as country (more vs less government mandated FWP policies), cultural (collectivist vs individualist) and industry (manufacturing vs service) contexts.

## **5.6 CONCLUSION**

This study provides insights into the inconsistent findings of FWP and employee outcomes by exploring the differences in employee experience with FWP (e.g. perceived availability and usage). Combining both aspects of employee experience with FWP with multiple work and non-work outcomes, this study provides a comprehensive understanding of the effects of flexible working on employees. Moreover, this study considers the moderating effects of gender, social support and flexibility stigma on FWP-employee outcomes relationship to better understand how various contextual factors influence these relationships. Overall, the findings of this study support the positive influence of FWP (both perceived availability and usage) on employee outcomes. These positive outcomes assist policymakers and organisations to recognise the diverse needs of employees and to design HR policies

for a sustainable workforce. In particular, the findings of this study emphasize that employees who perceive FWPs available to them will be benefitted as much as the FWPs users. This finding strengthens the business case for offering and implementing flexible work practices to all employees so that they can balance work and non-work responsibilities.

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# Appendices

## Appendix A: Employee Survey

*Flexible Working Practices and Employee Outcomes*

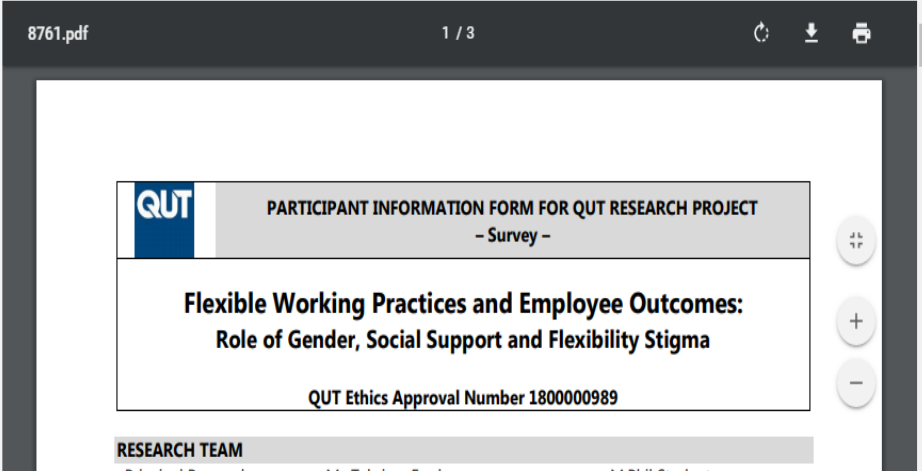
This study aims to investigate individual use of various “Flexible Working Practices (FWPs)” including flexitime; teleworking; compressed work week and job sharing etc. to identify their effects on employees and their life and work balance. The findings of this research will benefit individual workers; work teams and your organisation to develop and implement effective flexible working policies and practices.

The survey is divided into eight (8) sections based on question types and response choices. Relevant instructions for completion are provided at the beginning of each section. PLEASE ANSWER ALL THE QUESTIONS IN ALL SECTIONS.

If you are unable to complete the survey in one sitting, you can return to complete it from where you left off, provided that you are accessing the survey from the same device and using the same browser (in case of laptop/desktop); else you have to start from the beginning.

Completed:

The Participant Information Form attached below as a pdf document for your record, provides a full description of this project and the names of the researchers involved.



8761.pdf 1 / 3

**QUT** PARTICIPANT INFORMATION FORM FOR QUT RESEARCH PROJECT  
- Survey -

**Flexible Working Practices and Employee Outcomes:  
Role of Gender, Social Support and Flexibility Stigma**

QUT Ethics Approval Number 1800000989

RESEARCH TEAM

## SECTION 1: FLEXIBLE WORKING

The following questions involve Flexible Working Practices (FWPs) offered at your organisation. Please select the option(s) which are available to you. You may select more than one option.

In the past 12 months have the following FWPs been AVAILABLE to you if you needed them?

- Flexitime
- Part-time work
- Casual work
- Compressed work week ?
- Part-year work
- Job sharing ?
- Teleworking ?
- Voluntary reduced time ?
- Flexible holidays ?
- Purchased leave ?
- Occasional or ad hoc flexibility ?
- None
- Other

In the past 12 months have you USED any of the following FWPs? You can select more than one option to reflect the combined use of different types of practices (For example: If you are working 3 days per week and you work from home one of those days; you can select both part-time and teleworking.)

- Flexitime
- Part-time work
- Casual work
- Compressed work week ?
- Part-year work
- Job sharing ?
- Teleworking ?
- Voluntary reduced time ?
- Flexible holidays ?
- Purchased leave ?
- Occasional or ad hoc flexibility ?
- None
- Other

Occasional (ad hoc) flexibility is a type of work arrangement which is not ongoing but is for a short fixed period. This might include working a short day to attend a child's school event, to go for Dr. appointment, to take a relative to hospital, a few days to deal with a family emergency or ad hoc working from home for personal reasons.

Following are examples of occasional flexibility. Please select the option(s) options that is(are) most suitable for you.

- Work a short day (i.e. come in late, leave early or take a longer than normal break during the day)
- Work from home
- Take the day off without prior notice (excluding sick leave)
- Change your work days (if part-time)
- Other

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## SECTION 2: SUPPORT

The following statements involve the support you receive from your family members (e.g. spouse, parents, others). For each statement please select your answer from one of the five options that best represents your opinion. My family members,

**i) encourage me to use flexible working practices.**

Strongly Disagree (1)      Disagree (2)      Neither disagree nor agree (3)      Agree (4)      Strongly Agree (5)

**ii) understand that balancing work and life/personal responsibilities can be difficult.**

Strongly Disagree (1)      Disagree (2)      Neither disagree nor agree (3)      Agree (4)      Strongly Agree (5)

**iii) encourage me to ask for alternative work schedules.**

Strongly Disagree (1)      Disagree (2)      Neither disagree nor agree (3)      Agree (4)      Strongly Agree (5)

**iv) support the decisions I make regarding my work schedule.**

Strongly Disagree (1)      Disagree (2)      Neither disagree nor agree (3)      Agree (4)      Strongly Agree (5)

**v) understand my job responsibilities.**

Strongly Disagree (1)      Disagree (2)      Neither disagree nor agree (3)      Agree (4)      Strongly Agree (5)

**vi) encourage me to talk to my supervisor for ideas or advice about balancing work and life/personal responsibilities.**

Strongly Disagree (1)      Disagree (2)      Neither disagree nor agree (3)      Agree (4)      Strongly Agree (5)

## SECTION 3: PERCEPTIONS

For each statement please select your answer from one of the five options that best represents your opinion. In my organisation,

**i) female employees who have young or school-aged children are considered to be less committed to their careers than colleagues who are not mothers.**

Strongly Disagree (1)      Disagree (2)      Neither disagree nor agree (3)      Agree (4)      Strongly Agree (5)

**ii) male employees who have young or school-aged children are considered to be less committed to their careers than colleagues who are not fathers.**

Strongly Disagree (1)      Disagree (2)      Neither disagree nor agree (3)      Agree (4)      Strongly Agree (5)

**iii) the use of such practices, for those who choose to use formal or informal practices for work-life balance, often has negative consequences for their careers.**

Strongly Disagree (1)      Disagree (2)      Neither disagree nor agree (3)      Agree (4)      Strongly Agree (5)

#### SECTION 4: PERFORMANCE

This section relates to your work performance. For each question please select your answer from one of the five options that best represents your opinion.

i) What do you think of your quality of work? In other words, are your work outcomes perfect, free of error and of high accuracy?

Very Low (1)      Below average (2)      Average (3)      Above Average (4)      Excellent (5)

ii) What do you think of your work efficiency? In other words, what is your assessment of your work speed or quantity of work?

Very Low (1)      Below average (2)      Average (3)      Above Average (4)      Excellent (5)

iii) What do you think of your work performance? In other words, are you able to complete quality work on time?

Very Low (1)      Below average (2)      Average (3)      Above Average (4)      Excellent (5)

#### SECTION 5: WELL-BEING

For each question please select your answer from one of the five options that best represents your situation.

i) How often are you bothered by minor health problems such as headaches, insomnia, or stomach upsets?

Very Often (1)      Often (2)      Sometimes (3)      Rarely (4)      Never (5)

ii) During the past 3 months, how often have you felt nervous and stressed?

Very Often (1)      Often (2)      Sometimes (3)      Rarely (4)      Never (5)

iii) During the past 3 months, how often have you found that you could not cope with all the things you had to do?

Very Often (1)      Often (2)      Sometimes (3)      Rarely (4)      Never (5)

#### SECTION 6: WORK-LIFE BALANCE

For each statement please select your answer from one of the five options that best represents your opinion.

i) I currently have a good balance between the time I spend at work and the time I have available for non-work activities.

Strongly Disagree (1)      Disagree (2)      Neither disagree nor agree (3)      Agree (4)      Strongly Agree (5)

ii) I have difficulty balancing my work and non-work activities.

Strongly Disagree (1)      Disagree (2)      Neither disagree nor agree (3)      Agree (4)      Strongly Agree (5)

iii) I feel that the balance between my work demands and non-work activities is currently about right.

Strongly Disagree (1)      Disagree (2)      Neither disagree nor agree (3)      Agree (4)      Strongly Agree (5)

iv) Overall, I believe that my work life and non-work life are balanced.

Strongly Disagree (1)      Disagree (2)      Neither disagree nor agree (3)      Agree (4)      Strongly Agree (5)



## SECTION 7: TURNOVER

For each question please select your answer from one of the five options that best represents your opinion.

i) How frequently have you seriously considered leaving your job in the past six months?

Never (1)      Rarely (2)      Sometimes (3)      Often (4)      Almost Always (5)

ii) How likely are you to leave your job in the next six months?

Very Unlikely (1)      Not Likely (2)      Neutral (3)      Likely (4)      Very Likely (5)

iii) How often do you actively look for jobs outside your current job?

Never (1)      Rarely (2)      Sometimes (3)      Often (4)      Almost Always (5)

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## SECTION 8: CAREER

For each statement please select your answer from one of the five options that best represents your opinion. In my organisation,

i) many employees are resentful when men take extended leave to care for newborn or adopted children.

Strongly Disagree (1)      Disagree (2)      Neither disagree nor agree (3)      Agree (4)      Strongly Agree (5)

ii) many employees are resentful when women take extended leave to care for newborn or adopted children.

Strongly Disagree (1)      Disagree (2)      Neither disagree nor agree (3)      Agree (4)      Strongly Agree (5)

iii) employees who participate in available work-life practices (e.g. flexitime, part-time work, job sharing, teleworking etc.) are more serious about their careers than those who do not participate in these programs.

Strongly Disagree (1)      Disagree (2)      Neither disagree nor agree (3)      Agree (4)      Strongly Agree (5)

iv) turning down a promotion or transfer for personal reasons will seriously hurt one's career progress.

Strongly Disagree (1)      Disagree (2)      Neither disagree nor agree (3)      Agree (4)      Strongly Agree (5)

v) employees who use work-life practices are more likely to advance in their careers than those who do not use work-life practices.

Strongly Disagree (1)      Disagree (2)      Neither disagree nor agree (3)      Agree (4)      Strongly Agree (5)

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## Your Profile

### Gender

- Male
- Female
- Other

Please select the age group to which you belong.

Please select one ... ▾

Please select the area of the business in which you currently work.

- i) Assistance
- ii) Bank
- iii) Insurance
- iv) Sales & Marketing
- v) Technology
- vi) Group Risk & Compliance
- vii) Finance
- viii) Strategy
- ix) Advocacy
- x) Company Secretariat
- xi) Human Resources

Please select the option that best represents your job title.

- i) Front line/customer facing
- ii) Administration
- iii) Technical
- iv) Professional
- v) Manager
- vi) Senior manager

### Partnership Status

- No partner
- With a partner

Other than your own children and spouse, are you responsible for the care of others?

- Yes
- No

Are your day to day activities limited due to health problems or disability?

- Yes
- No

How long have you been working in this organisation?

Years

Months

How long have you been working in your current position?

Years

Months

Please select the annual salary package range to which you currently belong.

Please select one ... ▾

How long does it take you to commute to your workplace?

Hours

Minutes

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Completed:

## Comments

If you would like to comment on the topic of the research or on any of the questions in the survey, please do so in the space provided below.

You have come to the end of the questionnaire. We understand your time is valuable and your efforts are greatly appreciated. Thank you.

Please click submit to end this survey.

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Submit

Completed:



**Thank you very much for taking time to complete the survey.**

*You are welcome to close your browser at this stage*

If you would like a copy of this project's results, please click here to [send me an email](#). If you have any questions please contact:

**Name:** Tahrira Ferdous

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**Phone:** 3138 8074

## Appendix B: Variables and Relevant Scales

Variables	Chronbach's $\alpha$ (This study)	Chronbach's $\alpha$ (Original study)
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Social Support</u></b></p> <p>My family members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) encourage me to use flexible work arrangements.</li> <li>ii) understand that balancing work and life/personal responsibilities can be difficult.</li> <li>iii) encourage me to ask for alternative work schedules</li> <li>iv) are supportive of the decisions I make regarding my work schedule</li> <li>v) are understanding of my job responsibilities</li> <li>vi) encourage me to talk to my supervisor for ideas or advice about balancing work and life/personal responsibilities.</li> </ul>	.82	.86
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Flexibility Stigma</u></b></p> <p>In my department,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) female faculty who have young or school-aged children are considered to be less committed to their careers than colleagues who are not mothers.</li> <li>ii) male faculty who have young or school-aged children are considered to be less committed to their careers than colleagues who are not fathers.</li> <li>iii) for those in my department who choose to use formal or informal arrangements for work-life balance, the use of such arrangements often has negative consequences for their careers.</li> </ul>	.69	.66
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Performance</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i)What do you think of your quality of work? In other words, are your work outcomes perfect, free of error and of high accuracy?</li> <li>ii)What do you think of your work efficiency? In other words, what is your assessment of your work speed or quantity of work?</li> <li>iii)What do you think of your work performance? In other words, are you able to complete quality work on time?</li> </ul>	.82	.79

<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Wellbeing</u></b></p> <p>i) How often are you bothered by minor health problems such as headaches, insomnia, or stomach upsets?</p> <p>ii) During the past 3 months, how often have you felt nervous and stressed?</p> <p>iii) During the past 3 months, how often have you found that you could not cope with all the things you had to do?</p>	.74	.74
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Work-life Balance</u></b></p> <p>i) I currently have a good balance between the time I spend at work and the time I have available for non-work activities</p> <p>ii) I have difficulty balancing my work and non-work activities.</p> <p>iii) I feel that the balance between my work demands and non-work activities is currently about right.</p> <p>iv) Overall, I believe that my work and non-work life are balanced</p>	.93	.84
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Turnover Intentions</u></b></p> <p>i) How frequently have you seriously consider leaving your job in the past six months?</p> <p>ii) How likely are you to leave your job in the next six months?</p> <p>iii) How often do you actively look for jobs outside your current job?</p>	.89	.85
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Career Consequences</u></b></p> <p>i) Many employees are resentful when men in this organization take extended leave to care for newborn or adopted children.</p> <p>ii) Many employees are resentful when women in this organization take extended leave to care for newborn or adopted children.</p> <p>iii) In this organization employees who participate in available work-life arrangements (e.g., job sharing, part-time work) are more serious about their careers than those who do not participate in these programs.</p> <p>iv) Turning down a promotion or transfer for personal reasons will seriously hurt one's career progress in this organization.</p> <p>v) In this organization employees who use work-life arrangements are more likely to advance in their careers than those who do not use work-life arrangements.</p>	.39	.74