Who will care? The role of work role overload and flexstyle boundary control on the relationship between job embeddedness, burnout, and the withdrawal behaviours of aged care workers

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Who will care? The role of work role overload and flexstyle boundary control on the relationship between job embeddedness, burnout, and the withdrawal behaviours of aged care workers

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School of Management and Governance

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Thesis Sheet

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Thesis/Dissertation Sheet

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Abstract

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I dedicate this thesis to my loving husband Glenn Hickey, whose consistent care, reliability, and encouragement helped me to stay focused in completing this research. Thank you for believing in me and understanding that the time and sacrifice we together endured will help ensure opportunities will be available for our family.

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The three of you is all I will ever need.

Professional Acknowledgement

Writing this thesis has been a journey of learning. Selecting a topic that may assist in highlighting a practical societal problem, was the fuel and spark for my motivation. My experience in the aged care industry opened my eyes to the loss an elderly care recipient feels when their primary (non-relation) care worker withdraws.

To be able to study and ascertain a possible explanation as to why aged care workers withdraw when they are engaged and suited in their role, catered to and held dear their care recipient and valued their job… provoked me. I feel privileged to know that aspects of this study can be helpful to an industry in need, as well as beneficial and appreciated by the voiceless elders who are completely reliant on the embedded workers caring for them.

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List of Abbreviations

AIC	Akaike Information Criterion
BO	Burnout
CFA	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
CFI	Comparative Fit Index
CI	Confidence Level
COR	Conservation of Resources
FL	Flexstyle Boundary Control
HRT	Human Resource Team
IFI	Incremental Fit Index
JE	Job Embeddedness
LLCI	Lower Limit Confidence Level
MBI	Maslach Burnout Inventory
RMSEA	Root Mean Square Error of Approximation
SD	Standard Deviation
SE	Standard Error
TLI	Tucker-Lewis Index
ULCI	Upper Limit Confidence Level
US	United States
WB	Withdrawal Behaviours
WRO	Work Role Overload

Chapter 1

This chapter provides an overview of this thesis. Firstly, it provides the context and aims of the study. Secondly, it expands the nomological description of job embeddedness, outlining its potential benefits and disadvantages. It considers the relationship between job embeddedness and burnout, its subsequent impact on the withdrawal behaviours of aged care workers, and the potential conditions that affect these relationships. Thirdly, it outlines the theoretical contribution and practical implications of the thesis. Fourth, the chapter concludes with an overview of the thesis organisational structure.

1.1 Introduction

"To make a difference in someone's life you don't have to be brilliant, rich,
beautiful, or perfect. You just have to care".
Mandy Hale on the significance of providing care.

One of the most pressing issues for developed nations is the expected rapid growth of the senior (i.e., people aged 65 and over) population (Cotis, 2005). In Australia, this group is growing at a faster rate than the total population (Hugo, 2007). The current generation of seniors are also living longer than every generation before them (McCrindle, 2006). The major enabler(s) of this growth and longevity is the public health infrastructure, enhanced medical interventions, improved major illness survival rates, and a supportive care system that keeps elders living longer (McCrindle,

2006). These trends will create new challenges and require significant adjustments for the organisations who are critical to caring for older Australians (Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, 2019).

The aged care sector is entrusted to provide essential care for seniors. However, staffing in the sector is under significant pressure. Demand for care services for those aged 65 and over is outstripping the supply of available care workers (Mavromaras et al., 2017). This imbalance is projected to worsen. By the year 2050, one quarter of the population in Australia will be aged above 65 and will require some form of care (Drew et al., 2016). To meet this need, the executive chief of Aged and Community Services Australia stated, "we have to triple the workforce in aged care by 2050" (Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, 2019, p. 35). This shift in the population composition, and the predicted need for care workers denotes how critical it is for aged care organisations, and researchers to understand this sector's workforce.

Most organisations and industries will struggle at different times to retain a skilled workforce. However, the aged care industry experiences higher turnover than most (Karantzas et al., 2012). The retention of aged care workers is particularly vital because quality of care depends on the consistency of the care worker (Burgio et al., 2004; Castle et al., 2007). Aged care workers who provide direct person to person care make up 85% of the Australian aged care workforce. The remaining 15% (i.e., cleaners, cooks, and administration) are employed in supportive roles (Mavromaras et al., 2017). Care workers, as the critical and largest section of the sector's workforce have a turnover rate of 20-25% per year (Karantzas et al., 2012). This is of concern to governments, care providing organisations, and the individuals requiring care services (Martin & King, 2007).

Within the aged care sector, extensive research has been devoted to understanding why licenced registered nurses engage in withdrawal behaviours (Dawson et al., 2014; Gao et al., 2014; Roche et al., 2015). Comparatively little research has focused on direct aged care workers and their reasons for withdrawal (e.g., turnover; Radford et al., 2015; Austen et al., 2013). This is surprising, considering direct aged care workers provide all the immediate care and that they represent the largest proportion of the industry's workforce (Chou & Robert, 2008; Radford et al., 2015). This thesis addresses this gap, by focusing on the role of job embeddedness, work role overload, burnout, and flexstyles on the withdrawal behaviours of these aged care workers.

Aged care is a role renowned for its challenges, emotional connections, exhausting working conditions, and a lack of staff to provide person centred care (Hugo, 2007; Karantzas et al., 2012). Aged care workers face intense job demands when caring for elders with both physical and medical conditions, such as incontinence, poor mobility, diabetes, and neurodegenerative dementia. They often provide palliative care for elders with life-limiting or terminal illness and encounter the unfortunate elevated mortality rates of those they care for (VonDras et al., 2009). Workers are faced with increasing cost cutting, understaffing, constantly varying role expectations (King et al., 2012; Xerri et al., 2019), and changes imposed by government reforms (Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, 2019).

1.2 Aims and Research Questions

This thesis has three aims. Firstly, to understand what factors contribute to the withdrawal behaviours of aged care workers. Second, to explore the negative

consequences of job embeddedness on withdrawal behaviours via burnout. Third, to understand how a situational (i.e., work role overload) and an individual variable (i.e., flexstyle) can ameliorate or worsen the impact of job embeddedness on withdrawal behaviours via burnout. As such, given the limited research on aged care workers, this study aims to provide a valuable insight into why these essential workers withdraw. This thesis is designed to address the following three research questions:

Research question 1: What factors affect withdrawal of aged care workers?

Research question 2: What is the process that leads to the withdrawal of aged care workers?

Research question 3: To what extent do contextual and individual factors influence the relationship between job embeddedness, burnout, and withdrawal?

1.3 Key concepts

To address these questions, the thesis looks in detail at the following five constructs that are outlined below.

Withdrawal behaviours

Organisations often proclaim people are their most valuable assets (e.g., Azeez, 2017). This has encouraged theorising and empirical tests of why workers stay (Maertz & Campion, 1998). Similarly, practitioners have sought strategies which discourage worker withdrawal. Withdrawal behaviours take the form of lateness, absenteeism, and

turnover with each behaviour deemed costly to an organisation (Cascio, 2015; Marasi et al., 2016). Withdrawal behaviours are a worker's physical and/or psychological non-approved separation from their workplace, for part of, or the entire day (Johns, 2001; Lehman & Simpson, 1992; Rosse & Hulin, 1985). This may include "taking longer breaks than permitted, spending work time on personal matters, or putting less effort into one's job" (Scott & Barnes, 2011, p. 116). These three behaviours can operate progressively whereby consistent worker lateness can predict absenteeism, and absenteeism may predict turnover (Berry et al., 2012; Griffeth et al., 2000; Rosse, 1988).

The retention of workers is of primary concern for all age care organisations (Commonwealth of Australia, 2017). The Aged Care Workforce Strategy Taskforce found "Around a quarter of the care workers… were planning on leaving the aged care sector within the next five years" (Isherwood et al., 2018, p. 13). This level of withdrawal is a threat to an industry which is already facing difficulties in meeting the current servicing needs of elders. Highlighted by the Aged Care Royal Commission, the United Workers Union found "More than 60 per cent of aged care workers report they face unfilled shifts at their facilities every single day" (Kennedy, 2020, p. 1). This absence of staff can be due to tardiness, sick leave, personal leave, or a shortage of worker availability. The consequence of such instability and shortages results in destabilising the quality of care. As such, the withdrawal behaviours of aged care workers impact the sustainability of the aged care workforce.

Job embeddedness

One of the most compelling reasons why a worker exhibits these withdrawal behaviours is due to not feeling embedded in their job (Peltokorpi et al., 2015).

Originally articulated by Mitchell and colleagues (2001), "job embeddedness represents a broad constellation of influences on employee retention" (p. 1104). Job embeddedness comprises of three dimensions—*links, fit*, and *sacrifice*. Each is considered a 'pulling force' to the workplace (Burton et al., 2010). Outlined by Mitchell and colleagues (2001) the first dimension, *links,* is the formal or informal ties individuals have with co-workers, and/or the organisation. *Links* encompass such aspects as frequency of communication, number of connections or associations, and organisational tenure. They are tangible connections, whereby specific *links* have more/less significance to the worker than others (Mitchell et al., 2001). The second dimension, *fit,* refers to the perceived match and compatibility a worker has with his/her organisation. This can be seen in terms of skills, values, culture, and interests which complement the organisation. The final dimension, *sacrifice,* is the perceived psychological, social, or material costs a worker identifies as being incurred if he or she were to leave. These costs may arise, for example, from the organisation's geographical location, a workplace interest club, stock options, or employee benefits. The level of each dimension is summed to assesses the individual's aggregate level of embeddedness (Mitchell et al., 2001).

Aged care workers express a need to make a genuine difference and having an affinity for caring work as the reasons they were drawn to the industry (Hodgkin et al., 2017). The Aged Care Workforce Strategy Taskforce outlined that workers forge strong bonds with their clients, feeling they achieve social connectedness, and their skillset enables them to make a real contribution to the quality of the care (Isherwood et al., 2018). "Aged care has its good and bad days, but I keep going back for the clients" (Best Practice Aged Care Nursing, 2021). This altruism and relational rewards represents why workers choose to stay rather than leave.

Burnout

Burnout is an adversary condition, whereby workers gradually disengage physically and mentally from their role. This disengagement is mainly in response to excessive work-related stressors (Fong, 1990). Maslach (1978) initially termed this construct as a syndrome, occurring in individuals who work closely with others, especially those who provide services to people (Leiter et al., 2014; Maslach, 1978). Burnout was then redefined by Maslach (1982) as a severe psychosocial syndrome, characterised by three distinct dimensions—*exhaustion, depersonalisation*, and a lack of *personal accomplishment*. *Exhaustion* refers to feelings of fatigue that result from the overwhelming demands of the work individuals perform that depletes their working energy reserves (Maslach et al., 2001). *Depersonalisation* is a protective state of cynicism. It is considered a coping mechanism, whereby the worker detaches either cognitively or emotionally from colleagues, clients, and/or the workplace (Halbesleben & Buckley, 2004). It occurs when workers feel they no longer have the resources to control the stressors confronting them (Fournier et al., 2010; Gilboa et al., 2008; Lee & Ashforth 1996). Lack of *personal accomplishment* encompasses feelings of incompetence and an individual's reduced sense of achievement for workplace tasks and goals. Workers are considered burnt-out if they experience one or more dimensions of burnout (Nesher & Sonnentag, 2020; Schaufeli & Buunk, 2003).

Within the human service industry, *depersonalisation* is documented as being a central characteristic of burnout (Bakker et al., 2005). This is because it is specifically referred to as a reactional detached response towards those who are in one's service or care (Bakker et al., 2014; Schaufeli et al., 2009). Unlike *exhaustion* and *personal accomplishment* which is a prolonged response from increased job demands. *Depersonalisation* is a response resulting from exposure and interaction with

people. That is, the workers damaging response from working with clients and the way they feel about their clients (Outar & Rose, 2017). Aged care workers describe having feelings of being depleted, and fading away, stating "I think you become sort of hardened to their emotional needs" (Hutchinson et al., 2017, p. 8). When experiencing burnout, outcomes such as increased medical errors, client falls, resident mortality, and a reduced level of care are the professional consequences. As such, burnout may be a defensive, reactive behaviour between the worker who is providing compassion and caring services and the care recipient.

The influence of context (Work role overload)

Work role overload was first described as a situation, whereby workers feel they have too many responsibilities, activities, and tasks to perform in the available work time allowed (Goode, 1960). It was then theorised as a role stressor, due to an imbalance between a worker's available resources and the worker's role demands (Kahn et al., 1964). Sixty years later, work role overload is defined in the same way (Duxbury et al., 2018). A worker's resources are the organisational, physical, or psychosocial aspects of the role which facilitate task performance (Bakker & Geurts, 2004). Role demands refer to the organisational, physical, or psychosocial requests which require physical or mental effort from the worker (Bakker & Geurts, 2004). When the workplace demand requires greater effort than the worker can handle at any point in time, the demands become stressors (Meijman & Mulder, 2013).

The expected workload an aged care worker must accomplish each day often exceeds what they can comfortably manage. The Aged Care Workforce Report found workers commonly reported high workloads as one of the difficulties faced in their role (Mavromaras et al., 2017). Similarly, the Australian Senate investigating the

sector's workforce stated "The committee received evidence that direct care workers are managing workloads that are unsustainable, leading to compromised professional standards and quality of care, as well as adverse impacts on workers" (Commonwealth of Australia, 2017, p. 47). Worker's report being overwhelmed, unable to address the pressures and responsibilities that are expected when caring for the elders they are assigned (Mavromaras et al., 2017). When excessive workloads exist, unsafe working practices that compromise the workers and clients' safety have been found (Commonwealth of Australia, 2017; Mavromaras et al., 2017). Indeed, work role overload in the aged care industry has a direct impact, influencing the level of care aged care workers can provide.

The influence of individual characteristics (Flexstyles)

As detailed by Kossek and Lautsch (2012), a worker's flexstyle is either an *integrator* or *separator*. Flexstyles articulate the way a worker physically and psychologically maintains barriers in work and life. An *integrator* flexstyle has weak boundary control, blending work-related tasks into the home, and vice versa. Whereas a *separator* has a distinct strong boundary control separating their home from work, and work from home-related tasks.

Industry reports on the work-life approaches of aged care workers, indicate a wide variety of approaches are being used. There are some hints that these approaches can be consequential. For instance, some aged care workers have identified as not being able to separate work from home stating "You can't switch that off. You just can't. I mean I just went on holidays and I was on my holidays thinking about residents and wondering how they are, oh its eleven o'clock she'd been doing this or that. You can't help it" (Hutchinson et al., 2017, p. 9). Whereas others leave work at work, not

contemplating the residents schedule, or the medication that would be given at that time. A worker's personal work and life preferences can help or hinder, impacting the well-being and effectiveness of workers, their families, and the organisations in which they work (e.g., Ashforth et al., 2000; Olson-Buchanan, & Boswell, 2006).

The above constructs were selected specifically to address my research aims in relation to aged care workers and the two intertwined issues: an ageing population and a shortage of aged care workers (Hugo, 2007). The withdrawal behaviours of current aged care workers further compound these issues (Karantzas et al., 2012). It is thus critical to examine why the already small number of aged care workers are withdrawing and the conditions under which they are more or less likely to withdraw. This thesis focuses on the key constructs of a worker's embeddedness, the influence of context (work role overload), the influence of individual characteristics (flexstyle) and burnout to understand the withdrawal behaviours of aged care workers. The relationships between several of these constructs and withdrawal have been separately studied in prior research (e.g., Lee & Ashforth, 1996; Crossley et al., 2007; Holtom et al., 2005; Sekiguchi et al., 2008); however, they have not been examined jointly. Below I discuss why examining them jointly is of importance.

1.4 Contribution to Research

Firstly, Lee and colleagues (2014) reflected that scholars "need to better understand the potentially bad things stemming from job embeddedness" (p. 209) and Allen and colleagues (2016) stated "Negative embeddedness has been largely overlooked in theory and research" (p. 1682). In conducting this study, I answer this research call and extend our understanding of job embeddedness by identifying the

circumstances under which it can bring about negative withdrawal consequences in the aged care industry. This study thus contributes to the literature on job embeddedness by challenging the dominant assumption of embeddedness being beneficial (Hom et al., 2009; Mitchell et al., 2001). It does so by giving consideration to three specific withdrawal behaviours of workers in the form of lateness, absenteeism, and turnover. It further extends this by focusing on burnout as a mediating mechanism of the relationship between embeddedness and withdrawal (Crossley et al., 2007; Jiang et al., 2012).

Secondly, it examines how work role overload shapes the association between embeddedness and burnout. Scholars have mostly focused on organisational preventive causes or a worker's ability to reduce burnout (Demerouti et al., 2001; Häusser et al., 2010; Karasek, 1979). As such, the relationship between embeddedness and burnout is unclear. This study addresses this, by examining whether workers' experience of work role overload triggers a positive relationship between their job embeddedness and burnout.

Thirdly, Olson-Buchanan and Boswell (2006) suggested researchers examine how individuals integrate their work and life domains and the consequences of blurred boundaries between work and home. Kossek (2016a) also called for research to clarify how a worker's flexstyles can impact and/or benefit workers and their organisation. Furthering our understanding of job embeddedness and flexstyle boundary controls will allow insights for reducing burnout, and withdrawal behaviours.

Fourth, scholars have yet to examine whether embeddedness, work-life boundary flexstyles and work role overload may jointly interact to affect burnout. It is therefore unclear as to whether work role overload (a negative work experience trigged by context/situation) and flexstyle (an individual characteristic) jointly exacerbate or

buffer the effect of embeddedness on burnout. The thesis extends the literature in this important area by exploring whether the potential harmful impact of work role overload on the relationship between job embeddedness and burnout can be ameliorated by a *separator* flexstyle and exacerbated by an *integrator* flexstyle. Accordingly, the thesis will contribute to knowledge about how a work-life boundary may impede or buffer work role overload. It is anticipated that a *separator* flexstyle may help prevent burnout in times of work role overload as these workers have higher well-being and lower work-life conflict (Kossek & Lautsch, 2008) than those with an *integrator* flexstyle. Recognising this void in the literature, this study investigates the interaction effect of flexstyles and work role overload on the relationship between job embeddedness and burnout.

1.5 Contribution to Practice

The need for workers in the aged care industry is quickly growing not just in Australia but worldwide as outlined by the World Health Organisation, in the World Report on Ageing and Health (2014). The foreseeable requirement in needing to triple the current growth of aged care workers (Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, 2019) is being met with a decrease in working age individuals, and the industry's excessive turnover rate (The Aged Care Workforce, 2018). This turnover, and any worker withdrawal behaviours contribute to several undesirable workplace effects. For example, the loss of skilled, experienced and trained care workers results in a disruption to the quality of care, significantly higher hospitalisations, and increased organisational costs (Wakerman et al., 2019). The problems of needing to

attract the right type of aged care worker for this essential service, along with curbing

high levels of withdrawal is a social challenge worthy of scholarly attention.

This study provides practical suggestions to managers in the hope of reducing

worker withdrawal. It is hoped that the findings will allow targeted retention strategies,

better designs of individuals' work role and development of work-life balance training

to improve the aged care workforce stability, strengthen organisations and improve

caring outcomes.

1.6 Organisation of the Thesis

In the next chapter, I present an overview of the job embeddedness and

withdrawal behaviours literature, outlining study variables (i.e., work role overload,

flexstyle boundary control, and burnout), and describing the relationship between

them. In chapter three, I present the theoretical model and provide the theoretical

rationale for each hypothesis. In chapter four, I present the methodology and how the

data was analysed. In chapter five, I discuss the results of the study, allowing chapter

six to complete the thesis with a discussion of the theoretical and practical implications

and limitations of the study, as well as of a set of recommendations for future research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter provides a review of the recent theories and empirical research concerning the study's five variables: job embeddedness, withdrawal behaviours, burnout, work role overload, and flexstyle boundary control. It begins by reviewing recent research and explaining the relationships linking both organisational literature and the aged care context.

Job embeddedness is the story of why we stay

Grounded in field theory, Lewin (1951) initially proposed the idea of an embedded "figure". These are individuals who are enmeshed and enveloped into their setting so closely that it is hard to separate them from their surroundings. March and Simon (1958) considered what would influence a person to become embedded. Specifically, they considered the extent to which on and off the job factors would assist an individual in their decision to stay. Mitchell and colleagues (2001) expanded upon these ideas, defining the dimensionality of embeddedness and developing the first measure of embeddedness. They described the construct as akin to a broad constellation of influences which act in the same way as a net or web, to restrict an individual's movement.

Embeddedness contains two dimensions, *job embeddedness* (influences from within the job; e.g., culture and co-workers) and *community embeddedness* (influences from within one's community; e.g., locality to family and friends, and extra curriculum clubs). In general, *job embeddedness* has a greater influence on work related attitudes and behaviours than *community embeddedness*. *Job embeddedness* plays a larger role

(i.e., explains more variance) in workplace withdrawal attitudes and decisions than *community embeddedness* (Allen, 2006; Jiang et al., 2012). Additionally, research has demonstrated that *job embeddedness*, rather than *community embeddedness* is more predictive of a worker's performance and organisational citizenship behaviours (Lee et al., 2004; Burton et al., 2010). As this research specifically examines a worker's embeddedness within an organisation, and because the context to understand is a negative work environment (i.e., work role overload) the focal variable explored in this study is job embeddedness (Allen et al., 2016; Halbesleben & Wheeler, 2008; Jiang et al., 2012; Lee et al., 2004).

Job embeddedness (hereafter known also as embeddedness or embedded) comprises of three dimensions—*links, fit*, and *sacrifice* (Mitchell et al., 2001). *Links*, are the connections individuals have with co-workers, and/or the organisation; *fit*, refers to the perceived match and compatibility a worker has with his/her organisation and *sacrifice*, is the perceived costs a worker identifies as being incurred if he or she were to leave. Although this operationalisation has been influential, this original measure by Mitchell and colleagues (2001) has been criticised on conceptual, practical, and statistical grounds (Crossley et al., 2007; Jiang et al., 2012). For example, Crossley and colleagues (2007) argued embeddedness is a complex mental process emerging from idiosyncratic thoughts. Thus, they asserted that the original measure omitted important factors outside of *fit, links*, and *sacrifice*. This view is supported by the findings of subsequent researchers (i.e., Burton et al., 2010; Karatepe & Karadas, 2012), and indeed by the original authors Mitchell and colleagues. Practically, the length of the original measure (40 items), affected its useability, generating participant fatigue and/or acquiescent participant responding (Peltokorpi et al., 2015). In terms of statistical limitations, the mixture of reflective and formative

scale items meant the appropriateness of coefficient alpha, and confirmatory factor analysis within any study may be considered questionable (MacKenzie et al., 2005). To reduce the conceptual, practical, and statistical limitations, a seven item global reflective measure of embeddedness was developed (Crossley et al., 2007). This measure still considered the *links, fit*, and *sacrifice* foundation of embeddedness (Singh et al., 2018) but allowed participants to incorporate their own judgement and impressions of attachment to their organisation (Crossley et al., 2007; Zhang et al., 2012). Indeed, Crossley and colleagues (2007) found that their global measure predicted intention to quit, intention to search, and turnover, even after controlling for the composite measure. They contended that their global measure serves as a succinct companion to the original composite measure. Moreover, Zhang and colleagues (2012), in their theoretical comparison of the two measures, stated "if a study aims to test models using latent constructs, the reflective measure would be a better choice, especially for the studies that use structural equation modelling" (p. 223).

The strength of the embeddedness construct lies in its ability to explain the origin of beneficial workplace behaviours and organisational outcomes. For example, scholars have found that embedded workers display more citizenship behaviours (Andresen, 2015; Candan, 2016), are more conscientiousness (Giosan et al., 2005), and invest more resources (Wheeler et al., 2012). Embedded workers engage in more innovation-related work behaviour (Ng & Feldman, 2010), have increased motivation for workplace performance (Lee et al., 2004; Tian et al., 2016) and have lower turnover intentions (Halbesleben & Wheeler, 2008) compared to those who are less embedded. It has therefore been suggested that embeddedness creates a favourable relationship with workers and their workplace, whereby workers who are embedded in their job, feel content as members of the organisation, have stronger relationships with their co-

workers and do not look to move (Allen & Shanock, 2013; Lang et al., 2016; Zhang et al., 2012).

In contrast, studies focusing on less embedded workers have identified adverse outcomes. For example, workers who are less embedded tend to disidentify and distance themselves from their organisation (Collins & Mossholder, 2017). They have a disengaged response to their tasks and/or workplace events, feel indifferent and can be emotionally removed from the organisation (Zhang et al., 2012). Less embedded workers have more unpleasant feelings about their workplace, are less motivated, and are less likely to be proactive (Jia et al., 2020). Less embedded workers perform more counterproductive workplace behaviours due to having fewer reasons to refrain when they are unlikely to stay (Ng & Feldman, 2009a). As such, workers lacking embeddedness have been found to have a variety of negative individual and organisational outcomes.

2.1 The Relationship Between Job Embeddedness and Withdrawal Behaviours

Embeddedness and withdrawal behaviours

Recognising the forces which keep workers enmeshed in their role is critical to lessen withdrawal behaviours, retaining talented staff, reducing recruitment costs, and creating organisational competitive advantage (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). One of the most suggested strategies to enmesh a worker for the purpose of counteracting withdrawal, is for organisations to encourage embeddedness (Marasi et al., 2016). Scholars have suggested practitioners may achieve this by influencing co-worker

relationships and/or building worker skillsets (i.e., *links* and *fit*). This is because the more the worker connects with their colleagues and fits within their job, the more emotional and physical forgoing's (i.e., *sacrifices*) they will incur in leaving. As remarked by an aged care worker, inferring it is their emotional connection that alleviates thoughts of leaving, "So when you have a bad day, you think, that's it – I'm out of here. This is not worth the stress, especially for the money you're getting – it is not worth it. Then you go in the next morning and – so many times the residents say, oh, I'm so glad you're here. You look after me so well. I love having you look after me. Then you think, I'd do it for nothing if I had to. The residents themselves make you want to do it" (Hodgkin et al., 2017, p. 6). As such, the degree one experiences any or all of these enmeshing influences, the further embedded and stronger the forces of restraint from leaving.

This beneficial relationship between embeddedness and withdrawal behaviours has a long history. Initially being established within traditional models of turnover (e.g., Mobley et al., 1979; Price & Mueller, 1981), it is a central feature of modern theories of withdrawal (e.g., Hom et al., 2017; Mitchell & Lee, 2001). The contribution of embeddedness in reducing a worker's withdrawal has received extensive empirical support (i.e., Griffeth et al., 2000; Felps et al., 2009; Jiang et al., 2012). Consequently, job embeddedness decreases workers' withdrawal behaviours.

Embeddedness has been found to explain unique variance of withdrawal over and above other constructs, such as job satisfaction (Lee et al., 2004), job hunting behaviour (Mitchell et al., 2001), turnover related job attitudes (Jiang et al., 2012), and job alternatives (Crossley et al., 2007; Tanova & Holtom, 2008). Embedded workers have less intention to leave, higher performance, and engage in fewer job search and withdrawal behaviours (Jiang et al., 2012; Lee et al., 2004). Accordingly, most

scholars consider the construct of job embeddedness useful in predicting less worker withdrawal behaviours (Crossley et al., 2007; Holtom et al., 2005; Sekiguchi et al., 2008).

Lateness, absenteeism, and turnover are collectively referred to as withdrawal behaviours (Berry et al., 2012; Hanisch & Hulin, 1990; Johns, 2001; Koslowsky, 2000). Lateness, commonly denotes a worker who arrives after the beginning of their set working schedule (Shafritz, 1980). Liu and colleagues (2015) describe the two forms of lateness, voluntary (i.e., time lost by purposefully not attending work) and involuntary (i.e., time lost due to unavoidable reasons, such as transport interruptions). Lateness to arrive at work, return from lunch or return from offsite meetings can harm organisations financially (Bélanger et al., 2016; Imai, 2012). In the U.S., lateness is estimated to cost upwards of $3 billion per year (Liu et al., 2015). Lateness also imposes non-financial costs when supervisors need to spend time to monitor and/or discipline the non-punctual worker (Blau, 1994). Lateness is mostly considered a worker's first withdrawal behaviour and is positively correlated with absenteeism (Bélanger et al., 2016; Berry et al., 2012; Clegg, 1983; Harrison et al., 2006).

Absenteeism, the second form of withdrawal, is defined as a worker's failure to attend the workplace when scheduled to (Berry et al., 2012). Similar to lateness, absenteeism has two forms, involuntary and voluntary (Baydoun et al., 2016; Magee et al., 2016), which are both harmful to an organisation. Involuntary absenteeism is associated with unanticipated situations (i.e., sickness or an accident) whereby the worker was unable to attend (Schaufeli et al., 2009). Voluntary absenteeism describes the situation as a worker's preference and/or choice to not attend (i.e., electing to go fishing even though a presentation is due). Absenteeism is estimated to cost the Australian economy upwards of $7 billion per year in health care costs, productivity,

and lost revenue (Medibank Private, 2005). Absenteeism is positively correlated with a worker's turnover and considered interrelated as they both stem from choosing to escape the workplace (Berry et al., 2012; Harrison & Newman, 2012).

March and Simon (1958) introduced the concept of a third withdrawal behaviour, employee turnover. Turnover occurs when a worker departs their workplace (Hom et al., 2019). Workplace turnover costs an organisation both financially and internally (Hancock et al., 2017). Financially, turnover costs range from 90% to over 200% of the withdrawing worker's annual salary (Allen et al., 2014). This is mainly due to the cost of hiring replacement workers, loss of sales, operational disruption affecting profits, and the initial reduced productivity of new hires (Allen et al., 2014; Cascio, 2015; Woo & Maertz, 2012). Internally, the costs of turnover arise from ineffective teamwork, poor morale, and lower motivation (Berry et al., 2012).

Whilst turnover can be costly, not all turnover is negative. Some organisations benefit from a small number of resignations as it reduces their labour costs (Shaw et al., 2005). If the worker was considered a poor fit, they can be substituted, and new opportunities to the existing workers can be offered (Zhang, 2016). By employing a replacement, the organisation may gain value through new ideas, experience, and skillsets (De Winne et al., 2019). Despite this, the costs usually outweigh any benefits the organisation receives when turnover is moderate or high (Shaw et al., 2005).

In sum, job embeddedness through its dimensional influences have been seen to be of benefit to organisations in retention. It is this bond of attachment formed by workers with their workplace that encourages positive behaviours and attitudes, and acts as a deterrent against harmful anti-social workplace behaviours, such as voluntary absenteeism and lateness. Embedded workers have fewer job search thoughts (Holtom et al., 2012), less turnover intentions (Halbesleben & Wheeler, 2008) and their

withdrawal behaviours are less prevalent (Mitchell et al., 2001; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). On the other hand, those with weaker connections to their jobs may be less restrained when it comes to anti-social workplace behaviours, such as voluntary lateness. Hence, the advantages of embedded workers include less withdrawal behaviours, which is a substantial cost to workplaces. Consequently, it has been suggested that organisations should deliberately look for ways to increase embeddedness, and indeed, perhaps embeddedness is something workers themselves may seek to develop (Hom et al., 2009; Mitchell et al., 2001).

Embeddedness is not always beneficial

Recent theory and research (i.e., since 2015) on embeddedness, however, has taken a paradoxical view, suggesting the job stabilising effect of embeddedness can have unfavourable outcomes. Some scholars are now reporting a darker side to job embeddedness (Allen et al., 2016; Marasi et al., 2016). Specifically, they found negative workplace consequences to ensue when workers are embedded within unfavourable workplace contexts; and when a worker is embedded in adverse working environments, there are harmful effects on his/her health and wellbeing.

Generally, workers who are subjected to an unfavourable working situation or environment will react by withdrawing. However, instead of withdrawing, those who are embedded may react to the negative work environment by engaging in counterproductive behaviours directed at the organisation and other stakeholders. In other words, being retained in an unfavourable situation can result in a negative reactance against the source of control (i.e., the workplace). For instance, embedded workers with low interactional supervisor fairness, retaliated with higher workplace unproductive deviant behaviours (Collins & Mossholder, 2017). Embedded workers

facing poor job conditions engaged in more deviant behaviours, such as cyberloafing (Mazidi et al., 2020). When exposed to abusive supervision, embedded workers are more likely to conform and perform poorly (Allen et al., 2016). Embedded workers experiencing low job fulfillment (presumably resulting from a negative work environment), engaged in interpersonal and organisational norm-violating deviance, such as neglecting instructions, avoiding duties, sabotaging and draining company resources (Darrat et al., 2017). Embedded workers in organisations that are perceived as untrustworthy (another negative work environment), engaged in higher workplace deviance, such as harassment, sabotage, and gossip (Marasi et al., 2016). Hence, when situationally enmeshed in an undesirable context, embedded workers have been found to engage in retaliatory activities and sabotage behaviour.

Embeddedness is primarily a staying construct. In this regard, job embeddedness can be viewed as restricting or constraining the worker. When a worker feels trapped, they have perceptions of low volitional control. This lack of control over one's choices and decisions has behavioural implications beyond the engagement in retaliatory activities and sabotage behaviour. For example, when workers feel trapped, they partake in work avoidance (Hom et al., 2012). Misconduct behaviours include causing workplace problems and being unreliable (Hom et al., 2012). Work avoidance behaviours, include engaging in lateness and absenteeism (Hom et al., 2012; Mobley et al., 1979). This is because their desire for volitional control overwhelms their tendency to uphold positive workplace behaviours (Lawrence & Robinson, 2007). Highly embedded workers who feel trapped experience more regret than less embedded workers. They stay regardless of other job opportunities (Verbruggen & van Emmerik, 2020). To this end, with low volitional control and situational regret, an

inability to withdraw strengthens their dissatisfaction with the workplace (Bullens et al., 2011), which can ultimately harm the worker's health and well-being.

A willingness to tolerate poor working contexts thus suggests a bleaker side for embedded workers, especially for their health and well-being. For example, embedded workers subjected to poor working conditions have been found to have diminished physical health conditions, emotional exhaustion, and poor sleep quality (Allen et al., 2016). For workers in ill-fitting jobs, embeddedness has been found to thwart their motivation (Kiazad et al., 2015). Embedded workers working in organisations they do not trust have greater anguish and frustration (Marasi et al., 2016). Employees are so embedded they do not or cannot leave despite encountering detrimental conditions (Allen et al., 2016; Mitchell et al., 2001), and experiencing negative personal outcomes.

Considering job embeddedness can have favourable or unfavourable effects, scholars have called for further exploration into the relationship between embeddedness and withdrawal (Holtom et al., 2008; Jiang et al., 2012). To this end, I will provide the theoretical rationale in Chapter 3, that embeddedness generally decreases withdrawal behaviour; however, when an embedded worker experiences burnout as a result of being in a negative work environment (e.g., where they are susceptible to work role overload, such as in the age care industry), embeddedness may increase withdrawal.

Burnout and withdrawal behaviours

Depersonalisation is a central characteristic of burnout (Bakker et al., 2005). *Depersonalisation* is particularly relevant to a worker's experience of burnout in the human services industry (Maslach et al., 2001). This is because when workers are

depersonalised the purpose of caring for others loses its meaning. Workers attend to the functions of the care recipient similar to a machine, whereby the service tasks take precedence over human needs (Marquis, 2002). For example, in the disability industry Outar and Rose (2017), found that the more contact direct care workers had with clients, the greater the worker *depersonalisation*. As reported by an aged care worker new to the industry, "Some of them [care workers] have hardened up over years… and because I've just started I'm not at that point yet" (Hutchinson et al., 2017, p. 11). Outar and Rose (2017) also found no relationship between exhaustion and personal accomplishment for this contact caring role. *Depersonalisation* can therefore be considered an attitudinal manifestation, signalling a crisis in the individuals co-worker relationships (Maslach et al., 2001).

Depersonalised workers can have deleterious effects on others within the workplace. Co-workers and service recipients can distinguish between workers who are displaying *depersonalisation* behaviours versus those who are not, largely by their interactions (Nesher & Sonnentag, 2020). For instance, a nursing home resident stated that "Sometimes two girls will be bathing me and talking over me to each other about what they did the night before. I can't tell you what that feels like... it's as if I don't exist... just a body needing to be washed" (Marquis, 2002, p. 28). This is because depersonalised workers develop callous views and employ an uncaring attitude towards others (Lee & Ok, 2012). This callous view harms an individual's ability to have, express, and show sympathy for others (Halbesleben & Buckley, 2004). As such, their day-to-day behaviours and mannerisms become mechanical (Maslach et al., 2001) and their level of personal investment within the workplace decreases (Nesher & Sonnentag, 2020).

A further consequence of a worker's *depersonalisation* is their withdrawal (Leiter & Maslach, 2000; Swider & Zimmerman, 2010; Zysberg et al., 2017). Workers experiencing *depersonalisation* have lower commitment than their engaged (i.e., non-burnout) colleagues (Basar & Basim, 2016; Jung & Kim, 2012). To extricate themselves, workers respond behaviourally via lateness, absenteeism (Halbesleben & Buckley, 2004; Bakker et al., 2014) and/or their resignation. Indeed, *depersonalisation* is one of the most proximal antecedents of turnover (Swider & Zimmerman, 2010). Furthermore, organisational withdrawal behaviours are widely identified as a response to burnout (Lee & Ashforth, 1996; Zysberg et al., 2017). Despite this, burnout's role as a mediator of the relationship between job embeddedness and withdrawal behaviours requires further empirical examination.

The influence of burnout on the association between job embeddedness and withdrawal is still unclear. Primarily because a lack of research has focused on an association between embeddedness and burnout (see Kim et al. 2014 and Candan 2016 for exceptions). Kim and colleagues (2014), study of 563 nurses working in Korean hospitals found embeddedness to be negatively correlated with burnout. This study recommended managers look for ways to improve a worker's embeddedness via *links* and *fit*, to reduce nurse burnout. Candan (2016) suggested encouraging embeddedness after his study of 120 academics found a moderately negative correlation between embeddedness and burnout. It was observed that the subdimensions *fit* and *sacrifice* were negatively (though not significant) associated with burnout. Given only two studies outside of Australia and the aged care industry have investigated this relationship and my earlier argument that job embeddedness can increase withdrawal via a worker's experience of burnout, further research on this can enhance our

understanding on how burnout impacts the relationship between embeddedness and withdrawal.

The importance of situational and individual moderators that prompt embeddedness to elicit burnout

The scholarly findings on *job embeddedness* being beneficial in terms of eliciting less burnout have been mixed (Darrat et al., 2017; Jiang et al., 2012). Given the previous discussion, the proposition of *job embeddedness* always being valuable to workers and/or their organisations is up for additional empirical investigation. Thus, further research is needed to explore possible moderators and to understand the effects they may have on the embeddedness and withdrawal behaviour relationship. It would be valuable to ascertain whether it is the workplace environment and/or an individual difference that can bring about a negative consequence to being embedded (Sekiguchi et al., 2008). In line with this, researchers have called for studies to examine whether embeddedness may be moderated by situational variables, such as adverse working environments (Holtom et al., 2008; Marasi et al., 2016).

Workers who are embedded in adverse (i.e., harmful, unfavourable) workplaces become reluctant stayers. In the context of this thesis, the adverse workplace is work role overload. These workers who would normally resign (i.e., experiencing abusive supervision, toxic or destructive leadership environments) cannot because of the perceived forfeits (i.e., sacrifices) of moving (Allen et al., 2016; Avey et al., 2015; Holtom et al., 2012). This act of staying in the workplace is detrimental to the worker who experiences negative outcomes (Mitchell et al., 2001), such as feelings of regret, poor health (Allen et al., 2016), frustration and a lack of control (Sheridan et al., 2019). Considered a detriment to the workplace, reluctant

stayers are not loyal, actively cause workplace problems and look for ways to avoid the job (Hom et al., 2012). As workers tend to ruminate about the available and relevant option of leaving and perceive not leaving as a lost opportunity (Beike et al., 2009; Bullens et al., 2011), the embedded worker will engage in less productive behaviours (Singh, 2019). Hence, being embedded within an adverse/negative working environment can interact in a way that produces potent negative outcomes, such as burnout because the worker cannot withdraw.

The way workers deal with and react to negative work circumstances such as overload can prompt an overworked embedded worker to feel burnout. Overwork increases psychological pressures, feelings of fatigue (Huang et al., 2020), and negatively influences a worker's health and wellbeing (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Workers who are embedded in their organisation feel obligated to engage in behaviours that are beneficial to the employer and have a tendency to exceed their workplace responsibilities (Chan et al., 2019). Depending on the individual's ability to cope and manage, this strain to fulfill a heavy workload can establish an unbalance in their ability to meet the demands leaving the worker to experience emotional exhaustion (Karatepe, 2013). Hence, embeddedness along with overwork can influence the worker to expand their efforts to the point of burnout.

2.2 Contextual and Individual Influences on Burnout

Work role overload as a contextual influence

Aged care workers are exposed to several psychosocial factors which can be stressors. Workers in the aged care industry may experience high client/resident

workloads, time pressures, lack of autonomy, and staff shortages (Evesson & Oxenbridge, 2017; Westermann et al., 2014). Aged care workers undertake the most rudimentary human activities and tasks (i.e., feeding, hydrating, toileting, bathing, and dressing) which influence the quality of daily life (Barbosa et al., 2015). When providing services, workers are confronted with age related anguish, severe and chronic disease, pain, and the reality of the care recipient's impending death (Rouxel et al., 2016). Care workers also often feel obliged to provide support above and beyond the formal requirements of their position to please their care recipient or maintain their jobs (Martin, 2016). The aged care industry thus has factors that can become overload stressors.

Workplace stressors can be both challenging and hindering (Eatough et al., 2011; Gilboa et al., 2008; Vandenberghe et al., 2011). An increase in responsibilities or tasks can be a challenge that motivates a worker to achieve higher levels of performance (Lepine et al., 2005). For example, high performers will pro-actively take on greater duties and accountability, with the resultant higher demands providing a challenge to the worker (Gilboa et al., 2008). However, beyond a certain level, these stressors can be hindering, as the demands exceed the finite time and energy available to the worker (Crawford et al., 2010; Eatough et al., 2011).

Consistent role overload can also have extensive negative individual and workplace consequences. Overload reduces a worker's job satisfaction and increases thoughts of quitting (Higgins et al., 2004). Overload can also be perceived as a threat to a worker's well-being (Vandenberghe et al., 2011) and adversely affects health outcomes (Shultz et al., 2010). This is due to overload increasing a worker's level of anxiety, fatigue, emotional and physiological stress (Duxbury et al., 2018). Continuous excessive exposure to work overload is considered a primary factor proceeding to, and

contributing to burnout (Boyas & Wind, 2010; Kim & Stoner, 2008; Lloyd et al., 2002; Vullinghs et al., 2018) across all types of jobs, occupations, and industries (Yunus & Mahajar, 2015). Workplaces are also negatively affected as those that adopt overload practices limit a worker's ability to contribute (Kacmar et al., 2020), have low enthusiasm, organisational commitment (Jones et al., 2007) and higher workplace frustrations (Eissa & Lester, 2017). As such, role overload can undermine a worker's health and is a strain on the organisation's overall performance.

Whether overload is deemed challenging and/or a hindrance depends upon the strain of the demands imposed, the workers resources to meet the demands, and level of control the worker feels. This can explain why two workers with the same workload may have a different response (Stevenson & Duxbury, 2019; Jensen et al., 2013). When the challenge is beyond the individual workers ability to meet this strain, the stressor is deemed hampering to that worker (Gilboa et al., 2008; Lepine et al., 2005; Spector & Jex, 1998). In other words, not all individual workers who experience work role overload will be negatively affected. The impact depends on the way that the worker copes (Chen & Cunradi, 2008). If overload occurs infrequently, workers may cope effectively without feeling overwhelmed. For example, not all aged care workers in busy facilities with low worker to client ratios report overload (Czuba et al., 2019). This may be due to the familiarity of a regular routine and care recipient, and working consistently without having to think about the next task at hand. Other care workers find the frequent switching between tasks generates job fatigue, cognitive strain, and perceptions of overloaded (Qian et al., 2012). Below I discuss one such individual influence, specifically how an individual controls his/her work-life boundary can dampen or exacerbate their experience of work role overload.

Flexstyle work-life boundary controls as an individual influence

Several researchers have called for studies that examine mediating processes and boundary conditions relevant to the relationship between work role overload and work outcomes (e.g., Eatough et al., 2011; Gilboa et al., 2008; Montani & Dagenais-Desmarais, 2018). One way to identify and explain how individuals' control (or do not control) their boundaries is through their boundary management profiles (Kossek et al., 2012).

Each person has their own distinct boundary management. Springing from boundary theory (Nippert-Eng, 1996), individuals differ on a continuum to the extent they join or segment their work and life roles. Individuals who prefer to blend their domains, transition frequently with cross-role interruption behaviours. Workers who prefer to segment will keep their thoughts, actions and behaviours divided in each domain (Piszczek, 2017). Building on boundary theory, Kossek and Lautsch (2008), focused on the concept of flexstyles, as a way of explaining the psychological and physical ways a worker manages their personal and working lives. Flexstyles, also known as work-life boundary management is a worker's predisposed actions to maintain balance between the boundaries of work and life (McDowall & Lindsay, 2014). There are three flexstyles which individuals can possess: *separators, integrators*, or *cycler.*

Flexstyle *separators* are individuals who seek to avoid addressing personal matters at work, or work matters at home. They actively separate the two, keeping strong boundaries to ensure they do not blend their personal dealings with their work (Kossek et al., 2012). *Separators* have high control of their boundary crossing, "can control the timing, frequency, and direction of physical, mental, and sequential transitions between their work and life domains" (Kossek et al., 2012, p. 115). This

control maintains their balance and enables *separators* to have low interruptions back and forth between their personal and work life.

In contrast, *integrators* do not separate their work and life domains. During their paid work time, *integrators* may take care of personal and family needs. For example, monitoring and responding to personal related communication at work; and vice versa, allowing work to interrupt their vacations, family, or friend activities (Kossek et al., 2012). Due to their high blending, *integrators* have less control over their perceived boundaries, regularly engaging in high interruption unbalanced behaviours back and forth between their personal and work life (Kossek, 2016).

The third style, a *cycler* (or volleyer), is considered a hybrid style whereby the individual alternates between the two main approaches. Consistent with prior boundary management studies (i.e., Ashforth et al., 2000; Kossek et al., 2012; Olson-Buchanan & Boswell, 2006), this thesis focuses on the two main approaches because a worker will identify mostly with one style (segmented or integrated) "to create more or less distinct 'territories of the self'" (Nippert-Eng, 1996, p. 596). Moreover, it is difficult to capture switching between integration and separation at any one time period (which is the design of the current study; Kossek et al., 2012). Additionally, the *cycler* style is often dependent on the type of work individuals are involved in. For instance, accountants "cycle" based on the season but this is not relevant to aged care workers because aged care is not seasonal work.

Employee flexstyles have important effects on personal and work related outcomes. *Integrators*, who have weak control between the two domains, may benefit from enrichment – the extent that involvement in one domain improves and develops the other (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006; Leduc et al., 2016). The permeability of the work-life boundary creates efficiencies as the worker seamlessly moves from one role

to the other without losing time (Olson-Buchanan & Boswell, 2006). *Integrators* can benefit from an enhanced effectiveness as they juggle both domains at once (Halbesleben et al., 2010). In contrast, research also suggests that this blurring of boundaries can create problems. *Integrators* are more likely to experience discord with the different role expectations and conflict due to an imbalance of time (Olson-Buchanan & Boswell, 2006). In the workplace, this blurring of roles and flexibility makes workers more susceptible to role stress (Ashforth et al., 2000) including job-creep because of role ambiguity (Ashforth et al., 2000). Consistent multitasking can lead to low quality task completion and the lack of sustained effort can perpetuate mistakes (Weintraub et al., 2019). An *integrator* style also weakens supervisor perception of promotability, as the worker is seen to utilise company time to address (i.e., perhaps prioritise) personal life tasks (Paustian-Underdahl et al., 2016). Those who possess an *integrator* style have a lack of focus and this strains their cognitive resources as they attend to the needs of both domains (Settles et al., 2002). At home, they experience greater conflict as work interferes in their personal life (Kossek et al., 2006; Matthews & Barnes-Farrell, 2010). For instance, an *integrator* who blends a family dinner with completing a work project can miss out on being mentally present for a meaningful moment. To this end, an *integrator* benefits from the efficiencies gained from quick switching, yet the lack of direct focus and unbalanced time may interfere in both domains.

These problems are evident in relation to the aged care industry where many workers are flexstyle *integrators* who do not separate the domains of their work and life. Care workers note that they cannot switch off. "You find yourself thinking about the people that you care for, and worrying about them. You think to yourself that you, that you know that you shouldn't, leave it at work. You find yourself out of hours

thinking about those people… on my days off… and weekends" (Hutchinson et al., 2017, p. 9).

In regard to *separator* flexstyle, there is research that suggests that such a flexstyle is beneficial. Flexstyle *separators* are individuals who seek to avoid addressing personal matters at work, or work matters at home. This adherence to a strict delineation of domains does not allow for a spillover of beneficial effects, such as skills, behaviours and values to help either domain (Ashforth et al., 2000; Hanson et al., 2006). However, *separators* have more job clarity, higher quality role experiences, and an enhanced level of wellbeing (Kossek, 2016b). Workers who can separate their domains gain by being able to concentrate solely on the tasks at hand without having any role conflicts or interruptions. Workers who possess a *separator* flexstyle have a higher perception of their boundary control, and better work to life outcomes than those who possess an *integrator* flexstyle (Kossek et al., 2012). This beneficial detachment between the two owing to the strong domain control, enables recovery time (Tempelaar & Rosenkranz, 2019). When a disconnect occurs between each domain, the worker has both a cognitive and physical break. This 'breather' permits the worker to reset for the next role, take stock of any resource lost and avoid overload. Workers who are better positioned for resource gain, have the opportunity of further resource expansion and greater resource protection (Demerouti et al., 2001; Halbesleben et al., 2014). Additionally, workers possessing a *separator* flexstyle have greater physical, mental, and social health (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). As *separators* maintain clear boundaries, this favourably assists the worker to disconnect, evading overload, and provides the opportunity for resource protection and gain.

On the other side, with the capability of continuous connectivity and enabling technology, increasingly workplaces are making it difficult for workers to separate

their work and life. These new technological tools facilitate porous boundaries between work and home (Kossek & Lautsch, 2012), providing perpetual availability spanning both work and no-work time. As such, *separators* can be seen to lack flexibility and considered rigid when they only work at a specific time and place (Kossek & Lautsch, 2012). *Separators* lack the ability to reap the benefits of skill sharing and resources (Kossek, 2016). *Separators* miss out on any positive spill-over of synergies between their roles and can face under-development for whichever domain has the lower priority at that time (Kossek, 2016). This impermeable segmentation gives workers limited cross-role abilities to meet overlapping needs (Nippert-Eng, 1996) and can be seen as a negative outcome of possessing a separator flexstyle.

Given the evidence for the benefits of both *separator* and *integrator* styles, researchers have increasingly argued that flexstyles are better understood as a moderator of processes that connect job related demands and work outcomes. This line of research suggests that the degree of integration versus separation of work and non-work domains can have important effects on work, family and personal outcomes. It is the combination of work features and flexstyle type that affect the outcomes experienced by workers.

In conclusion, there is accumulated evidence that job embeddedness is associated with positive workplace behaviours and lessens withdrawal behaviours. There is also a growing body of evidence that job embeddedness contributes to negative outcomes for the worker and workplaces such as worker withdrawal behaviours. The divergent consequences of embeddedness suggest the influence of contextual and individual moderators. That is, in favourable contexts and individual features, embeddedness has beneficial outcomes for individuals and organisations in

the form of encouraging positive workplace behaviours alongside organisational retention. However, when individual features and the workplace context are less favourable, embeddedness contributes to adverse outcomes. For these employees, feeling enmeshed and immobile creates feelings of dissatisfaction and being trapped. These feelings manifest in the form of burnout and physical steps to avoid the role (i.e., withdrawing). In the next chapter, I turn to a focused examination of these issues by proposing a set of hypotheses that form the theoretical model considered in this thesis.

Chapter 3: Theoretical Model and Hypotheses

Chapter 3 outlines the theoretical rationale for the proposed conceptual model that explicates the conditions under which embedded aged care workers withdraw from work. In this chapter, I present the overarching theory that ties together the proposed model of this thesis. I illustrate the theoretical model guiding the research and the hypothesis drawn from this theory.

Overarching theory

This thesis draws upon the conservation of resources (Hobfoll, 1988) as the overarching theory to explain how job embeddedness influences withdrawal behaviours via burnout. The relationship between embeddedness and withdrawal via burnout is impacted by workers' flexstyle boundary control and experience of work role overload. The theoretical model is illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1:

Theoretical Model
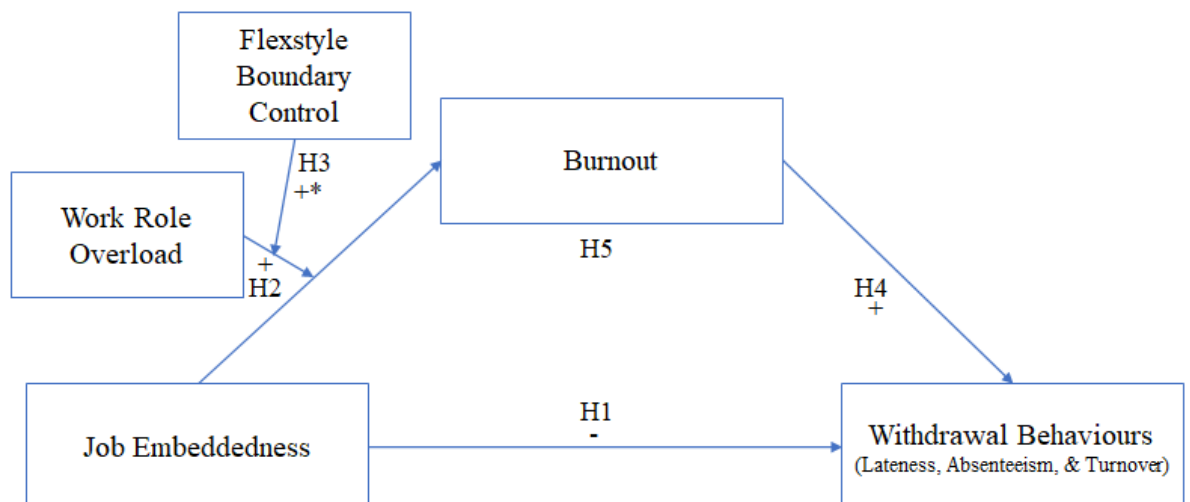
* The positive symbol represents a *integrator* flexstyle relationship, whereas a negative symbol will represent a *separator* flexstyle relationship.

Hobfoll (1988; 1989) conceived the conservation of resources (COR) to be a theory of motivation. The basic tenet of COR is that individuals are motivated by the conservation and acquisition of resources. Resources are considered to be anything an individual values, for example, objects (i.e., work car), energy (i.e., money), conditions (i.e., tenure, seniority) or personal (i.e., skills) from the workplace (Halbesleben et al., 2014; Hobfoll 2018). Workers utilise their resources and are active participants in the process of gaining/securing further valued resources. The value attributed to an individual's resources varies from person to person and is tied to the individual's situation and/or their experiences (Halbesleben et al., 2014). To this end, individuals are motivated to retain, build, and protect the resources they value (Hobfoll, 1988; 1989).

Job embeddedness is grounded in COR theory. This is because embedded workers accumulate valuable resources which underpin their decision to stay (Greene et al., 2018). These resources are split across the three embeddedness dimensions (i.e., *links, fit, sacrifice*) that connect the worker to a specific job and workplace (Harris et al., 2011; Kiazad et al., 2015). *Links,* are the (in)formal ties with the organisation; *fit,* is the comfort and compatibility with the organisation; and *sacrifice* being the cost incurred from (in)tangible benefits that by leaving are forfeited. When COR is incorporated with embeddedness, these valued resources can be perceived as instrumental (i.e., *links, fit*) or intrinsic (i.e., *sacrifices*) (Greene et al., 2018). Instrumental resources (i.e., *links, fit*) help a worker to fulfill, perform and engage in their role, whilst enabling further resources to be derived (Kiazad et al., 2015). An example is workplace training which can increase the workers opportunity for internal promotion (i.e., resource gain), and also reduce the odds of being laid off (i.e., resource protection). Intrinsic resources (i.e., *sacrifices*) hold situational value, and can be any

perceived psychological, social, or material benefits which would be lost upon exit (Halbesleben et al., 2014). An example is having a strong social support system/friendship network that is not yet available in another organisation (i.e., resource lost). As such, embedded workers are motivated to stay at an organisation to retain their valued intrinsic and/or instrumental resources and attain additional resources.

When resources are threatened, lost, or if there is failure to add further resources in the wake of effort, the worker will experience emotional distress, in the form of stressors (Harris et al., 2011; Hobfoll et al., 2017). COR posits that a worker will fear having their resources diminished and/or lost more than they fear the inability to acquire resources (Hobfoll, 1989). In line with prospect theory (Kahneman & Tversky 1979), this fear of loss produces a stronger emotional reaction, than that derived from resource gain (Hobfoll, 2011; Marasi et al., 2016). Kiazad and colleagues (2015) state that it is this fear of giving up/loss of workplace benefits that deters embedded workers' from leaving their job. They find that when faced with resource loss, the embedded worker will respond by investing further resources to counteract the loss and protect what is left. As embedded workers possess higher accumulated resources, a pending loss will be felt more intensely than those who are not embedded (Allen et al., 2016). Thus, embedded workers who are confronted with, or threatened with, resource loss undergo a stronger psychological impact in the form of experiencing workplace stressors.

Guided by COR, embeddedness represents the accumulation of valued intrinsic and instrumental resources (represented by dimensions of *links, fit* and *sacrifice*). Resources are valued because they allow workers to meet their demands, goals and protect against other resource loss. These resources derived through their current

workplace influences the worker to stay, embedding the worker to their workplace. When the worker's valued resources are threatened or lost, they experience distressing workplace stressors.

The relationship between job embeddedness and withdrawal

Job embeddedness describes the forces which inspire workers to stay. From the perspective of COR, these forces represent resources that individual's value. It is considered an anti-withdrawal construct, deemed to explain the "pulling forces" which keep workers fastened to their organisation (Darrat et al., 2017). Embeddedness encourages workers to stay through a broad array of attaching influences, including informal and formal connections, perceptions of job fit, and the perceived sacrifices of leaving (Halbesleben & Wheeler, 2008; Mitchell et al., 2001). Embeddedness influences the way workers interpret and react to adverse events and shocks, by buffering the negative "pushing forces" (Burton et al., 2010; Kiazad et al., 2015; Sender et al., 2018). Without embeddedness's pulling forces, workers are more likely to withdraw in the form of lateness, absenteeism, and turnover.

Lateness refers to the worker being intentionally tardy at work (Foust et al., 2006). This transgression may have a positive effect, as the non-working time temporarily provides a worker with resource restoration in the form of rest (Kaya & Karatepe, 2020). It can also have a negative effect on the actual available work time, goal accomplishment, and co-worker perceptions of the unpunctual worker (Mroz & Allen, 2017). This counterproductive behaviour reduces workplace time, creating an inability to obtain workplace resources, and requires an additional outlay of resources to '*catch up*' (Sliter et al., 2012). That said, embeddedness can thwart counterproductive workplace behaviours (Lee et al., 2004; Ng & Feldman, 2009b).

This is because embeddedness discourages a worker's tardiness via *links* which facilitate social workplace connections, through *fit*, whereby the worker feels capable and able to perform (Rubenstein et al., 2019), and by insight in avoiding valuable resource loss via *sacrifice* (Halbesleben et al., 2014). Thus, embedded workers are less likely to be late. Less embedded workers exhibit greater lateness because they have fewer ties to their colleagues, lack compatibility with occupational demands and values, and perceive themselves to possess fewer benefits from their employment.

Absenteeism is a worker's lack of physical presence in the workplace, at the expected time they were expected to be present (Martocchio & Jimeno, 2003). As embeddedness reflects the worker's decision to broadly participate directly in the organisation (Lee at al., 2004), having volitional absences can hinder their ability to accumulate and protect their valued resources, and may endanger his/her employment status (Mallol et al., 2007; Wheeler et al., 2012). Embeddedness discourages a worker's absenteeism through *links, fit,* and *sacrifice*. Embedded workers value their connection(s), have a greater sense of obligation (Hom et al., 2009) and social accountability at work (Rubenstein et al., 2019). The more the worker is embedded, the more connections they have, and the more they are obligated and want to help their co-workers and organisation. When workers *fit* with their organisation, they have higher perceived comfort and level of job capability, and can meet the demands of the role through skills and ability. Workers who are embedded want to keep their jobs and evade a *sacrifice* of resources by leaving (Lee et al., 2004). Embedded workers (i.e., unlike un-embedded workers) therefore avoid being absent as this reduces their performance, organisational effectiveness and endangers their employment status (Lee et al., 2004). As such, embeddedness discourages absenteeism (Burton et al., 2010; Lee et al., 2004; Ng & Feldman, 2009a; Van Woerkom et al., 2016).

Turnover is the act of parting ways between a worker and the organisation. Embeddedness discourages turnover through the combined forces of *links, fit* and *sacrifice*. *Links* is attributed to embedded workers having quality connections with others which impose normative pressure to stay. *Fit* refers to the perception of compatibility with the organisation, this comfort and fit increases the worker's attachment to the role. *Sacrifice* captures the actual cost or resources which will be forfeited upon leaving. The more resources the worker must give up, the less attractive turnover will appear (Zhang et al., 2019). As embeddedness is the result of resource accumulation, the larger the valued resources, the more embedded the worker is (Halbesleben & Wheeler, 2008) and the more discouraged the worker will be from turnover (Kiazad et al., 2015; Mobley, 1977). This is because quitting would entail an abrupt surrendering of work resources, depriving the worker of organisational opportunities and benefits (Holtom & Darabi, 2018; Sekiguchi et al., 2008). Conversely, those who have fewer valued resources (i.e., those who are not embedded strongly to the job), would incur fewer resource losses if they quit (Rubenstein et al., 2020). Job embeddedness therefore reduces a worker's desirability of movement and diminishes turnover (Jiang et al., 2012; Kiazad et al., 2015).

In summary, embedded workers are less likely to be late, absent and leave the organisation because it is simply too challenging and emotionally painful for them to give up the resources accumulated in their jobs. Indeed, embeddedness predicts a worker's withdrawal over and above their commitment to the organisation and/or their job satisfaction (Felps et al., 2009; Jiang et al., 2012). Even after workers engage in job search behaviours, the more embedded the worker is, the less likely they are to leave (Jiang et al., 2012; Lee et al., 2004). Based on the above theoretical

considerations and consistent with prior research findings (e.g., Lee et al., 2004; Mitchell et al., 2001; Sekiguchi et al., 2008), I propose:

Hypothesis 1: Job embeddedness is negatively associated with withdrawal behaviours (H1a: Lateness, H1b: Absenteeism, and H1c: Turnover).

Work role overload as a contextual moderator of the relationship between job embeddedness and burnout

Work role overload is experienced when the challenge of contradictory workplace requirements, inadequate resources and competing demands causes a drain and hindrance to the worker (Kacmar et al., 2020; Kilroy et al., 2016). When faced with workplace overload, workers often choose to increase their efforts (Lepine et al., 2005). Consistent with the COR perspective, those with greater resources are better positioned to handle and cope with workplace overload, due to having greater resilience to resource loss, and being more adept at stemming future resource depletion by resource acquisition (Wheeler et al., 2012). For those with less resources, overload will have the opposite effect. That is, the increased resource investment can spiral the worker via additional resource loss which create further stressors (Clarke & Higgs, 2020; Zhang et al., 2019). This increase in effort, depletes additional resources and may lead to burnout when the situation doesn't allow for recovery (Duxbury et al., 2018; Lee & Ashforth, 1996).

Resource loss overload has a direct positive relationship with burnout (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). However, limited research has been devoted to understanding how this work stressor can interact with job embeddedness to affect burnout. This is surprising because work role overload has been found to negatively moderate the

relationship of other workplace outcomes such as self-efficacy, resilience, and family work enrichment (Brown et al., 2005; Kacmar et al., 2020).

While it is unknown if work role overload moderates the relationship between job embeddedness and burnout, there is some evidence that suggests this is so. In line with other research detailing the detrimental moderating effects of work role overload on various beneficial relationships between resources and self-efficacy, resilience, and family work enrichment (i.e., Brown et al., 2005; Kacmar et al., 2020), it is expected work role overload will reduce any buffering effects that job embeddedness may have on workplace burnout. Overload is likely to encourage embedded workers to experience more *depersonalisation* as it forces people to stretch their effort, attention and resources thinly. Brown and colleagues (2005) found work role overload moderated the relationship between organisational resources and self-efficacy, such that overload reduced the worker's perceptions that their resources are adequate to cover the role's requirements, which in turn lowered workers' self-efficacy. Work role overload moderates the positive relationship of an individual's level of resilience and family-work enrichment (i.e., the extent that demand neutralises resilience qualities to preventing work enrichment), whereby the relationship weakened when role overload is high (Kacmar et al., 2020).

In sum, it is expected overload will moderate the relationship between job embeddedness and burnout. Specifically, it is expected that high levels of work role overload, will have a deleterious positive effect on the relationship between embeddedness and burnout. In COR parlance, as embedded workers have greater resources, these resources can withstand and buffer adverse situations (Kiazad et al., 2015; Mitchell et al., 2001) such as work role overload. Work role overload threatens the positive impact that these resources will have on well-being, health, and burnout

(Montani & Dagenais-Desmarais, 2018). When experiencing work role overload, the worker will need to exert additional effort and energy to cope and successfully complete their tasks (Sousa & Neves, 2020). According to COR, investing valued resources into the workplace, during times of overload will increase the perceived threat to existing and further losses (Hobfoll, 1989; Montani & Dagenais-Desmarais, 2018). If this situation continues, the worker will be unable to properly recover from their efforts, impairing their physical psychological health (Hobfoll & Freedy, 1993), and accelerating the progression of burnout (Leiter et al., 2014). Conversely, when work role overload is low, there is likely to be no effect to the job embeddedness and burnout relationship.

Hypothesis 2: Work role overload will moderate the relationship between job embeddedness and burnout, such that job embeddedness will be positively associated with burnout when work role overload is high.

The role of flexstyle and work role overload in the relationship between job embeddedness and burnout

A worker's work-life boundary management style influences the way individuals demarcate their work and non-working lives (Kossek & Lautsch, 2008). Workers with strong separating boundaries maintain two distinct work life domains, whereas workers with blurred merging boundaries allow for domain intermingling (Bogaerts et al., 2018). The merging or separating of domains is neither inherently good, nor bad (Chen et al., 2009; Kreiner, 2006). Instead, the outcome can be largely influenced by the organisational environment or situation they work in (Foucreault et al., 2018). Limited research has been dedicated to understanding the impact of an

individual's flexstyle when workers are experiencing work role overload. This is unfortunate, because a particular flexstyle influences the way a worker fits, acts and manages the demands of their workplace.

A workplace environment which does not harmonise with a worker's flexstyle will contribute to conflict and stress (Chen et al., 2009; Kreiner, 2006). It is posited workers who possess an *integrator* flexstyle and experience high role overload, will have greater burnout than those who possess a *separator* flexstyle. This is because integrators merge their roles, lose time and energy from managing both, and can face exhaustion because of the inadequate recovery time (Kossek & Lautsch, 2012). Consistent merging diminishes the opportunity for physical and mental breaks which would provide opportunities to gain valued resources to meet the overload. Being a multi-tasker reduces concentration and absorption on the task at hand. It also interferes with the helpful flow which aids a worker in coping with demanding tasks (Lazarus et al., 1980; Peifer & Zipp, 2019). In contrast, *separators* benefit from fewer interruptions of moving back and forth between work and personal life – which allows them to focus on the task at hand (Kossek, 2016b). To this end, a worker's flexstyle can be influential on the experience of workplace conflicts and stressors.

Boundary theory (Ashforth et al., 2000; Clark, 2000; Nippert-Eng, 1996) explains the degree to which workers distinguish each boundary. It theorises that *integrators* (i.e., unlike *separators*) have permeable boundaries characterised by flexibility, allowing for activities, thoughts, and feelings to enter the other domain (Wepfer et al., 2018). This permeable boundary of blending their work and life, gives little opportunity to disengage, and replenish resource loss prior to resource loss strain (Wepfer et al., 2018). During times of high work role overload, the perceived attainability of goal achievements is reduced, creating a stressful imbalance between

time and demands (Brown et al., 2005). Indeed, Kossek (2016b) found that workers who possess an *integrator* flexstyle, do not manage and control their boundary preferences, and in turn experience higher work stressors, in-role conflict, and burnout as compared to those who possess a *separator* flexstyle. Without control, the worker invests their limited valued resources to cater to the demand, and faces a resource loss spiral. It is this control that may have the ability to reduce the impact of overload (Kossek et al., 2012). When coupled with COR theory, the overloaded embedded worker will invest further resources, whilst looking to acquire and protect from resource loss (Hobfoll et al., 2018; Kiazad et al., 2015). It is thus posited, that for those who possess an *integrator* flexstyle, resource loss and *depersonalisation* will be exacerbated. In contrast, it is expected that a *separator* flexstyle will mitigate the detrimental effect of overload and the embedded worker will incur fewer resource losses and be less prone to burnout.

> *Hypothesis 3: There will be a three-way interaction between job embeddedness, work role overload, and flexstyle boundary control, such that work role overload and flexstyle boundary control will moderate the relationship between job embeddedness and burnout. The positive relationship between job embeddedness and burnout will be stronger when high work role overload is coupled with an integrator flexstyle boundary control compared to when high work role overload is coupled with separator flexstyle boundary control and when low work role overload is coupled with integrator or separator flexstyle boundary controls.*

The relationship between burnout and withdrawal behaviours

The COR primacy of resource loss principle plays a vital role in explaining why burnout predicts withdrawal (Barthauer et al., 2020; Hobfoll, 1988; 1989). Burnout is a process of prolonged high organisational demands, coupled with few resources that erodes the workers time and energy (Hobfoll et al., 2018). When workers are confronted with the erosion of valued resources to no perceived gain, they perceive this as a stressor (Alarcon, 2011). To counteract this strain workers will enact *depersonalisation* as a physical maladaptive coping method (Alarcon, 2011). Conceptually, as burnout progresses, more physical and mental negative outcomes (i.e., exhaustion, health problems, sleeping disturbances) are felt by the worker (Barthauer et al., 2020). To eliminate further resource depletion, workers look to each withdrawal behaviour as a protection mechanism (Harrison & Newman, 2012; Johns, 2001; Swider & Zimmerman, 2010). As such, worker's burnout is linked to behavioural withdrawal (i.e., Maslach, 1982; Maslach et al., 2001; Petitta & Vecchione, 2011; Schaufeli et al., 1996).

Lateness, an organisational deviance is the harmful action that workers direct at an organisation (Chullen et al., 2010). In healthcare, workers who reported greater perceptions of *depersonalisation* were also engaged in more organisational deviant behaviours (Chullen et al., 2010). For example, this can be intentional tardiness to the start of their workday, a meeting, or return from lunch. When late, the worker gains time, and the organisation loses productivity. Workers experiencing *depersonalisation* are uncaring to the needs of the organisation or people within (Halbesleben & Buckley, 2004). They have an indifferent and cynical attitude to the situation and/or to others (Emmerik et al., 2005). Persons experiencing *depersonalisation* use unfeeling and impersonal responses, derogatory language, and withdrawal through longer breaks

(Cordes & Dougherty, 1993; Kalliath & Beck, 2001). As such, workers experiencing higher *depersonalisation* engage in greater organisational deviance in the form of tardiness.

Workers experiencing *depersonalisation* are more likely to be absent. This is because depersonalised workers become less loyal as their negative attitudes increase (Campbell et al., 2013). Workers who experience workplace strain, respond by managing and protecting their resources. Petitta and Vecchione (2011) found *depersonalisation* is mostly related to a worker's lack of resources. This dearth of resources fuelling the worker's internal experience of stress (Bakker et al., 2014; Petitta & Vecchione, 2011). Maslach and Leiter (1999), maintain a worker's internal experience of workplace stressors will influence the behaviour of absenteeism. Absenteeism represents an escape strategy from resource depletion (Hobfoll & Shirom, 1993). In aged care, workers finding themselves to be less disengaged, treat their recipients as if they are tasks instead of human-beings and choose to be more absent (Marquis, 2002). In sum, workers high in *depersonalisation* are known to physically distance themselves via absenteeism (Swider & Zimmerman, 2010).

Workers experiencing *depersonalisation* are also more likely to leave their organisation via turnover. Indeed, Swider and Zimmerman (2010) meta-analysis of 115 studies showed a moderate effect size/correlation between the burnout dimension of *depersonalisation* and turnover (i.e., 0.29). Workers facing *depersonalisation* become disinterested in their work and workplace (Maslach & Leiter, 2008). When reducing their engagement, they further alienate themselves from their day to day tasks (Consiglio et al., 2013). Anderson (2008) found nursing home assistants with high levels of *depersonalisation* became emotionally hardened, objectifying residents and "viewing residents as room numbers rather than people" (p. 43). Chamberlain and

colleagues (2017) outlined a care workers *depersonalisatio*n "results in physical and emotional depletion and feeling like their work has no positive contribution" (p. 66). Having little motivation and energy to give to others or their job, workers look to remove themselves from the situation and resign.

As an individual's "burnout is not a direct consequence of the number of hours worked per se" (Barnett et al., 1999 p. 74), it is reasonable to assume it can be attributed to the context. Workers in the aged care industry can have a high risk of developing burnout (Stone & Harahan, 2010), and when they do, similar to other industries withdrawal behaviors may ensue. Workers who are *depersonalised* due to being confronted with age related serious illness, disease, and death (Boerner et al., 2017; Cocco, 2010), can utilise withdrawal behaviors as a coping mechanism. This coping mechanism is because of the difficulties attained when working with individuals affected by reduced physical and mental conditions (Cheug & Chow, 2011). The emotional burden borne when providing care for the needy whom exhibit aggressive tendencies and behavioural problems (Evers et al., 2001) encourages workers to take mini breaks (i.e., lateness and absenteeism) as a coping/defensive/strategy. With the inability to cure the elder, the need to maintain their quality of life, and the toll in terms of recipient's emotional demand the care provider also suffers emotionally, increasing the likelihood to withdraw. Indeed, when workers are depersonalised, it reduces their motivation to work, and can be manifested in intentions to leave, absenteeism, and turnover (Iecovich & Avivi, 2017).

Similar to other scholars who have considered a positive burnout and withdrawal behaviour relationship (i.e., Bakker & Costa, 2014; Balogun & Pellegrini, 1999; Firth & Britton, 1989; Maslach & Jackson, 1981; Travis et al., 2016), it is

expected workers who experience burnout will display withdrawal behaviours in the form of lateness, absenteeism and turnover.

Hypotheses 4: Burnout is positively associated with withdrawal behaviours (H4a: Lateness, H4b: Absenteeism, and H4c: Turnover).

The joint effect of work role overload and flexstyle on the mediated relationship between job embeddedness and withdrawal

Below I describe my overall conceptual model, which is an amalgamation of the theoretical rationale forwarded for hypotheses 3 and 4. During times of work role overload, an embedded worker's flexstyle will either be beneficial (i.e., weaken) or a hinderance (i.e., exacerbate). When a worker possesses a *separator* flexstyle, in contrast to an *integrator,* they have the benefit of cognitive and physical breaks between roles. These breaks enable the worker to reset and recharge so as to accumulate valued resources. Resources are valuable because; they enable the worker to meet current demands via resource investment, they can be accumulated to meet future demands, or they can be used to protect against perceived resource loss. When workers possess an *integrator* flexstyle, due to the ever-increasing resource deficiency of meeting both domains, they are less capable of resource gain, and risk entering a resource loss spiral. As such, I propose that workers who experience high role overload and possess a *separator* flexstyle benefit (via reduced resource loss) compared to workers with an *integrator* flexstyle (which exacerbates resource loss).

Flexstyle and work role overload may combine to shape the relationship between job embeddedness and burnout. When workers are faced with overload, they must invest their valued resources (i.e., such as time, energy) to order to cope and meet

the job demands. Workers possessing a *separator* flexstyle have a greater ability to cope with the demand. Consistent with COR theory, as overload increases, embedded workers will focus greater personal resources to cope (Halbesleben et al., 2014). This is because embedded workers are immersed (or trapped) with a lack of control, striving to accrue and retain their valued dimension-specific resources. Valued resources held by the embedded worker are considered difficult to relinquish, and the worker will be more reluctant to give up resources under threat of loss. When resources are expensed to the point they cannot meet the demand, this creates a stressor for the worker. Work role overload and a worker's flexstyle will affect the relationship between job embeddedness and burnout, whereby embedded workers remain in the role incurring greater resource loss to the point of burnout.

The final stage of the model outlines the connection between burnout and withdrawal. Resulting from involvement with demanding people or work situations, burnout, the chronic negative state (Leiter & Maslach, 1988; Schaufeli & Greenglass, 2001), will adversely affect the relationship between job embeddedness and withdrawal behaviours. This demand from people and work is a drain on the worker's resources, causing stress and poor health outcomes (Halbesleben & Buckley, 2004). Workers experiencing burnout, develop negative attitudes to the job and disassociate themselves from the workplace (Campbell et al., 2013). When distancing and for protection, they withdraw (i.e., lateness, absenteeism, turnover).

Taken together, I propose:

Hypotheses 5: Work role overload and flexstyle boundary control will moderate the mediated relationship between job embeddedness and withdrawal behaviours via burnout. The positive relationship between job

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embeddedness and withdrawal behaviours (H5a: Lateness, H5b: Absenteeism, and H5c: Turnover) via burnout will be stronger when there is high work role overload and an integrator flexstyle boundary control compared to when there is high work role overload and a separator flexstyle boundary control and when there is low work role overload and an integrator or separator flexstyle boundary controls.

Chapter 4: Methodology

4.1 Participating Organisations

Aged care workers can be employed within two settings of the aged care industry, in-home community aged care, and residential nursing aged care. Whilst the settings (i.e., location) is different the employment role and position across both settings is similar in skills, experience, and scope of practice/tasks (King et al., 2012). The setting of the service can determine how tailored and adaptable the care support is for the individual. For example, in-home care recipients select what support matches their needs, when they receive this support and who provides the support in their home. Residential care service recipients have fewer choices, as personal care and food delivery times are set, with a more one-size-fits all approach to care. Organisations within both settings, in-home community aged care and residential nursing aged care were offered participation.

Two organisations located within Sydney Australia participated in this study, and are covered by the Social, Community, Home Care and Disabilities Services Industry Award (Fair Work Australia, 2020). This award sets a worker's hourly rate of pay which is day/time specific, and offers casual workers who have been employed for twelve months the right to request casual to permanent conversion. Each organisation is a registered charity which enables all workers the opportunity to salary package. *Angel Care*[1] has approximately 280 aged care workers employed to provide

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[1] These are pseudonym names.

in-home care services. *Tender Care[1]* has approximately 120 aged care workers employed to provide residential nursing care. Aged care workers provide assistance with personal care (i.e., feeding, showering, dressing, and toileting), medication management, transport (i.e., medical appointments, outings, and social activities), and senior companionship. The aged care workers employed by *Angel Care* and *Tender Care,* and each organisation's Human Resource Team (HRT) participated in this study. The study received ethics approval[2] (HC180535) from the University of New South Wales human resources ethics committee (see Appendix 1).

4.2 Procedure

To reduce common method bias (Chan, 2009; Podsakoff et al., 2003), the study incorporated two data sources collected over two time periods. At stage one (S1, September 2019), aged care workers completed a self-report survey that included items measuring job embeddedness, work role overload, flexstyle boundary control, and burnout. At stage two (S2, May 2019), six months later, employee data for withdrawal

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[2] Six organisations originally agreed to participate. However, immediately following this, the Australian Royal Commission into the Quality and Safety of organisations within the aged care industry ("Aged Care Royal Commission - Home", 2019) was announced. Due to the sensitive nature of this Royal Commission, four organisations withdrew their consent. The remaining organisations requested three conditions be acknowledged and incorporated into their approval. The request consisted of anonymity of name, location, and participant privacy in any written publication. Within this thesis, the location and name have been substituted, whereby organisation one is referred to as *Angel Care* and organisation two is referred to as *Tender Care*.

behaviours in the form of lateness, absenteeism, and turnover was obtained from each HRT for aged care workers who participated.

To ensure clarity, quality and useability of survey design (Neuman, 2016), the survey was piloted with ten aged care workers from *Angel Care* (see Appendix 2). Based on the results, no changes were required. To safeguard the reliability of the main study, responses from the pilot group were not included in the main study.

The HRT's invited their employees to participate in the study via email. This invitation included eligibility criterion (i.e., 18 years and older), guarantee of confidentiality of personal details, the online survey link, the elective paper version location, and information about the participation incentive (i.e., participants from each organisation were randomly drawn to win one of four $30 cinema vouchers). The survey included instructions, the study measures, and demographic questions (see Appendix 3). The format was arranged with the study measures first, followed by demographic questions. To safeguard against inaccurate responses, attention checks, page breaks, and reminders to answer honestly were included (Meade & Craig, 2012; Neuman, 2016). Two weeks after the initial invitation, the HRTs sent out a reminder email. One month after distribution, the online survey was closed and all paper copies were numbered, scanned, entered into SPSS, and double checked for accuracy in data keying. Stage two was completed when each organisation's HRT providing the participant's average weekly hours worked, total number of shifts, and withdrawal behaviours (i.e., number of times late, number of times absent, and actual voluntary turnover).

Studies on job embeddedness and withdrawal that separate the collection of data on different parts of the model typically use a gap of six months (e.g., Ng & Feldman, 2013; Porter et al., 2019). Individuals experience decision paths when

withdrawing and this period ensures the appropriate time is given for any causal effects; without being so long that the effects taper off (Dormann & Zaph, 2002; Hom & Griffeth, 1995; Zapf et al., 1996).

4.3 Participants

Of the 390 aged care workers invited, a total of 283 attempted the survey (73%), 221 via the Qualtrics online link, and 62 chose the paper option. A total of 40 participants were excluded due to either not meeting the eligibility requirements, or insufficiently completing the whole survey (i.e., 6 participants were not eligible, 16 participants closed the survey directly after reading the participant information statement, 6 participants clicked they did not agree to participate, and 12 participants closed before completing the identifying demographics and thus S2 data could not be collected for them). In line with Ng and Feldman (2013), the dataset was checked for unusual response patterns, such as the respondents answering in an identical way to all questions, or multiple participation, but no such cases were found.

A total of 243 participants (i.e., 63% response rate; 173 from *Angel Care* and 70 from *Tender Care*) completed the survey in full, of which 185 (i.e., 76%) of participants choose the Qualtrics online link, and 58 (i.e., 24%) selected the paper option. Table 1 demonstrates the descriptive statistics relating to the participants' demographics. The average age of the participants was 51 years (SD = 13.70). Approximately 94% were female. This is typical of the health care services industry, where care workers tend to be female (Berkman et al., 2015), and of an older age profile (Martin & Healy, 2010). It is also in line with the "Australian aged-care sector is female-dominated with males representing less than 7 per cent of employees in the

sector" (Radford & Chapman, 2015, p. 6), and the 2012 Aged Care Census revealing a median age of 47 (King et al., 2012). Fifty percent of the respondents lived with a partner. They had an average of .73 (SD = 1.08) dependants living at home. The aged care sector provides onsite training and encourages the *Certificate III in Individual Support – Aged Care* qualification, as such 80% of participants recorded an education level of at least an associate degree. The majority (62%) of participants were casually employed, which is consistent with the aged care industry, whose workforce is primarily casual (Berkman et al., 2015). The participants average weekly working hours were 34 (SD = 11.80), had worked in their current position for an average of 4 years (SD = 3.72), and within the aged care industry for an average of 10 years (SD = 8.31). The Social, Community, Home Care and Disabilities Services Industry Award enables all casually employed workers the right to convert to permanent employed, however as shown, the majority of the workforce employed electing to not convert to a permanent role.

Table 1

Sample demographics

Variable	M or N (SD or %)
Age M (SD)	51.66 (13.70)
Gender N (%)	
0 = Female	228 (93.82)
1 = Male	15 (6.58)
Marital status N (%)	
0 = Partner	122 (50.20)
1 = No Partner	121 (49.80)
Dependants M (SD)	0.73 (1.08)
Education level N (%)	
0 = Associate degree and below	195 (80.25)
1 = Bachelor's degree and above	48 (19.75)
Work Type N (%)	
Casual	151 (62.14)
Part-time	62 (25.51)
Full-time	26 (10.70)
Other	4 (1.65)
Average weekly working hours M (SD)	34.58 (11.80)
Present organisation tenure M (SD)	4.38 (3.72)
Industry tenure M (SD)	10.97 (8.31)

Notes. N = 243.
M = Mean; N = Number, SD = Standard Deviation

4.4 Measures

All participants completed each study measure in full (see Appendix 3), though only the applicable subscales (i.e., specifically Burnout depersonalisation) outlined below were included in the analysis.

Job embeddedness. Embeddedness was measured using the Global Organisational Embeddedness scale by Crossley and colleagues (2007). The measure consists of seven items and was answered on a 7-point Likert style scale (1 = 'Strongly Disagree' to 7 = 'Strongly Agree'). Item six was reverse scored. Sample items are "I'm too caught up in the organisation to leave" and "I am tightly connected to this organisation". Higher scores indicate greater levels of job embeddedness. Cronbach's alpha was .96.

Work role overload. Work role overload was measured using the scale by Bolino and Turnley (2005). The measure contained three items, "The amount of work I am expected to do is too great"; "I never seem to have enough time to get everything done at work"; and "It often seems like I have too much work for one person to do". Each of the items were answered on a 5-point Likert style scale (1 = 'Strongly Disagree' to 5 = 'Strongly Agree'). Higher scores indicate greater presence of overload. Cronbach's alpha was .97.

Flexstyle. Boundary control management style was assessed using the Work-Life Indicator measure (Kossek et al., 2012). Consisting of three items, the measure was answered on a 5-point Likert style scale (1 = 'Strongly Disagree' to 5 = 'Strongly Agree'). Sample items are "I control whether I have clear boundaries between my work and personal life" and "I control whether I am able to keep my work and personal life separate". Higher scores indicate the worker has greater boundary control, denoting

the worker has a *separator* flexstyle. The lower the number, the less control a worker has over his/her boundaries, indicating an *integrator* flexstyle. Cronbach's alpha was .90.

Burnout. Burnout was assessed using the MMI - Maslach Burnout Inventory (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). The MMI contains three sub-scales (Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalisation, and Personal Accomplishment). The depersonalization sub-scale of MMI was used. Answered on a 7-point Likert style scale (1 = 'Never' to 7 = 'Every day'), the depersonalization scale consists of five items and included sample items such as "I've become more insensitive towards people since I took this job"; and "I worry that this job is hardening me emotionally". Higher scores indicate the more emotionally drained the worker is, their unfeeling and impersonal response towards those they directly care for (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Cronbach's alpha was .93.

Withdrawal behaviours. In the stage 2 (S2) of the data collection, the human resource team provided information for each employee who completed the S1 survey. This consisted of average weekly hours worked, actual number of shifts rostered to work, frequency of lateness, frequency of absenteeism, and actual turnover over the preceding six month period. These data were used to calculate variables corresponding to three withdrawal behaviours. *Frequency of lateness* was defined as the number of times that a worker arrived ten minutes past the expected start time per shift. Lateness was calculated as the Total number of times late / Total number of shifts of work x 100 = Lateness Rate (%). *Frequency of absenteeism* was calculated by the Total number of absences / Total number of shifts of work x 100 = Absent Rate (%). Absenteeism was defined as any day missing from the workplace which was not pre-approved (i.e., annual leave) or not supported by a certificate from a medical practitioner (i.e., sick

leave). It does not include planned leave, such as maternity or study leave. *Turnover* was defined as a situation in which an employee was no longer employed by the organisation and includes the categories of voluntary (i.e., resignation) or involuntary (i.e., redundancy turnover). Voluntary turnover was coded as "1" and no turnover was coded as "0".

4.5 Control Variables

Based on prior research, five control variables were selected because they are theoretically related to the main study variables.

Age. An employee's age was controlled given older workers may have more entrenched skillsets and habits which affect their embeddedness (Rubenstein et al., 2019). Age is also negatively related to withdrawal behaviours. Younger workers have a greater frequency of withdrawal behaviours than older workers (Allen et al., 2014; Griffeth et al., 2000). Age was measured in years and months.

Dependants. Individuals who are reliant on the participant for financial support were defined as a dependant. The more dependant care responsibilities the individual has, the lower the likelihood of demonstrating withdrawal behaviours (Griffeth et al., 2000) as workers are conscious of the need to financially provide for those in their care. Dependants was measured by the number of people, other than the participant, or their spouse or cohabiting partner (if any), who are dependent for financial support.

Average weekly working hours. Average weekly working hours was controlled for as working overtime influences the effects of burnout and increase the likelihood of worker withdrawal (Gabel-Shemueli et al., 2015; Moyer et al., 2017).

The HRT provided the number of average weekly working hours based on their payroll employee data.

Organisational tenure. Studies have shown a positive association with a worker's job embeddedness and the number of year's they are employed in an organisation (e.g., Felps et al., 2009; Singh et al., 2018). Employees feel more committed, dedicated and attached to the job the longer they are employed at the organisation (Becker & Billings, 1993; Robie et al., 1998). Workers with a greater degree of embeddedness are less inclined to present withdrawal behaviours (Allen et al., 2016; Griffeth et al., 2000; Ng & Feldman, 2009b). Employee organisational tenure was measured in months and years.

Organisational type. The aged care industry has two main employment opportunities for care workers, those being community in-home care, and institutional nursing home care (Radford et al., 2015). Two organisations were selected to cater to this employment type for participation in this study. In addition to the differences discussed on p. 64, workers within institutional nursing home care have greater supervisor and co-worker support. These two supports are considered essential to the enhancement of a worker's job embeddedness (Singh et al., 2018). As such, organisational type for was controlled for in the analysis. Workers who were employed by *Angel Care* and work within the community providing in-home care service were recorded as "0". Care workers who were employed by *Tender Care* and worked within the institutional nursing home were recorded as "1".

Chapter 5: Results

This chapter reports data analysis strategy and study results.

5.1 Descriptive Statistics

Table 2 reports the mean, standard deviation, Cronbach's alpha, and bivariate correlations for each variable. Located along the diagonal of the correlation matrix, the Cronbach alpha value reliabilities range from .90 to .97. Each exceeds the threshold of .70 (Nunnally, 1970). Inspection of the bivariate correlations among the variables shows that job embeddedness is positively correlated to workload ($r = .69$, $p < 0.01$), burnout ($r = .33$, $p < 0.01$) and with each of the withdrawal behaviours, lateness ($r = .06$, $p = n.s.$), absenteeism ($r = .12$, $p = n.s.$), and turnover ($r = .10$, $p = n.s.$). Burnout is positively correlated with lateness ($r = .25$, $p < 0.01$), absenteeism ($r = .31$, $p < 0.01$), and turnover ($r = .42$, $p < 0.01$), providing preliminary support for H4. As expected, the withdrawal behaviours are positively correlated with each other. Lateness is positively correlated with absenteeism ($r = .74$, $p < 0.01$), and turnover ($r = .40$, $p < 0.01$). Absenteeism is positively correlated with Turnover ($r = .50$, $p < 0.01$).

The comparatively high positive correlations between embeddedness and burnout, as well as embeddedness and workload in the current study are specific to Australian aged care workers (and possibly those worldwide). This workforce has been described as being under tremendous pressure, rushed and overworked due to inadequate staffing levels (Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, 2019). These findings are consistent with commissioned reports which describe "aged

care workplaces as understaffed… heavy workload over which direct care workers have little control" (Hodgkin et al., 2017, p. 94). It is therefore not inconceivable that aged care workers who are highly embedded and feel stuck in their jobs, experience heightened burnout and work role overload.

Table 2

Means, Standard Deviations, Intercorrelations, and Reliabilities

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Age	51.66	13.70											
2. Dependants	0.73	1.08	-.20**										
3. Working hours	34.58	11.80	.04	.00									
4. Organisational tenure	4.38	3.72	.27**	-.14*	.02								
5. Organisational type	0.29	0.45	-.61**	.06	-.23**	.07							
6. Job embeddedness	4.41	0.90	-.00	-.01	.04	.00	-.01	(.96)					
7. Work role overload	4.29	1.21	-.19**	.02	.11	-.08	.29**	.69**	(.97)				
8. Flexstyle boundary control	4.47	0.73	.06	-.07	.04	.03	-.07	.32**	.30**	(.90)			
9. Burnout	2.21	1.73	-.00	.03	-.08	-.16*	-.11	.33**	.33**	-.09	(.93)		
10. Lateness	1.64	4.16	-.20**	.13*	-.21**	.00	.28**	.06	.11	-.19**	.25**		
11. Absenteeism	1.51	3.73	-.20**	.06	-.24**	-.02	.29**	.12	.11	-.25**	.31**	.74**	
12. Turnover	0.18	0.39	.01	.08	-.09	-.08	-.04	.10	.07	-.21**	.42**	.40**	.50**

Notes. n = 243. Organisational type: Angel Care is coded as 0, Tender Care is coded as 1. *p.* < 0.05 and **p.* < 0.01. Flexstyle boundary control higher scores denote a separator, lower scores denote an integrator. Cronbach's alpha is displayed in brackets. Variables 1 - 9 were collected in stage 1 (S1), and variables 10 - 12 were collected in stage 2 (S2).

5.2 Measurement Model

A Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted to examine the factor structure of the stage one self-report measures of job embeddedness, work role overload, flexstyle boundary control, and burnout (see Figure 2). This analysis assesses construct validity by examining the hypothesised relationship between the observed variables and the underlying latent constructs (Brown & Moore, 2012). Model fit was assessed using AMOS version 25. Each factor contained the applicable indicators and met the required three items per factor minimum (Bandalos, 2002). The analysis confirmed significant consistency of all scales as the items loaded on individual factors (see Table 3).

Figure 2

4 Factor Confirmatory Factor Analysis Figure
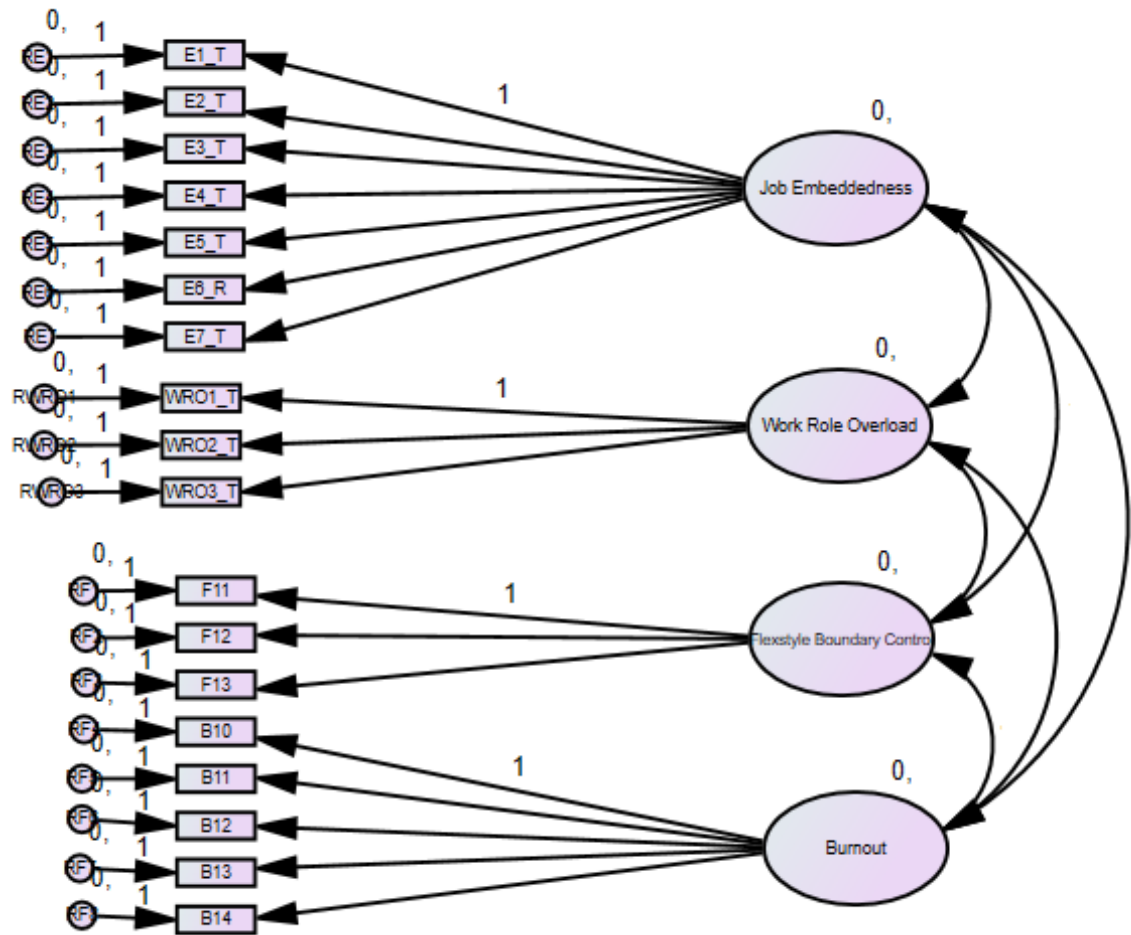
To examine the overall measurement model fit, relative fit indexes were obtained. Consistent with Bagozzi and Yi's (2012) suggestion, fit indices (i.e., chi-square, comparative fit index, and root mean square error of approximation) are the main indices used to examine each of the models. Browne and Cudeck (1992) recommend that a ratio of chi-square values to degrees of freedom of between 3 and 4, though less than 5 are permissible, a comparative fit index (CFI) of between .90 and .95 indicates an average fit, and values above .95 indicate good fit. When reviewing the Akaike Information Criterion (AIC), a lower result value indicates a better fit (Bozdogan, 1987; Wagenmakers & Farrell, 2004). Bentler and Bonett (1980) suggest that a Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) greater than .90 is an acceptable fit. For the Incremental Fit Indices (IFI), the goodness of fit is a continuum of 0 to 1, whereby the zero-point reflects a poor fit and a number close to 1, but not above it reflects an optimum fit (Marsh et al., 1996). When reviewing the IFI, a larger value is preferred as this compares the fitted model to the independence or null model (Miles & Shevlin, 2007). For Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), less than .05 indicates a close fit, values between .05 and .08 indicates a reasonable fit, and values between .08 and .10 indicates a mediocre fit, as the RMSEA assesses how far the model is from perfect, a smaller value indicates a better fit (Browne & Cudeck, 1992; MacCallum et al., 1996).

The measures were demonstrated to be distinct through comparison of the four-factor model with nine alternative models on the basis of a change in chi-square test, and lowest RMSEA (see Table 3). The four-factor model contained the variables job embeddedness (JE); work role overload (WRO); flexstyle boundary control (FL), and burnout (BO). The four-factor model freely estimated the correlations between the variables, demonstrating good fit properties ($\chi^2(129) = 487.27$, $p < .01$; AIC = 607.27, CFI = .93, TLI = .91, IFI = .93, RMSEA = .10). This model was superior to all

alternatives, including a three-factor model that constrained the variables JE and WRO to a single variable ($\Delta\chi^2(3) = 79.71$, $p < .01$; AIC = 680.98, CFI = .91, TLI = .89, IFI = .91, RMSEA = .11), a two-factor model that constrained two pairs of constructs in the form of JE with BO, and WRO with FL ($\Delta\chi^2(5) = 189.68$, $p < .01$; AIC = 786.95, CFI = .89, TLI = .86, IFI = .89, RMSEA = .12), and a one-factor model ($\Delta\chi^2(6) = 195.31$, $p < .01$; AIC = 790.58, CFI = .89, TLI = .86, IFI = .89, RMSEA = .12). These results suggest that the overall four-factor model was the best fit to the data and provides support for the distinctiveness of the four variables.

Table 3

Model comparison: Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Model	χ^2	df	χ^2/df	$\Delta\chi^2$	Δ df	AIC	CFI	TLI	IFI	RMSEA
Four factors (JE, WRO, FL, BO)	**487.27**	**129**	**3.78**			**607.27**	**.93**	**.91**	**.93**	**.102**
Three factors (JE/WRO, FL, BO)	566.98	132	4.29	79.71**	3	680.98	.91	.89	.91	.111
Three factors (JE/BO, FL, WRO)	574.82	132	4.35	87.55**	3	688.82	.91	.88	.91	.112
Three factors (WRO/FL, JE, BO)	645.53	132	4.89	158.26**	3	759.53	.90	.87	.90	.121
Three factors (WRO/BO, FL, JE)	507.88	132	3.85	20.61**	3	621.88	.92	.90	.92	.103
Three factors (FL/BO, WRO, JE)	633.18	132	4.80	145.91**	3	747.18	.90	.87	.90	.119
Two factors (JE/BO, WRO/FL)	676.95	134	5.05	189.68**	5	786.95	.89	.86	.89	.123
Two factors (JE/WRO, FL/BO)	677.11	134	5.05	189.84**	5	787.11	.89	.86	.89	.123
Two factors (JE/FL, WRO/BO)	681.70	134	5.09	194.43**	5	791.70	.89	.86	.89	.124
One factor (JE/WRO/FL/BO)	682.58	135	5.06	195.31**	6	790.58	.89	.86	.89	.123

Notes. $n = 243$. The bold values indicate a four factor model fits the data better than the other competing models.

Abbreviations: JE, Job embeddedness; WRO, Work role overload; FL, Flexstyle boundary control; BO, Burnout; χ^2, chi square (Chi-square difference statistic compared to the hypothesised model); AIC, Akaike Information Criterion (lower AIC values reflect the better fitting model); CFI, Comparative Fit Index; TLI, Tucker-Lewis Index; IFI, Incremental Fit Index; RMSEA, Root Mean Square Error of Approximation.

 * $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

5.3 Test of Hypotheses

Hayes (2013) model 11 was applied to test each of the hypothesis using the PROCESS regression macro within SPSS 24. There were no major violations such as deviations from normality, missing data, or outliers that would affect the statistical testing of the hypotheses. All independent variables were mean centred before the analysis (Aiken et al., 1991; Cohen et al., 2014). To estimate the bias-corrected confidence level (CI) of the indirect effects, bootstrapping estimates from 5,000 percentile bootstrap was applied (Preacher & Hayes, 2008).

5.4 Results

Hypothesis 1 states that job embeddedness will be negatively associated with withdrawal behaviours (H1a: Lateness, H1b: Absenteeism, H1c: Turnover). Job embeddedness was not associated with lateness (b = -.12, $p = n.s$) (Table 4), absenteeism (b = .10, $p = n.s$) (Table 5), or turnover (b = -.11, $p = n.s$) (Table 6). As the relationship between job embeddedness and each withdrawal behaviour was not significant, Hypothesis 1 is not supported.

Table 4

Moderator Regression Results for Frequency of Lateness as an Outcome

	b	SE	*t*	*p*	*LL 95% CI*	*UL 95% CI*
Constant	1.15	1.80	.64	.53	-2.405	4.696
Control variables						
Age	-.01	.03	-.50	.62	-.062	.037
Dependents	.40	.23	1.71	.09	-.061	.854
Working hours	-.05	.02	-2.06	.04	-.088	-.002
Employee tenure	.07	.07	.89	.37	-.079	.209
Organisational type	2.25	.75	3.00	.00	.773	3.735
Main Effects						
Job embeddedness	-.12	.29	-.41	.69	-.696	.458
Burnout	.67**	.15	4.33	.00	.364	.973

Model Summary

	R^2	MSE	*F*	*df1*	*df2*	*p*
	.19	14.51	7.61**	7.00	235.00	.00

Indirect Effects

	b				*Boot LLCI*	*Boot ULCI*
	.23				-.047	.412

Index of Moderated Mediation

	Index	Boot SE			*LL 95% CI*	*UL 95% CI*
	-.252	.093			-.487	-.120

Notes. N = 243. b = Coefficient; SE = Standard Error; CI = Confidence level; LLCI = Lower Limit Confidence Level; ULCI = Upper Limit Confidence Level; *p* < .05; **p < .01.

Table 5

Moderator Regression Results for Frequency of Absenteeism as an Outcome

	b	SE	*t*	*p*	*LL 95% CI*	*UL 95% CI*
Constant	1.25	1.57	.80	.43	-1.850	4.352
Control variables						
Age	-.01	.02	-.44	.66	-.053	.034
Dependents	.12	.20	.57	.57	-.284	.515
Working hours	-.05[*]	.02	-2.46	.01	-.085	-.009
Employee tenure	.03	.06	.45	.66	-.097	.154
Organisational type	2.19[**]	.66	3.34	.00	.900	3.487
Main Effects						
Job embeddedness	.10	.26	.39	.679	-.405	.604
Burnout	.70[**]	.14	5.21	.000	.437	.969

Model Summary

	R^2	MSE	*F*	*df1*	*df2*	*p*
	.23	11.07	9.87[**]	7.00	235.00	.00

Indirect Effect

	b				*Boot LLCI*	*Boot ULCI*
	.25				-.049	.454

Index of Moderated Mediation

	Index	Boot SE			*LL 95% CI*	*UL 95% CI*
	-.265	.103			-.525	-.120

Notes. N = 243. b = Coefficient; *SE* = Standard Error; CI = Confidence level; LLCI = Lower Limit Confidence Level; ULCI = Upper Limit Confidence Level; *p* < .05; **p* < .01.

Table 6

Moderator Regression Results for Turnover as an Outcome

	b	SE	Z	p	LL 95% CI	UL 95% CI	
Constant	-3.35	1.46	-2.30	.02	-6.204	-.488	
Control variables							
Age	.01	.02	.69	.49	-.026	.053	
Dependents	.18	.17	1.09	.28	-.145	.506	
Working hours	-.01	.02	-.80	.42	-.047	.020	
Employee tenure	-.02	.06	-.33	.74	-.137	.098	
Organisational type	.32	.58	.56	.58	-.813	1.462	
Main Effects							
Job embeddedness	-.11	.25	-.46	.65	-.594	.368	
Burnout	.54**	.11	5.15	.00	.333	.743	

Model Summary

	-2LL	LL	df	p	McFadden	CoxSnell	Nagelkrk
	190.69	39.20	7.00	.00**	.17	.15	.24

Indirect Effect

	b				Boot LLCI	Boot ULCI
	.19				-.037	.375

Index of Moderated Mediation

	Index	Boot SE		LL 95% CI	UL 95% CI
	-.203	.085		-.431	-.091

Notes. N = 243. b = Coefficient; *SE* = Standard Error; CI = Confidence level; LLCI = Lower Limit Confidence Level; ULCI = Upper Limit Confidence Level; **p* < .05; ***p* < .01.

Hypothesis 2 states that work role overload will moderate the relationship between job embeddedness and burnout, such that job embeddedness will be positively associated with burnout when work role overload is high. As shown in Table 7 (b = .21, p = .08), the interaction was marginally significant. An examination of the simple slopes reveals that the simple slope (see Figure 3) for the relationship between job embeddedness and burnout is not significant when work role overload is low (b = .10, p = $n.s$). The simple slope for the relationship between job embeddedness and burnout is significant when work role overload is high (b = .35, p < .05). Given the marginal significance, Hypothesis 2 is not supported at the conventional level of statistical significance. These results, however, are consistent with the relationship proposed in hypothesis 2.

Table 7

Moderator Regression Results for Burnout

	b	SE	t	p	LL 95% CI	UL 95% CI
Constant	4.11**	.66	6.24	.00	2.808	5.401
Control variables						
Age	-.01	.01	-1.06	.29	-.029	.009
Dependents	.02	.09	.27	.79	-.151	.200
Working hours	-.03**	.01	-3.06	.00	-.043	-.009
Employee tenure	-.04	.03	-1.32	.19	-.094	.018
Organisational type	-1.01**	.30	-3.32	.00	-1.608	-.410
Main Effects						
Job embeddedness	.35	.17	2.12	.04*	.025	.674
Work role overload	.62	.14	4.35	.00**	.339	.901
Flexstyle boundary control	-.36	.18	-1.96	.05*	-.714	.001
2-way interactions						
JE x WRO	.21	.12	1.78	.08	-.022	.437
JE x FL	-.78	.27	-2.93	.00**	-1.307	-.256
WRO x FL	-.19	.19	-1.00	.32	-.573	.187
3-way interactions						
JE x WRO x FL	-.38	.18	-2.10	.04*	-.732	-.023

Model Summary

	R^2	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
	.34	2.09	9.84	12.00	230.00	.00**

Note. N = 243. JE = Job embeddedness; WRO = Work role overload; FL = Flexstyle boundary control; b = Coefficient; *SE* = Standard Error; CI = Confidence level; LLCI = Lower Limit Confidence Level; ULCI = Upper Limit Confidence Level; *p* < .05; **p < .01.

Figure 3

Moderating effect of Work Role Overload on the Relationship between Job

Embeddedness and Burnout
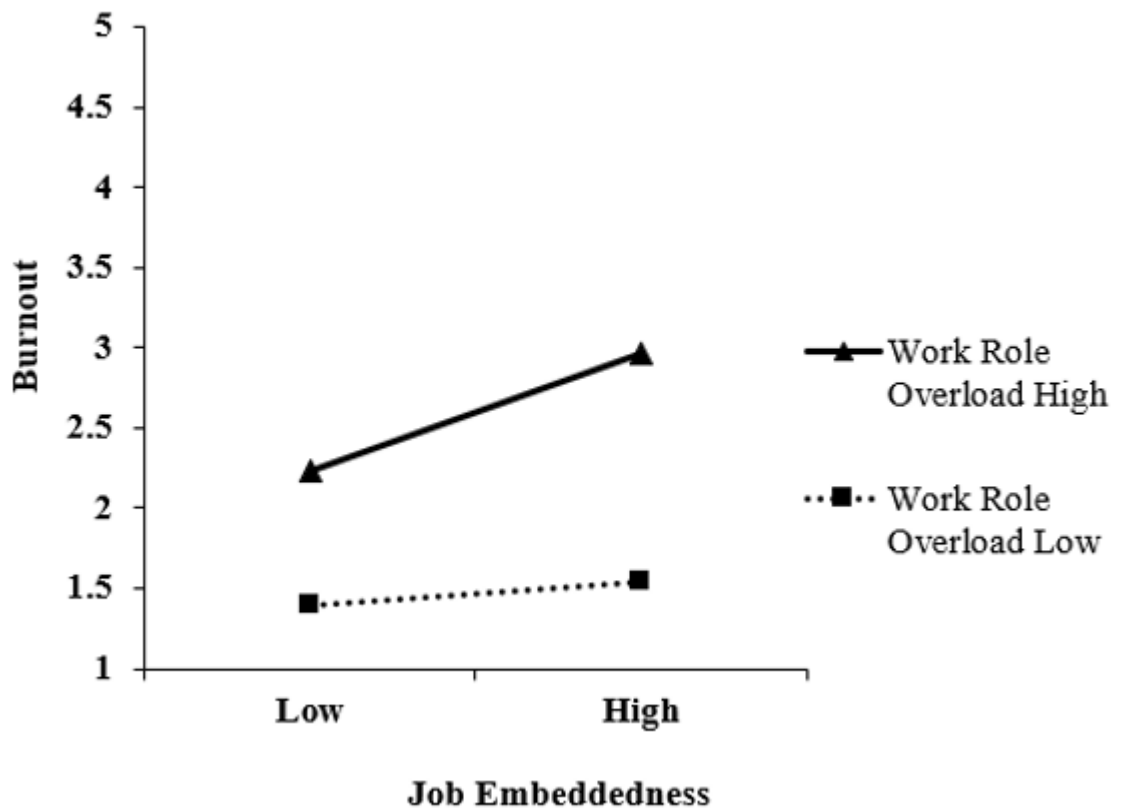
Hypothesis 3 proposes a three-way interaction, whereby work role overload and flexstyle boundary control will moderate the relationship between job embeddedness and burnout. The strongest positive relationship between job embeddedness and burnout will occur when work role overload is high, and the worker possess an *integrator* flexstyle boundary control. Job embeddedness was mean centred and interaction terms were computed to avoid multicollinearity (Aiken et al., 1991). As can be seen in Table 7, the coefficient is significant (b = -.38, *p* < .05).

To interpret the three-way interaction, an examination of the simple slopes was conducted with simple slopes plotted at high and low levels of the independent and

moderator variables. A low level is defined as one standard deviation (SD) below the mean, with a high level defined as one SD above the mean (Aiken et al., 1991). For each level of work role overload, the relationship between job embeddedness and burnout was plotted. This interaction is depicted in Figures 4a and 4b.

For workers with low work role overload, the slopes for the relationship between low job embeddedness and burnout was relatively flat (Figure 4a) for both, workers who had an *integrator* flexstyle boundary control style (b = .34, *p = n.s*) and workers who had a *separator* flexstyle boundary control style (b = -.07, *p = n.s*).

For workers with low work role overload, the slopes for the relationships between high job embeddedness and workers possess an *integrator* flexstyle boundary control, their burnout is higher (b = .34, *p* < .05) increasing as embeddedness increases than when they possess a *separator* flexstyle boundary control, their burnout decreases (b = -.38, *p* < .05) showing significant gradient differences (Figure 4a).

For workers with high work role overload, the slopes for the relationship between job embeddedness and burnout diverged. For workers with high overload who had an *integrator* flexstyle, the slope was significant and positive (b = 1.24, *p* < .01). The slope was non-significant for workers with high overload and a *separator* flexstyle (b = -.06, *p* > *.n.s*) (Figure 4b). Taken together, these patterns provide support for Hypothesis 3.

Figure 4a

Low Work Role Overload: The moderated relationship between job

embeddedness and burnout
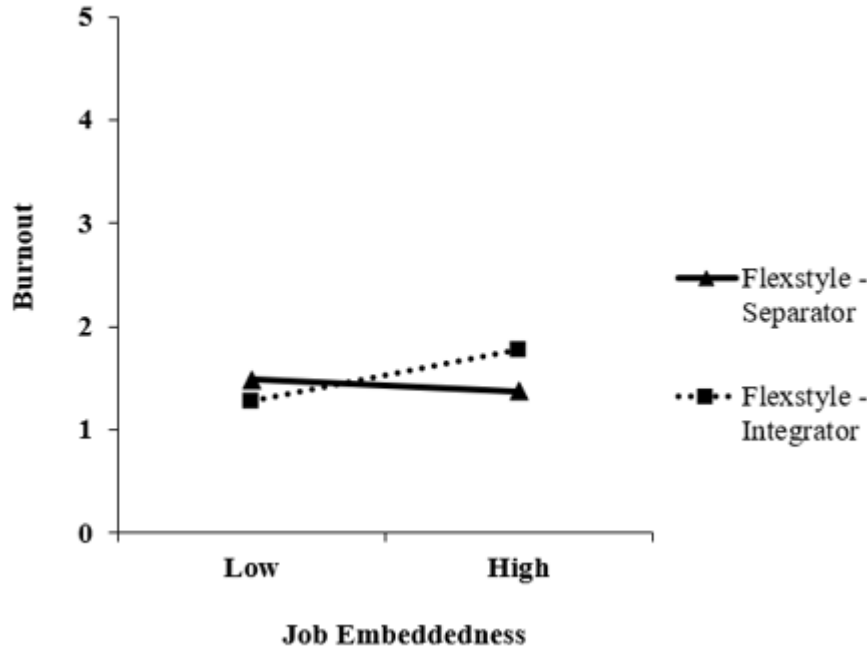
Figure 4b

High Work Role Overload: The moderated relationship between

job embeddedness and burnout
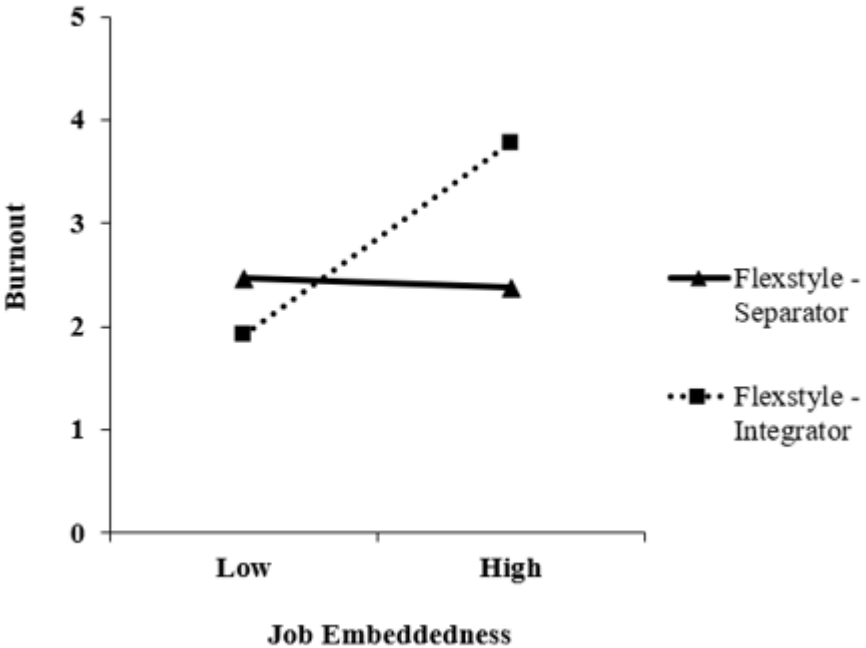
Hypotheses 4 states that burnout is positively associated with withdrawal behaviours (H4a: Lateness, H4b: Absenteeism, H4c: Turnover). Burnout was associated with lateness (b = .67, $p < .01$) (Table 4), absenteeism (b = .70, $p < .01$) (Table 5), and turnover (b = .54, $p < .01$) (Table 6). As the relationship between burnout and each of these withdrawal behaviours is positive and significant, hypothesis 4 is supported.

Hypotheses 5 states that work role overload and flexstyle boundary control will moderate the mediated relationship between job embeddedness and withdrawal behaviours via burnout. Withdrawal behaviours (H5a: Lateness, H5b: Absenteeism, and H5c: Turnover) will be most likely when job embeddedness and work role overload are high, and there is an integrator flexstyle boundary control. As the index of moderated mediation did not include zero at the 95% confidence level, work role overload and flexstyle boundary control moderated the mediated relationship between job embeddedness and lateness (Index = -.252, BootSE = .093, LLCI = -.487, ULCI = -.120) (Table 4), job embeddedness and absenteeism (Index = -.265, BootSE = .103, LLCI = -.525, ULCI = -.120) (Table 5), and job embeddedness and turnover (Index = -.203, BootSE = .085, LLCI = -.431, ULCI = -.091) (Table 6). Thus, hypothesis 5 is supported.

Chapter 6: Discussion

The withdrawal behaviours of workers are considered costly to organisations. Organisational studies which investigate this behaviour offer the "anti"-withdrawal construct embeddedness. This is because embedded workers are associated with positive work-related attitudes and behaviours. Embedded workers have increased social cohesion and contributions, fewer counterproductive behaviours, and refrain from job search. However, embeddedness can also have deleterious effects, harming rather than helping workers and the workplace. This study identifies conditions under which embeddedness is counterproductive and is associated with costly withdrawal behaviours. Specifically, it considers how flexstyle boundary control and a workplace stressor can counteract embeddedness's ability to deter the worker from withdrawing.

The study results generally supported the conceptual model. First, the results were consistent with the expectation that when experiencing work role overload, a worker's flexstyle boundary control will either benefit (i.e., if a *separator*) or hamper (i.e., if an *integrator*) the worker via burnout and withdrawal. Work role overload and flexstyle boundary control moderated the relationship between job embeddedness and burnout. The strongest positive relationship between job embeddedness and burnout occurs when work role overload was high and when the worker possesses an *integrator* flexstyle boundary control (Hypothesis 3). Second, consistent with previous research (i.e., Bakker & Costa, 2014; Balogun & Pellegrini, 1999; Firth & Britton, 1989; Maslach & Jackson, 1981; Travis et al., 2016), workplace burnout was found to be positively associated with the withdrawal behaviours of lateness, absenteeism, and turnover (Hypothesis 4). Lastly, work role overload and flexstyle boundary control were found to moderate the mediated

relationship between job embeddedness and withdrawal behaviours (lateness, absenteeism, and turnover) (Hypothesis 5).

Two hypotheses were, however, not supported. First, job embeddedness was not significantly associated with the withdrawal behaviours of lateness, absenteeism, and turnover (Hypothesis 1). Whilst surprising, this result may be due to the consistent high industry turnover (The Aged Care Workforce, 2018), the negative focus via the Royal Commission, the maturity of the respondents' age (i.e., close to retirement) and an abundance of employment opportunities enabling movement in the sector. Secondly, work role overload did not moderate the relationship between job embeddedness and burnout (Hypothesis 2). Whilst hypothesis two was not supported at the conventional level of statistical significance, the results were consistent with the proposed relationship.

Research Questions Answered

At the outset, this thesis outlined one of the most pressing issues currently faced by most nations. This issue is the rapid growth of its senior population, which outstrips the available supply of aged care workers who are vital for providing supportive services to these elders (Drew et al., 2016). An aging population carries many challenges for the workers who are employed to provide quality, person-centred care. Such challenges include, caring for individuals with increased levels of disability, chronicity, and frailty. To meet this challenge, a care worker's role is physically hard and mentally exhausting (Elstad & Vabo, 2021). They undergo arduous time pressures, are exposed to strenuous mechanical loads (i.e., lifting and handling), are regularly understaffed, and emotionally strained as they bear witness to, and care for, individuals in pain and dying (Westermann et al., 2014). However, the biggest challenge to the aged care sector is its withdrawal behaviours of workers; a quarter of its workforce leaving each year (Karantzas et al.,

2012). To this end, this thesis addressed the following three research questions: 1) What factors affect withdrawal of aged care workers?; 2) What is the process that leads to the withdrawal of aged care workers?; and, 3) To what extent do contextual and individual factors influence the relationship between job embeddedness, burnout, and withdrawal?

In responses to the first research question, this research found role overload and a worker's flexstyle interacted to exacerbate or buffer the effect of job embeddedness on a worker's burnout, which in turn influenced withdrawal behaviours. Specifically, when aged care workers are experiencing work role overload and possess an *integrator* flexstyle boundary control, rather than a *separator* flexstyle they are more likely to burnout and engage in three withdrawal behaviours (i.e., lateness, absenteeism, and turnover).

Regarding the second and third research questions, this research investigated the process (i.e., that these factors take) through which the withdrawal of aged care workers occurs, finding how contextual and individual factors influence the relationship between job embeddedness, burnout, and withdrawal. In examining this process, this research found that being embedded to one's job may prompt an aged care worker to experience burnout in the form of *depersonalisation.* Depersonalization is when a worker cognitively and/or emotionally detach from their colleagues, workplace, and/or clients (and in the case of aged care workers, this may include providing impersonal care to elders). *Job embeddedness* explicates why a worker stays, enmeshed to the workplace through its *links* (i.e., close working relationships with elders), *fit* (i.e., the compatibility and aspiration to help elders in need), and *sacrifice* (i.e., the loss of humanitarian, meaningful work as the cost of leaving). COR theory proposes job embeddedness enhances and supports the expansion of a worker's personal resources (Burton et al., 2010; Kiazard et al., 2015). Conversely, ongoing workplace demands such as overload reduces a worker's personal, physical, emotional, and mental resources (Karatepe et al., 2010). Peltokorpi (2020)

outlined, highly embedded workers who are "reluctant to leave the organisation, start to feel anxious, trapped, and stuck in their present unfavourable situation" (p. 7). When an individual's resources are low and unable to be replenished, workplace stressors ensue, impacting the care workers' health and wellbeing (Westermann et al., 2014), leading to burnout. Based on this study's findings, the embedded aged care worker stays, feels stuck in an adverse situation, and gradually resorts to using *depersonalisation* as a coping mechanism. This is unfortunate as *depersonalisation* is expressed as a harmful outlook, and emotional distancing behaviour exhibited by the care worker. Workers exhibiting *depersonalisation* approaches have inauspicious effects for the individual receiving the care. Specifically, it weakens the quality of care being provided to the elder (Cheung & Chow, 2011). Similar to the findings of earlier researchers (e.g., Bakker & Costa, 2014; Balogun & Pellegrini, 1999; Firth & Britton, 1989; Maslach & Jackson, 1981; Travis et al., 2016), when workers are experiencing burnout, withdrawal behaviours ensue. Taken together, the current findings suggest that when aged care workers experience burnout in the form of depersonalization, the negative impact of such burnout not only harms the worker themselves, but also the elders in their care.

This study suggests a new and intriguing way to think about aged care worker retention. Being embedded in the workplace can be helpful in reducing a worker's level of lateness, absenteeism, and turnover, if their workload is manageable. The foregoing results obtained in an aged care setting demonstrate that workers who faced unmanageable workloads can benefit by possessing a *separator* flexstyle. However, the combination of work role overload and an *integrator* flexstyle will foster burnout in the form of *depersonalisation* and ultimately result in increased withdrawal behaviours.

6.1 Theoretical Implications

This thesis makes several important contributions to the embeddedness, withdrawal, and aged care literatures.

Firstly, this thesis responds to Lee and colleagues (2014) call "to consider moderating, mediating, and mediate-moderation effects" (p. 211) and offer a supplementary understanding of the embeddedness and withdrawal relationship. The conceptual model, which was grounded in COR theory, offers a new way of understanding job embeddedness. This thesis examined how an individual factor (i.e., flexstyle), a workplace context (i.e., work role overload) and a worker's *depersonalisation* (i.e., progression of burnout), influenced the relationship between job embeddedness and withdrawal behaviours. In doing so, this study identified moderators which together influence the mediated relationship.

Secondly, this thesis contributes to the job embeddedness literature by questioning the pervasive expectations of beneficial effects of job embeddedness. Organisational theorists describe how embeddedness is beneficial by deflecting the effects of adverse environments (Burton et al., 2010; Mitchell & Lee, 2001). Other theorists challenge the dominant assumption of embeddedness being beneficial (Hom et al., 2009; Mitchell et al., 2001). Indeed, Lee and colleagues (2014) encouraged researchers to find negative aspects resulting from job embeddedness. Though it has been noted that embedded workers are less likely to withdraw in adverse workplaces (Allen et al., 2016; Greene et al., 2018), being stuck in these environments can have negative consequences for the wellbeing of the retained worker. This study highlights the harmful outcomes that are experienced by some embedded workers.

Thirdly, this thesis sheds light on what factors affect, and what process shape the withdrawal of aged care workers. Through the consideration of a worker's flexstyle alongside work role overload, this study offers a novel explanation as to how a worker's boundary control can lead an aged care worker to withdraw. The results illustrate the negative effect of embeddedness on burnout, with greater burnout occurring when the worker has an *integrator* flexstyle than when they possess a *separator* flexstyle. The results demonstrate that workers with an *integrator* flexstyle and high overload face difficulties in balancing their work and life roles, and thus experience burnout. By focusing on the type of flexstyle the individual possesses, this thesis takes a step towards understanding how contextual and individual factors influence the relationship between embeddedness and withdrawal. Consequently, the results provide support for the notion that embeddedness can sometimes have unfavourable outcomes for a worker and organisation.

Embeddedness can thus be considered a double-edged sword. In favourable environments, embeddedness is imbued with beneficial qualities (i.e., more *links*, higher *fit*). However, in unfavourable environments, for those who are stuck, a vicious predicament can ensue. This thesis found that when embedded workers are experiencing role overload, it is their embeddedness that can progress their burnout. According to COR, embedded workers have high levels of valued resources which they respectively protect, drain, and utilise to gain further resources. During times of work role overload (and an *integrator* flexstyle boundary control), the considerable resource investment, reluctance to give up accumulated resources and an inability to gain resources, the worker succumbs to resource spiral and burns out. Instead of withdrawing, workers who are embedded will bolster their efforts and continue to contribute to the workplace (Burton et al., 2010). These efforts are harmful to the worker personally in terms of burnout. This thesis

contributes to the aged care literature by examining the contextual and individual factors under which embeddedness is associated with increased burnout and advances an aged care worker to withdraw. This thesis introduces and shows empirical support for the notion that there can be a darker side to embeddedness.

6.2 Practical Implications

The growing body of aged care literature illuminates one central fact, the industry has a shortage of aged care workers. This shortage directly impacts the level and quality of care being provided to the aged recipients. The attraction and retention of workers is imperative to cater to the existing industry need and to set-up for the projected future demand. Organisations which have a workforce who engage in behaviours such as lateness, absenteeism, and turnover are weakened in their ability to provide this essential service. In contrast, organisations which reduce withdrawal behaviours will benefit by keeping talent, knowledge, and obtaining a sustainable competitive advantage. The findings of this thesis offer several practical implications for managers and organisations in and out of the aged care industry.

Firstly, given the results presented above managers should be wary of primarily utilising *job embeddedness* as a retention strategy. This approach may negatively impact the worker, elicit defiant actions, counterproductive behaviours, and decreased engagement in the workplace due to feeling stuck. Instead, organisations should consult their workers to understand the meaning they ascribe to this essential work, as age care work provides rewards not captured by notions of professional identity. By identifying the rewards an individual derives from their work (i.e., developing quality relationships, contributing to the wellbeing of another person, autonomous work), managers can be

more cognizant of what attracts and retains the right care worker. Therefore, managers may introduce deeper contextual and perceptual forces that improve worker engagement.

Secondly, the findings suggest highly embedded workers who experience work role overload will undergo burnout and withdrawal. For the highly embedded worker, these findings emphasize the need for managers to consider and reduce unnecessary workloads. As work role overload is a primary source of burnout, a worker's workload level should be logically and periodically assessed. Managers should assign work levels to the extent the load motivates the worker, without leaving the worker strained. Regular catch-up meetings, transparent communication, and self-reports can raise concerns about worker overload prior to feelings of burnout. To diminish work role overload, managers may utilise feasible load design programs which consider skillset, experience, and knowledge. Whilst it is acknowledged that not all job demands lead to role overload, demands such as job constraints, interpersonal conflicts, role ambiguity, and workplace insecurity are considered "hindrances" and should be avoided.

Thirdly, organisation can adopt testing practices for burnout symptoms. Managers and co-workers should be mindful of actions and verbal interactions that depersonalised workers present. Bearing in mind workers experiencing burnout will tend to remove themselves as a way to recuperate via turnover, recruiters should be alert to the prospect of a worker transferring into their workplace who currently has symptoms of burnout. As depersonalised workers will impose interpersonal distance and behave in an impersonal dehumanizing way. Considering new recruits can also poorly influence the organisation's existing workers' behaviours (i.e., cynicism), judgments, and actions (Felps et al., 2009), managers should be mindful and trained so as to recognise these symptoms. Given the high levels of aged care worker withdrawal, healthy organisations should avoid

integration of workers who are transferring without the appropriate support structure and practices.

Fourth, a worker's flexstyles have important effects on personal and work related outcomes. It is suggested surveying all existing and potential workers for awareness and providing education regarding the key aspects of their flexstyle boundary control. If findings are that of a *separator* workstyle, managers may be reassured in knowing the workers will have reasonable distinction between their roles, singularly working on the task at hand. Where *integrators* are identified, managers should be mindful to encourage the appropriate disconnect between their home, and of merging home-work tasks which reduce the worker's flow and productivity. As the results revel *integrators* are more likely to burnout, additional support and assistance programs may be required to create a healthy working environment. Organisations can create tailored benefits to meet and enhance a work-life balance, with managers encouraged to allow workers to have an input into the design of their work and their environment.

Finally, the aged care industry is renowned for employing a greater number of female workers (i.e., approximately 94%). *Job embeddedness* has been found to impact female workers more than males in relation to turnover (Jiang et al., 2012). It is suggested recruitment managers look to encourage further diversity of gender, which will build balance within the workplace and form a more robust workforce.

6.3 Study Limitations

Although established measures were used along with two data sources (i.e., direct care workers and human resource archival data) at two points in time, this study is subject to four limitations.

Firstly, the size of the sample used to test each of the hypotheses was 243. Although an acceptable power level was received, having a larger sample size will enhance the validity of the results (Neuman, 2016).

Secondly, the study adopted a standard research design in which the participant predictors are collected via a stage 1 survey and 6 months later, at stage two, the human resource team provided the withdrawal behaviour criterion (Steel, 2002). While useful and practical for the hypothesised prediction, the Time 1 and Time 2 design may be insensitive to changes over time (Neuman, 2016). For example, unexpected events or shocks can cause workers to leave in between the time lag of the two periods (Lee & Mitchell, 1994). To ensure this does not apply, a longitudinal research design with surveys administered at least three points in time over the course of 6 to 12 months is required.

Thirdly, the findings are somewhat context-specific, that is mostly female aged care workers, in the Australian aged care industry. To enhance generalisability, this study may benefit from expanding and comparing the results of aged care workers from different cultures, social economic development, and countries, in an effort to reveal stronger interaction effects. For example, Bourgeault and colleagues (2010) study of 77 immigrant aged care workers in Canada observed that it was because of their cultural backgrounds that migrant care workers were better at providing connected elder care. A stronger interaction may be found through a deeper sense of familial hierarchy, tradition, and a veneration for elders which is rooted in some home nation cultures (Datta et al., 2006).

A final limitation of this study is that a related construct, worker's commitment to the organisation, was not considered. Organisational commitment is "the employee's attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization" (Meyer & Allen,

1991, p. 67). Although studies have found a moderate positive correlation between organisational commitment and *job embeddedness*, they are two distinctly different constructs (Crossley et al., 2007). Commitment focuses on the psychological specific factors for being attached, whereas embeddedness represents a real and perceived staying attachment due to the job (Crossley et al., 2007). Nevertheless, not taking organisational commitment into account could mean an important aspect of what makes a worker more likely to stay is not controlled for. Perhaps as an additional conservative step, if organisational commitment was measured and controlled for, stronger incremental validity can be established for the effects of *job embeddedness* on the main study variables.

6.4 Future Research Directions

Whilst this study contained a number of limitations, it offers important guidance to researchers and practitioners within and outside of the aged care industry. Future researchers are encouraged to further unravel the theoretical complexities of the variables, and their relationships within this study. In particular, researchers can further unpack the proposed relationships by considering additional forces stemming from the individual, organization, and community.

At the individual level, as the perception of *job embeddedness* is subjective, it can be swayed by the individual's predisposition and cognitive state. Scholars may examine the individual differences that can influence or relate to an individual's impression of being embedded in the workplace. Individual differences such as traits can affect one's attitude towards their role (Judge et al., 2017). For example, people with the trait negative affectivity tend to dwell on the adverse aspects of their world and person (Karatepe,

2013). Negative affectivity is operationalised as any state that is negative, emotional, unpleasant, or uncomfortable (Schumer et al., 2018). Individuals predisposed to negative affectivity are more likely to encounter and pay attention to adverse stimuli in their workplaces (Necowitz & Roznowski, 1994; Young et al., 2018). Due to this inclination, these workers require additional energy to cope with the negative stimuli (Young et al., 2018). As such, a person high in negative affectivity, faced with a negative event (e.g., disagreement with a co-worker, or overlooked for a promotion) may be more likely to reconsider the connection they have with the organisation. The continuous depletion of energy to cope with the negative emotions may also curtail the extent to which they feel embedded at work. Future research can examine the varying configurations of individual traits in reaction to embeddedness, and how they affect withdrawal behaviours of workers.

At the organisational level, future research can examine the impact of diverse types of unfavourable workplace environments on the proposed relationships. Unfavourable environments include worker mistreatment, incivility, hostility, and supervisor aggression. This will determine whether other unfavourable workplace environments have similar the effects on *job embeddedness* and withdrawal behaviours, as work role overload. In doing so, future studies which include these alternative variables can enhance the credibility of these findings. Future research may examine how and in what circumstances this is different thus attributing to the nature and structural differences of negative work stressors.

Beyond the organisational level, future research can examine the effect of *community embeddedness* on the relationships explored in the thesis, because it is likely that there are forces outside of the organisational domain which compels a worker to stay and contribute. For example, individuals build attachments, social ties, and links within

their local community, which increases their motivation to stay in the organisation and avoidance to relocate (Feldman et al., 2012). Community embedded workers wanting to stay may enhance their performance in an effort to secure their job, and avoid significant emotional cost due to severing their social/community ties (Jiang et al., 2012). Workers who are high in *community embeddedness* are likely to have additional resources (i.e., COR theory, time, and energy) to invest into their role for the benefit of the organisation (Coetzer et al., 2017). For example, workers with strong community ties might receive extra tangible social support (e.g., childcare support, carpooling, help during family emergencies), which allows them to participate in training or career development programs that helps them to give back to the organisation. Greater *community embeddedness* may also affect organisational retention. Ramesh and Gelfand (2010) found greater community links were associated with higher probabilities of turnover. This is because 'well networked' individuals with extensive roots into their community have greater access to information on job alternatives, which support their endeavour to transition. Taken together, individuals who are highly embedded in their community are expected to intensify the proposed relationships examined in the thesis. That is, those who are embedded to both their job and community are likely to experience higher burnout if they possess an *integrator* flexstyle, and even more withdrawal behaviours will ensue (as compared to those who are only embedded to their job).

Lastly, this thesis focused on aged care workers in both in-home community aged care, and residential nursing aged care setting. It would be intriguing to ascertain if these findings are restricted to aged care workers alone. Future researchers who would like to test this model in the health sector can include different occupational fields and settings. For example, occupations such as Registered Nurses, or Medical Doctors in settings such as palliative care facilities (i.e., final stage of life), or dementia day care centres which

have time restrictions, and fewer interactions with each care recipient (i.e., low links and connections). To further enhance and reconfirm the generalizability of these findings, it is suggested additional research should consider testing this model in other contexts. For example, other service providing sectors such as retail, hospitality, and paramedics might be considered.

6.5 Final Words

In the context of aged care, this thesis takes a step towards better understanding how *job embeddedness* can have unintended negative effects. Arising when workers do not have strong boundary controls and are feeling overloaded, embeddedness can have a darker side, encouraging burnout and withdrawal. Retaining care workers within the aged care industry is particularly salient, as the demand and need for this workforce is growing exponentially. All evidence-based strategies which assist organisations to retain their workforce should be the centrepiece of retention policy development. This thesis also takes a step towards a better understanding of *job embeddedness* antecedents (i.e., flexstyle, work role overload, burnout) and yielded practical implications for reducing the withdrawal behaviours exhibited by aged care workers. Given the direct influence that continuous presence has on the quality of care being provided to our elders, there is an incessant need to understand the withdrawal behaviours of this highly important industry that serves society. For it is helping support workers on the front line providing the care, and those recipients receiving the care, that truly matters.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Ethics Approval

UNSW
SYDNEY

27-Jul-2018

Dear Dr Suzanne Chan-Serafin,

Project Title	Understanding the experience of aged care workers
HC No	HC180535
Re	HC180535 Notification of Ethics Approval
Approval Period	27-Jul-2018 - 26-Jul-2023

Thank you for submitting the above research project to the **HREAP F: Australian School of Business** for ethical review. This project was considered by the **HREAP F: Australian School of Business** at its meeting on **26-Jul-2018**.

I am pleased to advise you that the **HREAP F: Australian School of Business** has granted ethical approval of this research project. The following condition(s) must be met before data collection commences:

Conditions of Approval:
N/A

Conditions of Approval - All Projects:
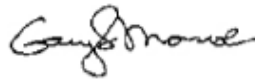
- The Chief Investigator will immediately report anything that might warrant review of ethical approval of the project.
- The Chief Investigator will seek approval from the **HREAP F: Australian School of Business** for any modifications to the protocol or other project documents.
- The Chief Investigator will notify the **HREAP F: Australian School of Business** immediately of any protocol deviation or adverse events or safety events related to the project.
- The Chief Investigator will report to the **HREAP F: Australian School of Business** annually in the specified format and notify the **HREAP F: Australian School of Business** when the project is completed at all sites.
- The Chief Investigator will notify the **HREAP F: Australian School of Business** if the project is discontinued before the expected completion date, with reasons provided.
- The Chief Investigator will notify the **HREAP F: Australian School of Business** of his or her inability to continue as Coordinating Chief Investigator including the name of and contact information for a replacement.

The **HREAP F: Australian School of Business** Terms of Reference, Standard Operating Procedures, membership and standard forms are available from https://research.unsw.edu.au/research-ethics-and-compliance-support-recs.

If you would like any assistance, or further information, please contact the ethics office on:

P: +61 2 9385 6222, + 61 2 9385 7257 or + 61 2 9385 7007
E: humanethics@unsw.edu.au

Kind Regards,

Professor Gary Monroe
Convenor HREA Panel F: Australian School of Business

This HREC is constituted and operates in accordance with the National Health and Medical Research Council's (NHMRC) *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007)*. The processes used by this HREC to review multi-centre research proposals have been certified by the National Health and Medical Research Council.

Appendix 2 – Pilot Group Survey

Angel Care^

^ This is a pseudonym name.

UNSW
SYDNEY

Participation Information Statement & Consent Form
Understanding the Experiences of Aged Care Workers
Dr Suzanne Chan-Serafin

Participation Information Statement

1. **What is the research study about?**
   You are invited to take part in this research study regarding your feelings about work, workload, personal workstyle, current work experience, and work intentions. This study aims to understand the role of how much people separate their work and home life in how they respond to the stresses encountered at work. You have been invited because you are an aged care worker in the Australian aged care industry.

2. **Who is conducting this research?**
   The study is being carried out by the following researcher: Dr. Suzanne Chan-Serafin from the UNSW Business School.

3. **Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria**
   To participate in this research study, you need to be:
   - *An aged care worker*
   - *18 years or older*

4. **Do I have to take part in this research study?**
   Participation in this research study is voluntary. If you do not want to take part, you do not have to. If you decide to take part and later change your mind, you are free to withdraw from the study at any stage. Doing so will not affect your relationship with UNSW Sydney and/or Angel care.

   If you decide you want to take part in the research study, you will be asked to:
   - Read the information carefully (ask questions if necessary);
   - Fill and sign the consent form attached to the questionnaire;
   - Take a copy of this form with you to keep.

5. **What does participation in this research require, and are there any risks involved?**
   If you decide to take part in the research study, we will ask you to complete an online or a paper based questionnaire. The questionnaire will ask about your embeddedness, workload, personal workstyle, feelings about work, work intentions and some basic demographic items. It should take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

   We don't expect this questionnaire to cause any harm or discomfort. However, if you experience feelings of distress as a result of participating in this study, let the research team know and they will try to provide you with assistance.

   If you do decide to take part, your Human Resource Manager will be asked to provide information on your withdrawal behaviours (absenteeism, lateness, and turnover) six months after the closing date of the questionnaire. Your direct supervisor will not be aware of your completion and your responses will be confidential: This means your responses will not be shared with your manager or employer, therefore it will not influence your employment in any way.

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Dr Suzanne Chan-Serafin

6. **What are the possible benefits to participation?**
We also hope to use knowledge gleaned from this research study to benefit others who are care workers in the aged care industry.

7. **What will happen to information about me?**
By signing the consent form, you consent to the research team collecting and using information about you for the research study. Your responses will not be disclosed to your supervisor and in no way will affect your relationship with UNSW Sydney and/or Angel Care. Responses collected will be kept for a minimum 7 years after the project's completion. We will store information about you and your organisation in a de-identified format at UNSW Business School.

Researchers at UNSW are required to store their any aggregated data in the UNSW data repository called ResData. Once the aggregated data is deposited into this repository it will be retained in this system permanently. It will, however, be retained in a format where your identity will not be known. The data will only be used for this study.

The information you provide is personal information for the purposes of the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW). You have the right of access to personal information held about you by the University, the right to request correction and amendment of it, and the right to make a compliant about a breach of the Information Protection Principles as contained in the PPIP Act. Further information on how the University protects personal information is available in the **UNSW Privacy Management Plan**.

8. **How and when will I find out what the results of the research study are?**
The research team intend to publish and/or report the results of the research study in a variety of ways. All information published will be done in a way that will not identify you or your organisation. If you would like to receive a copy of any article published, you can let the research team know by adding your email or postal address within the consent form. We will only use these details to send you the results of the research.

9. **What if I want to withdraw from the research study?**
Even if you do agree to participate, you may later withdraw your consent at any time. You can do so by completing the 'Withdrawal of Consent Form' which is at the end of this document. Alternatively, you can ring the research team and tell them you no longer want to participate. Your decision not to participate or to withdraw from the study will not affect your relationship with UNSW Sydney and/or Angel Care.

If you decide to leave the research study, the researchers will not collect any additional information from you. Any identifiable information about you will be withdrawn from the research project. The research team will destroy any information about you that was collected during your participation in the study.

Participation Information Statement & Consent Form
Understanding the Experiences of Aged Care Workers
Dr Suzanne Chan-Serafin

10. What should I do if I have further questions about my involvement in the research study?

The person you may need to contact will depend on the nature of your query. If you require further information regarding this study or if you have any problems which may be related to your involvement in the study, you can contact the following member/s of the research team:

Research Team Contact Details:

Name	Suzanne Chan-Serafin
Position	Senior Lecturer
Telephone	02 9385 7636
Email	s.chan-serafin@unsw.edu.au

What if I have a complaint or any concerns about the research study?

If you have a complaint regarding any aspect of the study or the way it is being conducted, please contact the UNSW Human Ethics Coordinator:

Complaints Contact:

Position	UNSW Human Research Ethics Coordinator
Telephone	+ 61 2 9385 6222
Email	humanethics@unsw.edu.au
HC Reference Number	HC180535

Angel Care^ ^ This is a pseudonym name.	UNSW SYDNEY
Participation Information Statement & Consent Form Understanding the Experiences of Aged Care Workers Dr Suzanne Chan-Serafin	

Consent Form – Participant providing own consent

Declaration by the participant:

☐ I understand I am being asked to provide consent to participate in this research study;

☐ I have read the Participant Information Statement Sheet or someone has read it to me in a language that I understand;

☐ I understand the purposes, study tasks and risks of the research described in the study;

☐ I provide my consent for the information collected about me to be used for the purpose of this research study only;

☐ I have had an opportunity to ask questions and I am satisfied with the answers I have received;

☐ I understand that my Human Resource Team will provide information regarding my withdrawal behaviours (lateness, absenteeism, and turnover) six months after the close of this study. My direct supervisor will not be aware of my completion and my responses will be confidential;

☐ I freely agree to participate in this research study as described and understand that I am free to withdraw at any time during the study and withdrawal will not affect my relationship with any of the named organisations and/or research team members; and

☐ I would like to receive a copy of the study publication (if any produced) via email or post, I have provided my details below and ask that they be used for this purpose only.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email Address: _____

☐ I understand that I will be given or can take a copy of this signed document to keep.

Participant Signature:

Name of Participant (please print)	
Signature of Research Participant	
Date	

Angel Care^ ^ This is a pseudonym name.	UNSW SYDNEY
Participation Information Statement & Consent Form Understanding the Experiences of Aged Care Workers Dr Suzanne Chan-Serafin	

Form for Withdrawal of Participation

I wish to **WITHDRAW** my consent to participate in this research study described above and understand that such withdrawal **WILL NOT** affect my relationship with The University of New South Wales and/or Angel Care. In withdrawing my consent I would like any information which I have provided for the purpose of this research study withdrawn.

Participant Signature:

Name of Participant (please print)	
Signature of Research Participant	
Date	

The section for Withdrawal of Participation should be forwarded to:

CI Name	Dr Suzanne Chan-Serafin
Email	s.chan-serafin@unsw.edu.au
Phone	02 9385 77636
Postal Address	Att: Suzanne Chan-Serafin School of Management UNSW Business School UNSW Sydney NSW 2052 Australia

Instructions

1. Read each of the questions carefully.

2. When completing, please do so using a blue or black pen.

3. Please indicate your level of agreement with each item.

4. There is no right or wrong answer.

Note: All responses will be kept strictly confidential, will be used for the purpose of the research only and will NOT be given to your organisation.

Embeddedness

Please tick one answer for each question:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I feel attached to this organisation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
It would be difficult for me to leave this organisation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I'm too caught up in this organisation to leave.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel tied to this organisation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I simply could not leave the organisation that I work for.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
It would be easy for me to leave this organisation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am tightly connected to this organisation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Workload

Please tick one answer for each question:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The amount of work I am expected to do is too great.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I never seem to have enough time to get everything done at work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
It often seems like I have too much work for one person to do.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Personal Workstyle

Please tick one answer for each question:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I take care of personal or family needs during work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I respond to personal communications (e.g., emails, texts, and phone calls) during work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I do not think about my family, friends, or personal interests while working so I can focus.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
When I work from home, I handle personal or family responsibilities during work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I monitor personal-related communications (e.g., emails, texts, and phone calls) when I am working.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I regularly bring work home.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I respond to work-related communications (e.g., emails, texts, and phone calls) during my personal time away from work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I work during my vacations.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I allow work to interrupt me when I spend time with my family or friends.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I usually bring work materials with me when I attend personal or family activities.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I control whether I am able to keep my work and personal life separate.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I control whether I have clear boundaries between my work and personal life.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I control whether I combine my work and personal life activities throughout the day.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
People see me as highly focused on my work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I invest a large part of myself in my work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
People see me as highly focused on my family.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I invest a large part of myself in my family life.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Feelings about work

Please tick one answer for each question:

	Never	A few times a year	Once a month or less	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Every day
I feel emotionally drained from my work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel used up at the end of the workday.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel fatigued when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Working with people all day is really a strain for me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel burned out from my work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

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	Never	A few times a year	Once a month or less	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Every day
I feel frustrated by my job.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel I'm working too hard on my job.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Working with people directly puts too much stress on me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel like I'm at the end of my tether.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel I treat some recipients as if they were impersonal objects.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I've become more insensitive toward people since I took this job.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I worry that this job is hardening me emotionally.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I don't really care what happens to some recipients.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel recipients blame me for some of their problems.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I can easily understand how my recipients feel about things.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I deal very effectively with the problems of my recipients.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel I'm positively influencing other people's lives through my work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel very energetic.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I can easily create a relaxed atmosphere with my recipients.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel exhilarated after working closely with my recipients.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I have accomplished many worthwhile things in this job.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
In my work, I deal with emotional problems very calmly.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Work Intentions

Please tick one answer for each question:

	Very Unlikely	Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Undecided	Somewhat Likely	Likely	Very Likely
How would you rate your chances of quitting in the next 3 months.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
How would you rate your chances of quitting in the next 6 months.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
How would you rate your chances of quitting sometime in the next year.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

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Demographic Items

First Name   _____

Surname   _____

Age Group		
☐ Under 18	☐ 18-24 years	
☐ 25-34 years	☐ 35-44 years	
☐ 45-54 years	☐ 55-64 years	
☐ 65-74 years	☐ 75 or older	

Gender
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male
- ☐ Other   _____

Marital status
- ☐ Single and have never been married
- ☐ Married (or in a de-facto relationship)
- ☐ Separated
- ☐ Divorced
- ☐ Widowed
- ☐ Other   _____

How many people, other than you and your spouse or cohabiting partner (if any), are dependent on you for financial support?
(write a number)   _____

Education
(Please tick your highest)
- ☐ Less than High School, e.g. did not complete Year 12
- ☐ High School Graduate, e.g. completed Year 12
- ☐ Certificate I, II, III, IV
- ☐ Diploma
- ☐ Advanced Diploma/Associate degree (2 years)
- ☐ Bachelor degree (3-4 years)
- ☐ 4 year University degree
- ☐ Professional degree, e.g. Honours degree
- ☐ Postgraduate, e.g. MBA, Masters degree
- ☐ Doctorate
- ☐ Other   _____

Job Description		
☐ Aged care worker	☐ Registered Nurse	
☐ Office administration	☐ Other _____	

Demographic Items Continued

Work type   ☐ Casual   ☐ Contract/Temp
             ☐ Part-time   ☐ Other _____
             ☐ Full-time

On average how many hours do you work per week? (write a number) _____

How long have you worked for this organisation? (write a number for years and months)

Years   _____

Months   _____

How long have you worked as an aged care worker? (write a number for years and months)

Years   _____

Months   _____

Thank you for your participation.

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Post Survey Instructions

- Thank you for your participation.
- This is the final stage, whereby you answer questions directly relating to the survey's soundness and ease of use.
- There is no right or wrong answer.

How many minutes did it take you to complete the questionnaire?

Please list any words you found confusing

Please outline any questions you found confusing or unclear

Please describe any issues you encountered when completing:

Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience?

How many minutes did it take you to complete the questionnaire?

Please list any words you found confusing

Appendix 3 – Survey

Participation Information Statement & Consent Form
Understanding the Experiences of Aged Care Workers
Dr Suzanne Chan-Serafin

Participation Information Statement

1. **What is the research study about?**
    You are invited to take part in this research study regarding your feelings about work, workload, personal workstyle, current work experience, and work intentions. This study aims to understand the role of how much people separate their work and home life in how they respond to the stresses encountered at work. You have been invited because you are an aged care worker in the Australian aged care industry.

2. **Who is conducting this research?**
    The study is being carried out by the following researcher: Dr. Suzanne Chan-Serafin from the UNSW Business School.

3. **Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria**
    To participate in this research study, you need to be:
    *   *An aged care worker*
    *   *18 years or older*

4. **Do I have to take part in this research study?**
    Participation in this research study is voluntary. If you do not want to take part, you do not have to. If you decide to take part and later change your mind, you are free to withdraw from the study at any stage. Doing so will not affect your relationship with UNSW Sydney and/or Angel care.

    If you decide you want to take part in the research study, you will be asked to:
   *   Read the information carefully (ask questions if necessary);
    *   Fill and sign the consent form attached to the questionnaire;
    *   Take a copy of this form with you to keep.

5. **What does participation in this research require, and are there any risks involved?**
    If you decide to take part in the research study, we will ask you to complete an online or a paper based questionnaire. The questionnaire will ask about your embeddedness, workload, personal workstyle, feelings about work, work intentions and some basic demographic items. It should take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

    We don't expect this questionnaire to cause any harm or discomfort. However, if you experience feelings of distress as a result of participating in this study, let the research team know and they will try to provide you with assistance.

    If you do decide to take part, your Human Resource Manager will be asked to provide information on your withdrawal behaviours (absenteeism, lateness, and turnover) six months after the closing date of the questionnaire. Your direct supervisor will not be aware of your completion and your responses will be confidential: This means your responses will not be shared with your manager or employer, therefore it will not influence your employment in any way.

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6. **What are the possible benefits to participation?**

   We also hope to use knowledge gleaned from this research study to benefit others who are care workers in the aged care industry.

7. **What will happen to information about me?**

   By signing the consent form, you consent to the research team collecting and using information about you for the research study. Your responses will not be disclosed to your supervisor and in no way will affect your relationship with UNSW Sydney and/or Angel Care. Responses collected will be kept for a minimum 7 years after the project's completion. We will store information about you and your organisation in a de-identified format at UNSW Business School.

   Researchers at UNSW are required to store their any aggregated data in the UNSW data repository called ResData. Once the aggregated data is deposited into this repository it will be retained in this system permanently. It will, however, be retained in a format where your identity will not be known. The data will only be used for this study.

   The information you provide is personal information for the purposes of the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW). You have the right of access to personal information held about you by the University, the right to request correction and amendment of it, and the right to make a compliant about a breach of the Information Protection Principles as contained in the PPIP Act. Further information on how the University protects personal information is available in the **UNSW Privacy Management Plan**.

8. **How and when will I find out what the results of the research study are?**

   The research team intend to publish and/or report the results of the research study in a variety of ways. All information published will be done in a way that will not identify you or your organisation. If you would like to receive a copy of any article published, you can let the research team know by adding your email or postal address within the consent form. We will only use these details to send you the results of the research.

9. **What if I want to withdraw from the research study?**

   Even if you do agree to participate, you may later withdraw your consent at any time. You can do so by completing the 'Withdrawal of Consent Form' which is at the end of this document. Alternatively, you can ring the research team and tell them you no longer want to participate. Your decision not to participate or to withdraw from the study will not affect your relationship with UNSW Sydney and/or Angel Care.

   If you decide to leave the research study, the researchers will not collect any additional information from you. Any identifiable information about you will be withdrawn from the research project. The research team will destroy any information about you that was collected during your participation in the study.

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Participation Information Statement & Consent Form
Understanding the Experiences of Aged Care Workers
Dr Suzanne Chan-Serafin

10. **What should I do if I have further questions about my involvement in the research study?**

The person you may need to contact will depend on the nature of your query. If you require further information regarding this study or if you have any problems which may be related to your involvement in the study, you can contact the following member/s of the research team:

Research Team Contact Details:

Name	Suzanne Chan-Serafin
Position	Senior Lecturer
Telephone	02 9385 7636
Email	s.chan-serafin@unsw.edu.au

What if I have a complaint or any concerns about the research study?

If you have a complaint regarding any aspect of the study or the way it is being conducted, please contact the UNSW Human Ethics Coordinator:

Complaints Contact:

Position	UNSW Human Research Ethics Coordinator
Telephone	+ 61 2 9385 6222
Email	humanethics@unsw.edu.au
HC Reference Number	HC180535

Angel Care^	UNSW
^ This is a pseudonym name.	SYDNEY

Participation Information Statement & Consent Form
Understanding the Experiences of Aged Care Workers
Dr Suzanne Chan-Serafin

Consent Form – Participant providing own consent

Declaration by the participant:

☐ I understand I am being asked to provide consent to participate in this research study;

☐ I have read the Participant Information Statement Sheet or someone has read it to me in a language that I understand;

☐ I understand the purposes, study tasks and risks of the research described in the study;

☐ I provide my consent for the information collected about me to be used for the purpose of this research study only;

☐ I have had an opportunity to ask questions and I am satisfied with the answers I have received;

☐ I understand that my Human Resource Team will provide information regarding my withdrawal behaviours (lateness, absenteeism, and turnover) six months after the close of this study. My direct supervisor will not be aware of my completion and my responses will be confidential;

☐ I freely agree to participate in this research study as described and understand that I am free to withdraw at any time during the study and withdrawal will not affect my relationship with any of the named organisations and/or research team members; and

☐ I would like to receive a copy of the study publication (if any produced) via email or post, I have provided my details below and ask that they be used for this purpose only.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email Address: _____

☐ I understand that I will be given or can take a copy of this signed document to keep.

Participant Signature:

Name of Participant (please print)	
Signature of Research Participant	
Date	

Angel Care^

^ This is a pseudonym name.

Participation Information Statement & Consent Form
Understanding the Experiences of Aged Care Workers
Dr Suzanne Chan-Serafin

Form for Withdrawal of Participation

I wish to **WITHDRAW** my consent to participate in this research study described above and understand that such withdrawal **WILL NOT** affect my relationship with The University of New South Wales and/or Angel Care. In withdrawing my consent I would like any information which I have provided for the purpose of this research study withdrawn.

Participant Signature:

Name of Participant (please print)	
Signature of Research Participant	
Date	

The section for Withdrawal of Participation should be forwarded to:

CI Name	Dr Suzanne Chan-Serafin
Email	s.chan-serafin@unsw.edu.au
Phone	02 9385 77636
Postal Address	Att: Suzanne Chan-Serafin School of Management UNSW Business School UNSW Sydney NSW 2052 Australia

Instructions

1. Read each of the questions carefully.

2. When completing, please do so using a blue or black pen.

3. Please indicate your level of agreement with each item.

4. There is no right or wrong answer.

Note: All responses will be kept strictly confidential, will be used for the purpose of the research only and will NOT be given to your organisation.

Embeddedness

Please tick one answer for each question:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I feel attached to this organisation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
It would be difficult for me to leave this organisation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I'm too caught up in this organisation to leave.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel tied to this organisation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I simply could not leave the organisation that I work for.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
It would be easy for me to leave this organisation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am tightly connected to this organisation.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Workload

Please tick one answer for each question:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The amount of work I am expected to do is too great.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I never seem to have enough time to get everything done at work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
It often seems like I have too much work for one person to do.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Personal Workstyle

Please tick one answer for each question:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I take care of personal or family needs during work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I respond to personal communications (e.g., emails, texts, and phone calls) during work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I do not think about my family, friends, or personal interests while working so I can focus.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
When I work from home, I handle personal or family responsibilities during work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I monitor personal-related communications (e.g., emails, texts, and phone calls) when I am working.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I regularly bring work home.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I respond to work-related communications (e.g., emails, texts, and phone calls) during my personal time away from work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I work during my vacations.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I allow work to interrupt me when I spend time with my family or friends.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I usually bring work materials with me when I attend personal or family activities.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I control whether I am able to keep my work and personal life separate.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I control whether I have clear boundaries between my work and personal life.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I control whether I combine my work and personal life activities throughout the day.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
People see me as highly focused on my work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I invest a large part of myself in my work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
People see me as highly focused on my family.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I invest a large part of myself in my family life.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Feelings about work

Please tick one answer for each question:

	Never	A few times a year	Once a month or less	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Every day
I feel emotionally drained from my work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel used up at the end of the workday.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel fatigued when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Working with people all day is really a strain for me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel burned out from my work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

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	Never	A few times a year	Once a month or less	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Every day
I feel frustrated by my job.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel I'm working too hard on my job.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Working with people directly puts too much stress on me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel like I'm at the end of my tether.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel I treat some recipients as if they were impersonal objects.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I've become more insensitive toward people since I took this job.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I worry that this job is hardening me emotionally.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I don't really care what happens to some recipients.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel recipients blame me for some of their problems.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I can easily understand how my recipients feel about things.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I deal very effectively with the problems of my recipients.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel I'm positively influencing other people's lives through my work.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel very energetic.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I can easily create a relaxed atmosphere with my recipients.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel exhilarated after working closely with my recipients.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I have accomplished many worthwhile things in this job.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
In my work, I deal with emotional problems very calmly.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Work Intentions

Please tick one answer for each question:

	Very Unlikely	Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Undecided	Somewhat Likely	Likely	Very Likely
How would you rate your chances of quitting in the next 3 months.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
How would you rate your chances of quitting in the next 6 months.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
How would you rate your chances of quitting sometime in the next year.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Demographic Items

This section asks demographic information – please tick the appropriate box or write the requested information below:

First Name   _____

Surname   _____

Age Group
- ☐ Under 18
- ☐ 25-34 years
- ☐ 45-54 years
- ☐ 65-74 years
- ☐ 18-24 years
- ☐ 35-44 years
- ☐ 55-64 years
- ☐ 75 or older

Gender
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male
- ☐ Other   _____

Marital status
- ☐ Single and have never been married
- ☐ Married (or in a de-facto relationship)
- ☐ Separated
- ☐ Divorced
- ☐ Widowed
- ☐ Other   _____

How many people, other than you and your spouse or cohabiting partner (if any), are dependent on you for financial support? (write a number)   _____

Education (Please tick your highest)
- ☐ Less than High School, e.g. did not complete Year 12
- ☐ High School Graduate, e.g. completed Year 12
- ☐ Certificate I, II, III, IV
- ☐ Diploma
- ☐ Advanced Diploma/Associate degree (2 years)
- ☐ Bachelor degree (3-4 years)
- ☐ 4 year University degree
- ☐ Professional degree, e.g. Honours degree
- ☐ Postgraduate, e.g. MBA, Masters degree
- ☐ Doctorate
- ☐ Other   _____

Job Description
- ☐ Aged care worker
- ☐ Office administration
- ☐ Registered Nurse
- ☐ Other _____

Demographic Items Continued

Work type   ☐   Casual   ☐   Contract/Temp

                          ☐   Part-time   ☐   Other _____

                          ☐   Full-time

On average how many hours do you work per week? (write a number) _____

How long have you worked for this organisation? (write a number for years and months)

Years   _____

Months   _____

How long have you worked as an aged care worker? (write a number for years and months)

Years   _____

Months   _____

Thank you for your participation.

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