THE EMPLOYEE PERSPECTIVE OF FORMATION, FULFILMENT AND OUTCOMES OF THE WORK-LIFE BALANCE (WLB) PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACT

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THE EMPLOYEE PERSPECTIVE OF FORMATION, 
FULFILMENT AND OUTCOMES OF THE WORK-LIFE 
BALANCE (WLB) PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACT 

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy 

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.............................................. ....................................................

Kerry Merle Grigg  Date
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION.................................................................................................................... I

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS...................................................................................................... II

TABLE OF CONTENTS........................................................................................................ IV

TABLE OF TABLES............................................................................................................. XI

TABLE OF FIGURES......................................................................................................... XIII

ABSTRACT......................................................................................................................... XV

CHAPTER ONE.................................................................................................................... 1

INTRODUCTION.................................................................................................................. 1

1.1. Introduction.................................................................................................................. 1

1.2. Background to the study............................................................................................. 1

1.3. Research problem and research questions............................................................... 5

1.4. Justification for the research .................................................................................... 7

1.4.1. Theoretical perspective.......................................................................................... 8

1.4.2. Practical perspective.............................................................................................. 9

1.5. Methodology............................................................................................................... 11

1.6. Outline of the thesis.................................................................................................. 12

1.7. Definitions.................................................................................................................. 14

1.7.1. Operational definitions.......................................................................................... 14

1.7.2. Definitions relating to research procedures and setting ........................................ 15

1.8. Limitations and delimitations of the research project................................................ 16

1.8.1. Limitations............................................................................................................ 16

1.8.2. Delimitations........................................................................................................ 17

1.9. Summary................................................................................................................... 18

CHAPTER TWO.................................................................................................................. 20
LITERATURE REVIEW................................................................................................................. 20

2.1. Introduction.......................................................................................................................... 20

2.2. The changing environment.................................................................................................. 20

2.2.1. Demographic and socio-cultural changes ................................................................. 21

2.2.2. Labour market changes ................................................................................................. 27

2.2.3. Generational changes .................................................................................................... 30

2.2.4. Emergence of the knowledge-based economy and the knowledge worker .......... 31

2.2.5. War for talent ................................................................................................................. 32

2.2.6. Current business environment context ......................................................................... 33

2.3. Strategic HRM.................................................................................................................... 33

2.3.1. Resource based view of the firm .................................................................................. 34

2.3.2. The emergence of Strategic HRM ............................................................................... 35

2.3.3. Implications for the HR Function ................................................................................ 35

2.4. Work-life balance................................................................................................................ 39

2.4.1. Evolution of the WLB concept..................................................................................... 39

2.4.2. Scholarship of WLB ..................................................................................................... 40

2.5. The psychological contract................................................................................................ 47

2.5.1. Definition and evolution of the psychological contract construct ......................... 47

2.5.2. The WLB psychological contract ............................................................................... 50

2.6. WLB psychological contract formation: A signalling theory perspective ............... 53

2.6.1. Signalling theory: Definition and discussion ............................................................... 53

2.6.2. Employee perceptions of effective communication of WLB policies and programs and WLB policy awareness ........................................................................................................ 55

2.7. WLB psychological contract formation: The moderating role of a sensemaking process perspective .................................................................................................................. 56
2.7.1. Sensemaking theory: Definition and discussion ................................. 57
2.7.2. Employee perceptions of WLB organisational culture and supervisor support... 57
2.8. Antecedents of WLB psychological contract fulfilment .......................... 60
2.8.1. Employee perceptions of WLB organisational culture and supervisor support... 60
2.9. Outcomes of WLB psychological contract fulfilment: Social exchange theory ..... 62
2.9.1. Social exchange theory: Definition and discussion ............................. 63
2.9.2. Trust ................................................................................................. 64
2.9.3. Job satisfaction ................................................................................. 66
2.9.4. Affective commitment ..................................................................... 67
2.9.5. Intention to leave the organisation .................................................. 69
2.9.6. In-role performance ......................................................................... 71
2.9.7. Contextual Performance: Interpersonal facilitation and job dedication ....... 72
2.10. Outcomes of WLB psychological contract fulfilment: Affective events theory ..... 75
2.10.1. Affective events theory: Definition and discussion .......................... 75
2.10.2. The mediating role of trust .............................................................. 76
2.11. Outcomes of WLB psychological contract fulfilment: A sensemaking perspective 78
2.11.1. The moderating role of WLB organisational justice ........................... 79
2.12. Summary ............................................................................................. 86

CHAPTER THREE .......................................................................................... 87

METHODOLOGY ............................................................................................. 87

3.1. Introduction ........................................................................................... 87
3.2. Research design .................................................................................... 87
3.2.1. Overview of the research design ....................................................... 87
3.3. Data collection and procedures ............................................................ 90
3.3.1. Population and sample ....................................................................... 90
3.3.2. Non-response bias ................................................................................................. 98
3.3.3. Procedure ............................................................................................................ 101

3.4. Reliability and validity of measures ...................................................................... 107
3.4.1. Reliability ............................................................................................................. 107
3.4.2. Validity ................................................................................................................ 108

3.5. Measures .................................................................................................................. 109
3.5.1. Awareness of WLB policies .............................................................................. 109
3.5.2. Use of WLB policies ......................................................................................... 109
3.5.3. Employee perceptions of effectiveness of methods used to communicate WLB promises and commitments ............................................................... 110
3.5.4. Formation of WLB psychological contract ..................................................... 110
3.5.5. WLB psychological contract fulfilment ............................................................. 111
3.5.6. WLB organisational culture .............................................................................. 111
3.5.7. Supervisor support ............................................................................................. 112
3.5.8. Organisational justice ....................................................................................... 112
3.5.9. Trust ..................................................................................................................... 113
3.5.10. Affective commitment ...................................................................................... 113
3.5.11. Job satisfaction ................................................................................................ 114
3.5.12. Intention to leave ............................................................................................. 114
3.5.13. In-role performance ......................................................................................... 114
3.5.14. Contextual performance .................................................................................. 115
3.5.15. Controls .............................................................................................................. 115

3.6. Data analysis overview .......................................................................................... 117
3.6.1. Data cleaning and preparation .......................................................................... 118

3.7. Quantitative data analysis techniques .................................................................... 119
3.7.1. Normality of data ........................................................................................................ 120
3.7.2. Outliers ...................................................................................................................... 121
3.7.3. Linearity ..................................................................................................................... 122
3.7.4. Homoscedasticity ....................................................................................................... 122
3.7.5. Multicollinearity ......................................................................................................... 123
3.7.6. Multiple regression analysis ...................................................................................... 123
3.7.7. Sample size ............................................................................................................... 125
3.7.8. Mediation analysis ..................................................................................................... 126
3.7.9. Moderation analysis .................................................................................................. 128
3.8. Ethical considerations .................................................................................................. 129
3.9. Summary ...................................................................................................................... 130

CHAPTER FOUR .................................................................................................................. 131

RESULTS: FORMATION OF THE EMPLOYEES’ WLB PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACT .................................................................................................................. 131

4.1. Introduction .................................................................................................................. 131
4.2. Inter-correlations of formation of WLB psychological contract variables ............... 132
4.3. Formation of the WLB psychological contract .............................................................. 134
4.3.1. Hypotheses 1 and 2 results ....................................................................................... 134
4.3.2. Hypotheses 3a/b and 4a/b ....................................................................................... 135
4.4. Summary ...................................................................................................................... 139

CHAPTER FIVE .................................................................................................................... 141

RESULTS: ANTECEDENTS AND OUTCOMES OF WLB PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACT FULFILMENT ........................................................................................................ 141

5.1. Introduction .................................................................................................................. 141
5.2. Intercorrelations of Variables ....................................................................................... 143
5.3. Antecedents of WLB psychological contract fulfilment ........................................148

5.3.1. Hypotheses 5 and 6 results ........................................................................148

5.4. Outcomes of WLB psychological contract fulfilment ........................................149

5.4.1. Hypothesis 7 results ..................................................................................149

5.4.2. Hypothesis 8 results ..................................................................................151

5.4.3. Hypothesis 9 results ..................................................................................152

5.4.4. Hypothesis 10 results ...............................................................................153

5.4.5. Hypothesis 11 results ...............................................................................155

5.4.6. Hypothesis 12 results ...............................................................................156

5.4.7. Hypothesis 13 results ...............................................................................157

5.5. The mediating role of trust ............................................................................159

5.5.1. Hypothesis 14a results .............................................................................159

5.5.2. Hypothesis 14b results .............................................................................161

5.5.3. Hypothesis 14c results .............................................................................162

5.5.4. Hypothesis 14d results .............................................................................164

5.5.5. Hypothesis 14e results .............................................................................166

5.5.6. Hypothesis 14f results .............................................................................167

5.6. The moderating role of WLB organisational justice .......................................169

5.6.1. Hypothesis 15 results ...............................................................................169

5.7. Summary .......................................................................................................171

CHAPTER SIX ...................................................................................................174

DISCUSSION .....................................................................................................174

6.1. Introduction ....................................................................................................174

6.2. Discussion ......................................................................................................174

6.2.1. Discussion of the formation of the WLB psychological contract ...............174
6.2.2. Discussion of the antecedents of WLB psychological contract fulfilment ....... 182
6.2.3. Discussion of the outcomes of WLB psychological contract fulfilment ....... 186
6.3. Summary ........................................................................................................................................... 207

CHAPTER SEVEN ....................................................................................................................................... 210
KEY FINDINGS, CONTRIBUTIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS. 210

7.1. Introduction ........................................................................................................................................... 210
7.2. Key Findings ........................................................................................................................................... 210
7.3. Contributions of the research ................................................................................................................. 212
  7.3.1. Theoretical, knowledge-based and methodological contributions ................................................. 212
  7.3.2. Practical contributions ...................................................................................................................... 216
7.4. Limitations of the research ...................................................................................................................... 219
  7.4.1. Methodological limitations ............................................................................................................ 219
  7.4.2. Conceptual limitations ................................................................................................................... 223
7.5. Future research directions ....................................................................................................................... 225
  7.5.1. Individual level research .............................................................................................................. 225
  7.5.2. Organisational level of research .................................................................................................. 231
7.6. Conclusions ........................................................................................................................................... 233

REFERENCES ................................................................................................................................................. 237

APPENDICES ............................................................................................................................................... 282

APPENDIX 1: STAGE 1 SURVEY ................................................................................................................... 282
APPENDIX 2: STAGE 2 SURVEY ................................................................................................................... 293
APPENDIX 3: EXPLANATORY STATEMENT ............................................................................................. 295
APPENDIX 4: ETHICS APPROVAL ............................................................................................................. 296
# TABLE OF TABLES

Table 3.1: Employee working arrangements (a) (b), by employment size in Australia, 2008 – 09
.................................................................................................................................................. 91

Table 3.2: Research Sample ........................................................................................................ 95

Table 4.1 Summary of Means, Standard Deviations, Cronbach Alpha Coefficients and
Intercorrelations .......................................................................................................................... 133

Table 4.2: Hierarchical multiple regression results predicting WLB psychological contract
formation ......................................................................................................................................... 134

Table 4.3: Hierarchical multiple regression results predicting formation of WLB psychological contract
................................................................................................................................................... 137

Table 5.1 Summary of Means, Standard Deviations, Cronbach Alpha Coefficients and
Intercorrelations for variables included in testing of Hypotheses 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 14a, 14b,
14c, 15a, 15b, 15c, 15d using Stage 1 survey data ...................................................................... 145

Table 5.2 Summary of Means, Standard Deviations, Cronbach Alpha Coefficients and
Intercorrelations for variables included in testing of Hypotheses 11, 12, 13, 14d, 14e, 14f
using Stage 2 Survey data ........................................................................................................ 147

Table 5.3: Hierarchical multiple regression results predicting WLB psychological contract
fulfilment ......................................................................................................................................... 148

Table 5.4: Hierarchical multiple regression results predicting employee trust .......................... 150

Table 5.5: Hierarchical multiple regression results predicting employee job satisfaction ....... 151

Table 5.6: Hierarchical multiple regression results predicting employee affective commitment
................................................................................................................................................... 152

Table 5.7: Hierarchical multiple regression results predicting employee intention to leave .... 154

Table 5.8: Hierarchical multiple regression results predicting employee in-role performance
................................................................................................................................................... 155
Table 5.9: Hierarchical multiple regression results predicting employee contextual interpersonal facilitation performance (CIFP). ................................................................. 156

Table 5.10: Hierarchical multiple regression results predicting contextual job-dedication performance ...................................................................................................................... 158

Table 5.11: Hierarchical multiple regression analysis predicting mediating role of trust in relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and employee job satisfaction. ................................................................. 159

Table 5.12: Hierarchical multiple regression analysis predicting mediating role of trust in relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and employee affective commitment .................................................................................................................. 161

Table 5.13: Hierarchical multiple regression analysis predicting mediating role of trust in relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and intention to leave. ........... 163

Table 5.14: Hierarchical multiple regression analysis predicting mediating role of trust in relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and in-role performance. ...... 165

Table 5.15: Hierarchical regression analysis predicting mediating role of trust in relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and contextual interpersonal facilitation performance (CIFP). .................................................................................................................. 166

Table 5.16: Hierarchical multiple regression analysis predicting mediating role of trust in relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and contextual job dedication performance (CJDP). .................................................................................................................. 168

Table 5.17: Hierarchical multiple regression results predicting the moderating role of organisational justice dimensions on employee trust. ................................................................. 170
TABLE OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1: Research Model ............................................................................................................. 85

Figure 4.1: Interaction of WLB policy awareness and WLB supervisor support on WLB psychological contract formation ........................................................................................................ 139
ABBREVIATIONS

The following list outlines abbreviations used throughout the thesis.

ABS  Australian Bureau of Statistics
AET  Affective events theory
CIFP Contextual interpersonal facilitation performance
CJDP Contextual job dedication performance
FMCG Fast moving consumer goods
GFC Global financial crisis
PSM Public service motivation
RBV Resource based view
SHRM Strategic human resource management
WLB Work-life balance
ABSTRACT

Employees’ concern for striking a better balance between their work and non-working life has become a feature of the modern workplace in recent times because of significant shifts in both demographic and socio-cultural norms, and this has driven significant changes in the structure and requirements of the labour market. As a result organisations are developing work-life balance (WLB) strategies to enhance the autonomy of employees in the process of coordinating and integrating the work and non-work aspects of their lives. More specifically, organisations are increasingly using a co-ordinated communications strategy, referred to as a WLB employer branding strategy in this thesis, to promote the organisations’ WLB credentials to prospective and existing employees.

The aim of this research study was to examine the impact WLB policies and employer branding activities have on employee perceptions of expectations for WLB organisational support. Furthermore the study sought to identify and understand the factors that lead to employees perceiving that the organisation has fulfilled those expectations for support around their WLB needs and how employees respond in terms of trust, job satisfaction, affective commitment, intention to leave the organisation, in-role and contextual job performance. The study used the concept of a WLB psychological contract to examine these relationships. The WLB psychological contract in this study is defined as those expectations and beliefs an employee has of an organisation to provide a supportive work environment that enhances the employee’s sense of balance between their work and non-working life.

A cross-sectional research design was used to study the perceptions of employees in the Stage 1 survey and supervisor perceptions of their reports’ performance in the Stage 2 survey. The sample size for the Stage 1 survey was 627 and 167 supervisors responded to the Stage 2
survey. The sample was drawn from seven Australian organisations from the health, local government and fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) sectors.

The study demonstrates that employee perceptions of effective communication of WLB policies and programs and awareness of WLB policies form WLB psychological contracts. Furthermore, WLB supervisor support performed a role in forming WLB psychological contracts due to its moderating influence on WLB policy awareness. Consistent with previous literature demonstrating the positive role of WLB supervisor support and organisational culture, both variables performed an important antecedent role in fulfilling employees’ WLB psychological contracts. As expected, a positive relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and enhanced levels of employee trust, job satisfaction, affective commitment and contextual performance directed at both the organisation and colleagues were uncovered. The study also demonstrated that WLB psychological contract fulfilment reduces the employee’s intention to leave the organisation. In addition to the main effects relationship trust had with WLB psychological contract fulfilment, trust also mediated the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and job satisfaction, affective commitment, intention to leave the organisation and contextual performance directed at colleagues (i.e., interpersonal facilitation) in the study. Finally, and counter to expectations, based on sensemaking theory, organisational justice dimensions failed to moderate the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and trust.

The use of signalling theory to examine WLB psychological contract formation presents the most significant contribution of the study. The study also makes a valuable contribution to both the WLB and psychological contract literature by extending the work of other researchers that have focused on the more narrowly defined concept of a work-family
psychological contract and employee responses to work-family psychological contract breach. By contrast, this study tests relationships that explain both the formation of the more expansive work-life balance psychological contract and responses to WLB psychological contract fulfilment from the employees’ perspective.

The study also makes several contributions to practice because the HR function and its managers tend to play an important role in shaping and implementing an organisation’s WLB strategy. The study’s findings demonstrate the importance for HR practitioners to take a considered approach to the development of WLB policies and communication of WLB programs because of the role they play in creating employee expectations around WLB support. Furthermore, HR practitioners have a key role to play in enhancing supervisor support and facilitating the organisational culture required to fulfill employees’ WLB psychological contracts. Finally, influencing employee-related outcomes included in this study (e.g., trust, job satisfaction, affective commitment, intention to leave, performance) are an important part of the HR practitioner’s role and the results provide important insights into how these outcomes can be enhanced.
Chapter One

Introduction

1.1. Introduction

The current study draws together the work-life balance (WLB) and psychological contract literature to examine employee perceptions of formation and fulfilment of the WLB psychological contract. This chapter will provide a foundation for the thesis by specifying the goals of the study and illustrating the study’s theoretical and practical relevance in advancing the WLB and psychological contract literature. First, the chapter provides the background to the study. Next, the research problem and questions that are the focus of the study are identified before the theoretical and practical justification for the study is presented. The methodology adopted for the research project is then introduced before key terms used in the study are identified and defined. Finally, the limitations and delimitations of the study are made clear.

1.2. Background to the study

Employees’ concern for striking a better balance between their work and non-working life has become a feature of the modern workplace in recent times and the subject of intense research attention in both academia and management consulting (Bardoe1, De Cieri & Santos, 2008; Kossek & Distelberg, 2008; Skinner, Pocock & Williams, 2008). Work-life balance has become an important concern for organisations because of seismic shifts in both demographic and socio-cultural norms, and this has driven significant changes in the structure and requirements of the labour market. Some of these shifts include an increase in the number of women in the workplace and the resultant increase in dual-earner households, the aging population and evolving views on the role of women, men and mature employees in the workplace (Duxbury & Higgins, 2008). At the same time, changing generational values
suggest young people emphasise and value achievement of WLB more than their predecessors (Smola & Sutton, 2002; Sturges & Guest, 2004). Finally, considerable media interest (e.g., Macdonald, 2009; Berkovic, 2010) has both fuelled and reflected the general public’s interest in WLB as an issue and this has further driven the corporate social responsibility, diversity and equal employment opportunities agendas in many organisations, as well as impacting on public policy (Brough, Holt, Bauld, Biggs, & Ryan, 2008; Kossek & Distelberg, 2008; Pocock, 2003). Other factors driving the focus on WLB include the emergence of the knowledge-based economy and the often cited ‘war’ for attracting talented workers (e.g., Holland & Hecker, 2010; Raynaud, 2011).

While these developments have been unfolding, strategic HRM (SHRM) as a discipline has sharpened the focus on WLB as a key organisational concern and strategic focus (Harrington & James, 2005; Kossek & Ozeki, 1999). Underpinned by the resource based view (RBV) of the organisation, whereby certain forms of internal resources, including human capital, are increasingly identified as the most likely sources of competitive advantage, SHRM has emerged over time to ensure that the HR function in many organisations is closely aligned to business strategy development and implementation (Becker & Huselid, 2006; Wright & McMahan, 1992). Due to the influence of SHRM, the HR function in many organisations has evolved from focussing solely on transactional and compliance-based activities, including recruitment and negotiation of enterprise agreements, to focussing on building internal human capital in response to broader social changes including the demographic and socio-cultural shifts that have an impact on the availability, skills and experience of the organisation’s human capital (Becker & Huselid, 2006; Guest, 1989). As a result, providing organisational support, in the form of policies (e.g., telecommuting, job-sharing) and programs (e.g.,
wellbeing activities) to facilitate the work-life responsibilities and aspirations of employees, has become a key concern of many organisations and HR practitioners.

It is important to acknowledge that the concept of balancing work and non-work responsibilities has evolved over time from its original focus on the family responsibilities of employees, usually involving the care of young children, to its current focus on work and broader life responsibilities and aspirations, including caring for aging family members, volunteer work, and sport and recreational pursuits (Harrington, 2007; Lewis & Rapoport, 2005; Pocock et al., 2010). As a result, the term work-life balance has emerged to take in this more expansive examination of the work and non-work responsibilities and aspirations of employees and it is the term used in this study.

In response to the emergence of work-life balance as a key employee concern and a growing appreciation of the value of the organisation’s human capital, there is a growing trend for organisations to actively promote their WLB credentials as part of their ‘employer brand’ in order to differentiate themselves in the labour market as an ‘employer of choice’ (Harrington & Ladge, 2009; Mescher, Benschop & Dooreward, 2010; Sutton & Noe, 2005) in a bid to attract and retain the best talent. Organisations use various activities and methods (e.g., recruitment advertising, induction programs, and company websites) to communicate work-life policies and practices to both current and prospective employees (Collins, 2007; Mescher et al., 2010). At the same time the important role of supervisor support and a supportive organisational culture have been identified as key variables that determine the use of WLB policies (Brough et al., 2008; Hammer, Kossek, Zimmerman & Daniels, 2007; Thompson, Beauvais & Lyness, 1999). What is less understood is how these communication activities and perceptions of supervisor support and organisational culture shape employee expectations.
about WLB organisational support, and how employees respond when these expectations about WLB organisational support and employee centred flexibility are met.

The psychological contract provides a sound theoretical foundation to explore the communication of WLB promises from the employee perspective and responses to perceived psychological contract fulfilment (Guest & Conway, 2002; Sturges, Conway, Guest & Liefooghe, 2005). Psychological contract theory has been increasingly used as a framework to understand the employment relationship (Chaudhry, Wayne & Schalk, 2009) and employee expectations within that employment relationship (Rousseau, 1995). Furthermore, researchers have argued that the psychological contract concept provides a useful basis to examine the dynamics of employee attitudinal and behavioural outcomes that result from the making and keeping of WLB promises and commitments by organisations (Botsford, 2009; Scholarios & Marks, 2004). This thesis presents a study that introduces the concept of a work-life balance (WLB) psychological contract. Drawing on the work of De Vos, Buyens and Schalk (2003), the WLB psychological contract refers to the employee’s beliefs and expectations of the support the organisation will provide in terms of enhancing the employee’s sense of balance between their work and non-working life.

For the individual employee, awareness of how organisations can support them to better manage their work and life responsibilities and aspirations has become an important component of many psychological contracts (Hornung & Glaser, 2010). Due to their utility in explaining how employees interpret the cues and behaviour of organisations and their agents (e.g., supervisors), signalling and sensemaking theories provide the theoretical basis to test the relationship between employee awareness of WLB policies, effectiveness of WLB policy and program communications, WLB supervisor support, organisational culture and WLB
psychological contract formation. Social-exchange theory is used to explain how employees respond to WLB psychological contract fulfilment in the form of emotions (trust), job attitudes (job satisfaction, affective commitment, intention to leave), and behaviours (in-role performance and contextual performance).

Employee emotions, attitudes and behaviours are all considered critical to the successful leveraging of the organisation’s human capital and ultimate business performance (Wright, Dunford & Snell, 2001). In addition to testing how employees respond to WLB psychological contract fulfilment, the study also examines how those emotional, attitudinal and behavioural outcomes might relate to one another by applying Weiss and Cropanzano’s (1996) affective events theory (AET) to the analysis. Finally, sensemaking theory is used to examine the role that WLB organisational justice dimensions, including distributive, procedural, informational and interpersonal justice perceptions, have on employees’ interpretation and response to WLB psychological contract fulfilment.

1.3. Research problem and research questions

The strategic importance and increasing use of organisational work-life programs and concerns for the impact those programs have on individual employees provide the impetus for the research problem. The research problem is to answer the question:

*Does employee awareness of WLB policies and perceptions of the effectiveness of communication of WLB promises and commitments lead to WLB psychological contract formation? If so, once formed what are the antecedents and outcomes of WLB psychological contract fulfilment?*
In order to fully examine this problem a number of research questions and hypotheses are developed from the literature reviewed in Chapter Two. These hypotheses direct the research study and assist in answering the research questions to address the overarching research problem. These research questions with accompanying hypotheses are developed and explained in Chapter Two.

The first research question (RQ1) is concerned with the role that employee perceptions of effective communication of WLB promises and commitments and awareness of WLB policies perform in shaping employee expectations of a supportive workplace in terms of seeking balance between their working and non-working lives:

**RQ1:** What is the relationship between employee perceptions of effective communication of WLB programs, WLB policy awareness and WLB psychological contract formation?

The second research question (RQ2) tests the role that employee perceptions of a supportive WLB organisational culture and supervisor play in forming WLB psychological contracts:

**RQ2:** What is the relationship between WLB organisational culture, WLB supervisor support and WLB psychological contract formation?

The third research question (RQ3) tests the role that employee perceptions of a supportive WLB organisational culture and supervisor play in fulfilling WLB psychological contracts:

**RQ3:** What is the relationship between WLB organisational culture, WLB supervisor support and WLB psychological contract fulfilment?
The fourth research question (RQ4) explores the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and employee emotions, attitudes and behaviours:

**RQ4:** *What is the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and employee trust, job satisfaction, affective commitment, intention to leave the organisation and in-role and contextual performance?*

The fifth research question (RQ5) examines the potential impact that organisational justice dimensions, including WLB distributional, procedural, interpersonal and informational justice, have on the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and employee trust:

**RQ5:** *What effect does WLB distributional, procedural, interpersonal and informational justice have on the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and trust?*

**1.4. Justification for the research**

The current study draws together the WLB and psychological contract literature to examine employee perceptions of formation and fulfilment of the WLB psychological contract. The following discussion highlights the significance and justification of the research study from a theoretical and practical perspective.
1.4.1. Theoretical perspective

The use of signalling theory to examine WLB psychological contract formation presents the most significant theoretical contribution of the study. As will be discussed in greater detail in the concluding chapters of the thesis, the study extends theory development in the field by identifying and examining what factors lead to WLB psychological contract formation, how those factors are related and the psychological and social factors that justify the selection of the factors and the proposed relationships between them (Whetten, 1989). The study also makes a valuable contribution to both the WLB and psychological contract literature by extending the work of other researchers that have focused on the more narrowly defined concept of a work-family psychological contract and employee responses to work-family psychological contract breach (e.g., Botsford, 2009; Xu, 2008). By contrast, this study tests relationships that explain both the formation of the more expansive work-life balance psychological contract using signalling theory and responses to WLB psychological contract fulfilment from the employees’ perspective underpinned by social-exchange theory.

The study is also justified because of the utilisation and extension of the WLB supervisor support and organisational culture constructs to the examination of formation and fulfilment of the WLB psychological contract. Previously used to research the use of WLB policies and benefits (e.g., Lambert, 2000; Thompson et al., 1999), WLB supervisor support and organisational culture are utilised in this study to test their role in shaping employee perceptions of WLB psychological contract formation and their antecedent effect in influencing employee perceptions of WLB psychological contract fulfilment.

The research sample used in this study, including employees from seven large Australian organisations also represents a significant contribution to knowledge because it answers the
call to extend psychological contract research to include participants beyond MBA students and other occupational elites that dominate the existing psychological contract literature (Autry, Hill & O’Brien, 2007; Deery, Iverson & Walsh, 2006; Suazo, 2009).

1.4.2. Practical perspective

The study will inform business and managerial practice. The WLB psychological contract is of significant interest to both employees and their employers. For the individual employee, consideration of how organisations can support them to better manage their work and life responsibilities and aspirations has become a key component of many psychological contracts (Hornung & Glaser, 2010). While pay and career development opportunities that primarily impact on the individual employee represent the more traditional and well-researched components of the psychological contract, drawing on Barnett’s (1999) work-life systems framework, the work-life sphere of influence and impact extends beyond the individual employee.

According to Barnett’s (1999) work-life systems framework, the employee is part of an interactive system that includes the employee’s workplace and non-workplace needs, values and aspirations and the employee’s spouse, children, parents and community. WLB considerations present a particularly important and discrete component of the employee’s psychological contract, because the potential sphere of influence extends to the employee’s spouse, children, parents and communities and individuals. Individuals may form psychological contracts around WLB expectations differently to psychological contracts around pay or career development opportunities, and they might respond differently to WLB psychological contract breaches because of their potential impact to reach beyond the individual employee. Following this, from a practical perspective research is required to better
understand how the WLB psychological contract is formed in the first place and how employees respond when those WLB psychological contracts are fulfilled.

Furthermore, applying an organisational lens, the study is justified from a practical perspective because the HR function and its managers tend to play an important role in shaping and implementing an organisation’s WLB strategy (Milliken, Martins & Morgan, 1998; Polach, 2003). In a bid to attract and retain the best talent, there is a growing trend for organisations to actively promote their work-life balance credentials as part of their employer brand (Harrington & Ladge, 2009; Mescher et al., 2010; Sutton & Noe, 2005). Specifically, the HR function influences the WLB signals sent out by organisational agents through their day-to-day work activities performed in developing HR policy, internal communications, employer branding strategy and implementation and through training and developing line managers on WLB issues (Milliken et al., 1998; Polach, 2003). Finally, influencing employee-related outcomes included in this study (e.g., trust, job satisfaction, affective commitment, intention to leave, performance) are an important part of the HR practitioner’s brief. The research findings will potentially enhance business practice by uncovering insights into how HR practitioners support and educate line managers and drive organisational change to facilitate WLB psychological contract fulfilment.

The preceding discussion identifies the significance and justification of the research from a theoretical and practical perspective. While this empirical study is limited to three industry sectors, it does make significant contributions to the advancement of the WLB and psychological contract literatures and business practice.
1.5. Methodology

The research design used in this study relies on two cross-sectional surveys designed to examine the relationship between the independent and dependent variables that are identified in the hypotheses in Chapter Two. Cross-sectional studies involve collecting data at the same point of time (Tharenou, Donohue & Cooper, 2007). The Stage 1 survey was distributed to 4604 employees at seven Australian organisations from the private health, local government and fast-moving consumer goods sectors. Six hundred and twenty-seven surveys were received, representing a response rate of 13.6%. In the survey, employees were asked a series of pre-coded questions about their perceptions on effectiveness of communication of WLB promises and commitments, awareness of WLB policies, WLB supervisor support, organisational culture, WLB psychological contract formation and fulfilment, trust, job satisfaction, affective commitment, intention to leave, performance, WLB justice dimensions and a range of demographic questions that served as control variables.

In the Stage 1 survey, employees were also asked for permission to send a survey to their direct supervisor to ask for their performance rating of the employee. The final sample size for the Stage 2 survey includes 167 respondents, representing a response rate of 67%. The Stage 2 Survey is an important component of this study because collecting multiple source data is a critical research design strategy used to overcome the perceived problems of self-report data and common methods bias (Muse, Harris, Giles & Field 2008; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman & Fetter 1990).

Given the diverse nature of the organisations, two methods, including an on-line and paper and return envelope survey, were used to administer the Stage 1 survey. The Stage 2 survey
The research was only administered by a paper and return envelope method due to the smaller research population.

Several data analysis methods were applied to analyse the data set and ultimately test the hypotheses. After the data were cleaned, a chi-square goodness-of-fit test was applied to test for non-response bias. Next, the Cronbach alpha coefficient for each multi-item measure used in the study was calculated to check for the reliability of the measures. In this study all measures met the minimum Cronbach alpha coefficient 0.7 standard of internal consistency as outlined by researchers (e.g., Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson & Tatham, 2006; Robinson, Shaver & Wrightsman, 1991), with coefficients ranging from 0.82 to 0.96. The content validity of the measures was also checked through the use of an expert panel to provide feedback on the measures used in the survey. In addition, the intercorrelation tables were inspected to check the construct validity of the measures. Based on this analysis, the researcher was satisfied that the measures satisfied the tests of reliability and content and construct validity. Finally, hierarchical multiple regression analysis, the joint significance test and moderation analysis were utilised to test all the hypotheses included in the study (Hypotheses 1a to 15d).

Chapter Three will provide a more detailed discussion of the method used in this study, including an examination of some of the limitations associated with the research design.

1.6. Outline of the thesis

The purpose of this section is to describe the structure of the thesis and the contents of each chapter. The thesis consists of seven chapters.
Chapter One presents the broad directions of the research project. The chapter introduces the research problem and research questions and provides the background to the study. The justification that appears in the chapter makes the importance of the study clear. The methodology adopted for the research project is introduced and briefly discussed and an outline of the thesis is provided. Finally, key terms are defined and the limitations and delimitations of the study are identified.

Chapter Two includes a review of the literature from which the research problem, questions and hypotheses are derived. From the literature review, gaps in the body of knowledge are identified and the research questions and hypotheses are subsequently developed. A Research Model is included at the conclusion of this chapter to visually demonstrate the variables and hypothesised relationships developed as part of the current study.

Chapter Three provides a description of the quantitative method used for the research project. The chapter includes a brief discussion on the research paradigm underpinning the project and justifies the selection of the method based on the extant psychological contract and WLB literature. The chapter provides coverage of the sample, research procedure, measures and data analysis techniques used in the study.

Chapter Four presents the results from the testing of Hypotheses 1, 2, 3 and 4, focussing on the formation of the WLB psychological contract. The results for each hypothesis are detailed using the data analysis techniques described in Chapter Three.

Chapter Five presents the results of Hypotheses 5 and 6, focussing on the factors antecedent to employee perceptions of WLB psychological contract fulfilment, and Hypotheses 7 to 15,
examining the outcomes of WLB psychological contract fulfilment. The results for each hypothesis are detailed using the data analysis techniques described in Chapter Three.

Chapter Six provides an in-depth discussion of the results presented in Chapters Four and Five.

Chapter Seven highlights the study’s key findings and delineates the contributions of the research project. The methodological and conceptual limitations of the study are highlighted and discussed. Finally, the future research directions at both an individual and organisational level that emerge from the study are presented.

1.7. Definitions
Definitions adopted by researchers are often not uniform, so key terms are defined to establish positions taken in this study.

1.7.1. Operational definitions

Work-life balance (WLB) strategies
WLB strategies are defined as those that enhance the autonomy of employees in the process of co-ordinating and integrating the work and non-work aspects of their lives (Felstead, Jewson, Phizacklea & Walters, 2002).

Psychological contract
The psychological contract refers to the individual employee’s beliefs about the terms and conditions of a reciprocal exchange agreement between that person and the organisation (Robinson, Kraatz & Rousseau, 1994; Rousseau, 1990). While acknowledging that
psychological contracts were originally conceptualised as a two-way exchange relationship between employees and employers by researchers in the field (e.g., Argyris, 1960; Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 2002; Schein, 1978), this study explores only the employee’s view of the WLB psychological contract. The researcher acknowledges that psychological contracts were originally conceptualized as a two-way exchange relationship between employees and employers by researchers in the field, including Argyris (1960), Schein (1978) and, more recently, Coyle-Shapiro and Kessler (2002). When taking this approach to researching the psychological contract between employee and employer, Cullinane and Dundon observed that ‘the expectations of both parties and the level of mutuality and reciprocity needed to be considered jointly in order to explain the sources of agreement and disparity’ (2006, p. 115). While this study focuses on the employee’s perspective of the WLB psychological contract, in the final chapter the requirement for future research to examine both sides of this exchange relationship is highlighted.

**WLB psychological contract**

Building on the earlier work of De Vos et al. (2003), Ellis (2007) and Botsford (2009), the WLB psychological contract in this study is defined as those expectations and beliefs an employee has of an organisation to provide a supportive work environment, in the form of policies, programs, supervisory support and a supportive organisational culture, that enhances the employee’s sense of balance between work and non-working life.

**1.7.2. Definitions relating to research procedures and setting**

**The Stage 1 and Stage 2 Surveys**

Two surveys were used in this study to collect data. The Stage 1 Survey was distributed to employees from all levels across the seven participating organisations; the Stage 2 Survey
was distributed to the supervisors of those participants of the Stage 1 Survey who gave their informed consent to sending the Stage 2 Survey.

**The participating organisations**

In the process of negotiating an entrée to participating organisations, the reassurance of complete non-disclosure and confidentiality was a critical factor. As a result, in the thesis all organisations are labelled Organisation A to Organisation G.

1.8. Limitations and delimitations of the research project

This research study, as with any other, is subject to constraints of finance, time and access to research participants; without such constraints a much broader scope of research would have been possible. This section contains a brief overview of the main limitations and delimitations of the study. A more detailed discussion is provided in Chapter Seven.

1.8.1. Limitations

The limitations caused specifically by the method chosen are discussed at length in Chapter Three. The study was conducted using two cross-sectional surveys. While the cross-sectional survey is the most commonly used research design, it does present some limitations (de Vaus, 2002). Through hypothesis testing, cross-sectional surveys can identify that a relationship exists between the particular variables subjected to the testing but it cannot demonstrate strict cause and effect relationships. Furthermore, the Stage 1 survey data are subject to common methods bias. This bias variance refers to the extent of the erroneous relationship that is inferred between two or more variables measured with the same data source, for example, by the same respondent, at the same time, on the same survey (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Jeong-Yeon & Podsakoff, 2003).
As will be discussed in further detail in Chapter Three, most of the variables in the Stage 1 survey are inherently subjective or intra-psychic in nature (e.g., job satisfaction, affective commitment) and gathering data from another source for these variables is not appropriate (Chang, 2010). However, data on variables that are behavioural by nature and can be observed (e.g., in-role and contextual performance) were collected from another source. The use of the Stage 2 survey to collect performance data from the participant’s supervisor was the primary method employed to counter the potential for common method bias.

Another limitation is the potential impact that non-response bias has on the final data set collected from the sample and subsequent hypothesis testing (Simsek & Veiga, 2001). The chi-square analysis conducted on the data from organisations C, D, E, and G and outlined in Chapter Three revealed that part-time and casual employees were under-represented in the data. As discussed in Chapter Seven in the Limitations section, future studies must ensure this important group of employees is appropriately represented. While reliable population data from the three private hospitals (Organisations A, B and F) was unavailable, nursing data from the 2006 Australian Census was used to conduct the necessary chi-square analysis to test for non-response bias in that section of the sample. The results indicated that the respondents from the private hospitals were representative of the broader nursing population in terms of gender and employment arrangement.

1.8.2. Delimitations

The most important delimitation imposed by the researcher was the use of two cross-sectional surveys at the expense of a longitudinal research design or multi-case study approach using both quantitative and qualitative research methods. While time and financial constraints did drive the choice of the research design to some degree, the decision to use two surveys to
ensure data were collected from two data sources (i.e., the employee and their supervisor) for some of the analysis, and the sample selection from a diverse range of job types and employees, albeit from a small number of industry sectors, strengthens the study and underlying research design significantly.

**1.9. Summary**

It is now widely accepted that organisations are increasingly developing and promoting WLB policies and programs as a key plank of their business strategy to strengthen their human capital (Harrington & Ladge, 2009; Milliken, Martins & Morgan, 1998). However, despite this, and the fact that WLB is now widely regarded as a key content item of the modern employee’s psychological contract (Bellou, 2007; Kelley-Patterson & George, 2002; Roehling, Cavanaugh, Moynihan & Boswell, 2000), no conceptual and empirical research to date has explored how psychological contracts around WLB are formed in the first place, and only a limited body of work has explored how employees respond when they perceive the organisation has failed to support their work-family needs and aspirations (e.g., Botsford, 2009; Hornung & Glaser, 2010; Scholarios & Marks, 2004). To meet this challenge, and to advance understanding of the effect that organisational promises and commitments around WLB have on the formation of a WLB psychological contract and how employees respond to the fulfilment of those promises and commitments, this study sets out to examine: 1) the relationship between employee perceptions of effective communication of WLB programs, WLB policy awareness and WLB psychological contract formation; 2) the relationship between WLB supervisor support, WLB organisational culture and WLB psychological contract formation; 3) the relationship between WLB supervisor support, WLB organisational culture and WLB psychological contract formation and fulfilment; 4) the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and employee trust, job satisfaction, affective
commitment, intention to leave the organisation and in-role and contextual performance; and 5) the effect WLB distributional, procedural, interpersonal and informational justice have on the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and trust.

The study will highlight the issues for the HR function in terms of shaping, communicating and meeting WLB expectations through HR policy, internal communications, employer branding strategies, and also through shaping organisational culture and training and developing supervisors on WLB issues.

This chapter introduced and provided the background to the study underpinning the thesis. The research problem and complementary research questions were then articulated. The following section explained the justification for the study and included a short introduction to the research design adopted for the study. An outline of the thesis was provided, followed by a section containing definitions used within the report. Following this, a description of the limitations of scope and delimitations of the study imposed by the researcher were presented.

The following chapter reviews the relevant HR, work-life balance and psychological contract literature from which the study is derived. From the review, gaps in the body of knowledge are identified and the primary research problem, questions and hypotheses are developed.
Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

Chapter One provided an introduction to the research problem and questions and established the broad directions of the study. This chapter contains a review of the theoretical foundations upon which the study is based. In this chapter the relevant HR, WLB and psychological contract literature is reviewed and the hypotheses designed to address the research questions are introduced. The hypotheses are represented in a Research Model in Figure 2.1 at the conclusion of the chapter.

2.2. The changing environment

The purpose of this section is to present a synthesis of the factors driving the interest in work-life balance and psychological contracts and to identify the implications this has on organisations and the individuals employed by those organisations. While full analysis of the various contextual factors outlined in the proceeding section is beyond the scope of this literature review, limited coverage is warranted. Understanding why both the WLB and psychological contract concepts have emerged as important issues for organisations and individuals helps to explain why organisations are taking a proactive role in promoting their WLB credentials and how those efforts impact on the individual’s psychological contract.

The interaction between the work and non-work life domains of individuals has attracted a considerable amount of research attention over recent decades (e.g., Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Frone, Russell & Cooper, 1997; Kossek & Lee, 2008). Similarly, psychological contract research has been receiving increasing levels of attention due to its utility and value
in exploring the employment relationship (Conway & Coyle-Shapiro, 2006; Jepsen & Rodwell, 2010). A combination of factors, including demographic, labour market, generational changes, and the emergence of the knowledge-based economy and subsequent ‘war for talent’, have all combined to generate a business environment where WLB and psychological contracts have become a key concern for both organisations and employees alike. While sections of this review will focus on the Australian context, as this is where the research was conducted, the changes taking place in Australian society and business are reflective of the broad transformational changes taking place across the developed world (Bardoe & Grigg, 2011; Harris & Foster, 2008).

### 2.2.1. Demographic and socio-cultural changes

The significant and mostly irreversible changes taking place in Australia’s demographic profile are having a significant impact on Australia’s labour market and business environment. Women’s increased participation in paid work in Australia, especially amongst women with caring responsibilities, is one of the main drivers for the emergence of WLB on the political and business agenda (Pocock, Skinner, & Pisaniello, 2010). In the years from 1985 to 2005, the labour force participation rate for women increased from 46% in 1985 to 54% in 1995 and 57% in 2005 (ABS, 2005). The 2006 Australian Census figures place the labour force participation rate for women at 58% (ABS, 2008). In May 2010, women’s participation in the Australian labour market was 58.3% (ABS, 2010b). Participation amongst Australian women however, in particular those of child-bearing age, is much lower than in many similar OECD countries (Abhayaratna & Lattimore, 2006).

Accompanying the rise in the participation rate of women in the Australian workforce is the rise of the dual-earner household where both parents are in the paid work force (Duxbury &
Higgins, 2008). Dual-income households are the result of economic changes which require most households or families to have two incomes, although some have noted that they are the result of women’s desire to have both a fulfilling family and professional life (Meurs, Breaux & Perrewe, 2008). The change in family form from the ‘male breadwinner family’ to the dual-earner family has been witnessed internationally (Blossfeld & Drobnic, 2001). In Australia the proportion of families with dependent children that are dual-earner families increased from 45.5% in 1985 to 60% in 2007 and 63% in 2009-2010 (ABS, 1996; ABS, 2008; ABS, 2011). The emergence of dual-earner families has the net effect of increasing the pressure in the home to manage the demands of house and family, including both child and elder care (Barnett, Gareis, Sabattini & Carter, 2010, Duxbury & Higgins, 2008).

One of the flow-on concerns for dual working parents is the issue of unsupervised children home alone after school hours (Pocock, 2003, 2006). Research by Barnett and colleagues (2010) demonstrated that parents’ long work hours, lack of schedule control, and children’s time unsupervised after school predicted high parental concerns, and parental concerns, in turn, predicted job disruptions (e.g., being distracted, making errors) for both men and women.

While significant attention has been given to parents of young children in the WLB field, the care of adolescent children and elderly family members is a significant concern (Craig & Sawrikar, 2008; Pocock, 2003). In particular, the issue of providing care for adolescent children in the dual-income family is challenging, given that non-parental after-school care services are not widely available for adolescent children and may in any event be too confining for them (Craig & Sawrikar, 2008). As a result, parents require flexibility to accommodate the intermittent demands adolescents can place on their parents (Craig &
Sawrikar, 2008). Providing care for adolescent children requires a delicate balance between support and independence, and, given that workforce participation of mothers with older children is higher than that of mothers with younger children, this is a particular concern for many Australian employees (ABS, 2006b; Craig & Sawrikar, 2008). Furthermore, the prevalence of dual-earner couples generally increases with the age of the youngest dependent child, from 49% of families where the youngest child was aged 0 to 4 years, to 75% where the youngest child was a full-time student aged 15 to 24 years in Australia in 2009–2010 (ABS, 2011).

Coupled with the rise of the dual-income earning household, reduced and delayed fertility has resulted in women having fewer babies later in life (Lattimore & Pobke, 2008). Fertility refers to the actual number of live births in a given period relative to the size of the population (as distinct from the physical ability to reproduce). The fertility rate refers to the number of births per woman per year. The total fertility rate (TFR) is a measure of current fertility (Duxbury & Higgins, 2008). According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS, 2006a), the total fertility rate in Australia was at its highest point in 1961 at 3.6. Australia’s TFR dropped below replacement level (2.1 babies per woman) in 1976. It has remained below replacement level and declined further since then. This means that under current age-specific fertility rates the average number of babies born to a woman throughout her reproductive life would not be sufficient to replace herself and her partner. The TFR in Australia reached 1.8 by 1996. Since then, the TFR in Australia has been relatively stable, hitting a high of 1.98 babies per woman in 2008-09 before sliding to 1.89 in 2010 (ABS, 2010c; ABS, 2011). However, it must be noted that Australia has a high fertility rate compared with many other developed nations (Lattimore & Pobke, 2008).
In addition to having relatively fewer babies than their mothers did in previous decades, Australian women are having their babies later in life (Lattimore & Pobke, 2008). This trend in delayed childbearing is evident in the fact that the median age of mothers has increased consistently over the past two decades (Duxbury & Higgins, 2008). In 1983, the median age of all mothers was 26.9 years and by 1993 this had increased to 28.9 years. In 2003, the median age was 30.5 years, while in 2010 it was 30.7 years (ABS, 2011b; Duxbury & Higgins, 2008; Department of Family and Community Services, 2001).

When these factors converge, the ‘sandwich’ generation, where working parents have caring responsibilities for both dependent children and ageing parents, is the result (Duxbury & Higgins, 2008; Hammer & Neal, 2008). According to Hammer and Neal (2008; p. 94), research has consistently found that those employees dealing with multigenerational care giving and work responsibilities tend to experience the highest levels of stress compared to those who engage in fewer role combinations. Research in the Australian context supports these findings, particularly for females in executive positions juggling considerable care and work responsibilities (Duxbury & Higgins 2008).

Another dramatic social change in Australia driving what Duxbury and Higgins (2008) refer to as the work and lifestyle ‘revolution’ is the changing structure of the Australian household and family, with more people remaining unmarried or living in de facto relationships, significant increases in divorce rates and a corresponding increase in working single parents, and a rise of families with children that are termed ‘step’\(^1\) or ‘blended’\(^2\) families (Planitz &

\(^1\) Families in which there are biological children of one or other parent and another parent rather than both, representing 5% of all families with children in 2006 (ABS 2068.0 Census Data 2006).
\(^2\) Families which contain a mix of the biological children of resident parents and one or more children from another union (ABS 2068.0 Census Data 2006).
Feeney, 2009; Pocock, 2008). In 2009-10, step and blended families accounted for 4% and 3% respectively of all families in Australia with children aged 0-17 years of age (ABS, 2011a). These new family structures have the impact of changing the nature and regularity of family commitments, as working parents require flexibility to bend with the often unpredictable responsibilities that go with shared care arrangements (Smyth, 2009).

The ageing of the population in the developed world has also focussed attention on WLB issues. As a result of improved health and nourishment, the average life expectancy in developed nations, including Australia, has dramatically increased over the last century (Meurs et al., 2008). At the turn of the twentieth century, life expectancy at birth was approximately 55 and 59 years respectively for males and females in Australia (Australian Institute of Health and Wellbeing, 2010). A male born in 2007 in Australia could expect to live to 79 while a female could expect to reach 84 years of age (ABS, 2009). In Australia the dual forces of increasing life expectancy and sustained low levels of fertility combine to ensure the ageing of the Australian population will continue into the future and this will have dramatic impacts on the age composition of Australia’s population and workforce (ABS 2008). In 2007, people aged 65 years and over made up just 13% of Australia’s population. According to ABS projections, by 2056 the proportion of people aged 65 years and over is set to increase to between 23% and 25% and to between 25% and 28% in 2101 (ABS, 2008).

The impact of the ageing population is multifaceted. The ageing of the workforce means that employees are willing and able to participate in the workforce into a later part of life than in the past and often seek out WLB policies to transition into retirement or care for
grandchildren (Meurs et al., 2008; Pitt-Catsouphes & Matz-Costa, 2008; Pocock, 2006). This trend is linked to the paradigm shift in adult development that now sees the ‘third age’ of adulthood which is described as the stage which comes after the transition from midlife and before adults become elderly (Pitt-Catsouphes & Matz-Costa, 2008). One of the key tenets of this relatively new developmental phase is that many people aged in their 60s and 70s are both active and competent and eager to maintain, and in some cases increase, their responsibilities in both paid and unpaid work (Pitt-Catsouphes & Matz-Costa, 2008).

Eldercare is also an emerging area of interest for organisations as employees struggle to find the necessary time to care for their parents and/or elderly dependants who are living longer than ever before. The impact of this increased life expectancy is that Australian employees are generally spending an increasing number of years providing support and care to aging parents (Duxbury & Higgins, 2008; Pocock, 2006). Increased mobility has added to the complexity of caring for one’s parents, since many Australian employees now live considerable distances from the elders for whom they are responsible for providing care (Duxbury & Higgins, 2008; Pocock, 2003). The impact of eldercare responsibilities was highlighted in the Duxbury and Higgins (2008) study, where a significant proportion of the study reported eldercare responsibilities. While only 4% of the large Australian knowledge worker sample had an elderly dependent living at home, just over one in three (35%) had an elderly dependent living nearby and almost half (46%) had an elderly dependent living elsewhere. Many knowledge workers in the study had responsibility for more than one elderly dependant. The Duxbury and Higgins (2008) study suggested that eldercare may be even more relevant to male Australian employees than childcare, with just over half of the respondents reporting that within their family, the responsibility for eldercare is shared.
Other important socio-cultural changes taking place within the family include the increasingly active role fathers are now taking in parenting, including during the early years of a child’s life, and the increasing emergence of families with two gay or lesbian parents (Aumann, Galinsky & Matos, 2011; Drago, 2007; Meurs et al., 2008). Both trends increase the focus on WLB and encourage employees to rethink their relationship with their work and employer (Meurs et al., 2008).

Despite the significant coverage given to family-related issues in this review, it is important to acknowledge that work-life issues do not just relate to employees with children. Research by Casper, Weltman and Kwesiga (2007) demonstrates that single employees without immediate family responsibilities also seek out and value organisational support for their non-working roles. The study by Casper and colleagues (2007) found that when singles perceive less equal treatment for non-work support than employees with families this has a negative impact on their organisational commitment and turnover intentions. Furthermore, while much of the WLB literature focuses on women, research has demonstrated that organisational support for employees’ non-working lives is salient for a range of employee groups, including blue-collar men working in a manufacturing environment and employees without any children (e.g., Grandey, Cordeiro & Michael 2007; Pocock et al., 2010; Root & Wooten, 2008; ten Brummelhuis & van der Lippe, 2010).

### 2.2.2. Labour market changes

Another force driving the interest in work-life and employer-employee relations is the changing nature of work in affluent societies, including Australia, and the inherent impact it has on quality of life. According to Harris and Foster (2008), three major themes emerge from this driver. First, the major shift towards globalisation and a hyper-competitive business
environment have resulted in the increasing casualisation, or temporary nature, of work, and a rise in the number of hours worked and work intensity. These trends are linked to significant downsizing activities, restructuring and business process reengineering and advances in information and communication technology (Guest, 2002a; Hess & Jepsen, 2008; Skinner & Pocock, 2008). Second, a range of commentators and researchers have explored why employees are willing to accept the demands of increased work intensification and suggest that the power of materialism and consumerism dominates attitudes towards the role of paid work in people’s lives. That is, employees are increasingly willing to forego a sense of work-life balance in a bid to earn more money to meet their materialistic and consumer driven aspirations (Higgins & Duxbury, 2005; Pocock 2003, 2006; Promislo & Deckop, 2008). In Australia, these trade-offs between work-life balance and materialism have been highlighted by a range of high-profile social commentators and researchers (e.g., Hamilton & Mail, 2003; Malouf, 2011; Pocock, 2008). Finally, quality of life debates over the negative impact of work intensification and long hours on individuals, families, workplaces and communities have placed both WLB and psychological contracts on the agenda for researchers, practitioners and public policy makers alike (Lewis & Rapoport, 2005; Kossek & Distelberg, 2008; Sturges & Guest, 2004).

Long working hours, particularly for professional workers, are a particular feature of working life for many employees working in developed countries like Australia (Duxbury & Higgins, 2008). While some countries have been reducing working hours to better accommodate a balanced approach to work and life, Australia (along with the US, Canada, Iceland and New Zealand) has been moving in the opposite direction (Pocock, 2005). By international standards Australian employees work some of the longest full-time working hours among OECD countries (van Wanrooy, Jakubauskas, Buchanan, Wilson & Scalmer, 2008). In 2006,
full-time employed men in Australia worked an average of 45.9 hours per week, compared to many OECD countries (e.g., Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands) with averages of less than 43 hours per week (AIFS, 2008). In the Australian 2006 Census, 27.7% of all full-time employees worked 49 hours or more (ABS Census).

Furthermore, while many people in Australia are compensated for working beyond the hours included in their standard work week, many are not, and as a result unpaid overtime is now extremely common in Australia (Fear & Denniss, 2009). Long working hours, paid or unpaid, impact on the amount of time an individual employee can spend on other responsibilities and pursuits outside of work (e.g., family, leisure) (Fear & Denniss, 2009) and changes their relationship with and expectations of their employer (Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 2002; McDonald & Hite, 2008).

Another labour force trend linked to the growing emphasis on WLB is the increasing proportion of Australian employees in part-time employment (Pocock et al. 2010). Part-time work is one of the most frequently used flexible work arrangements in Australia (Bardoel, Morgan & Santos, 2008; Pocock et al., 2010). In Australia, as in the United States, part-time workers are those who work fewer than 35 hours per week (Burgess, 2005). The proportion of employees working part-time in Australia has increased from 16% in 1980 to 28% in 2003 (ABS, 2003). By 2007, part-time employment accounted for 29% of employment overall in Australia (Abhayaratna & Andrews, 2008). Compared to its OECD counterparts, Australia has a relatively high part-time employment rate, with only the Netherlands recording a higher percentage of employment accounted for by part-time workers (Abhayaratna & Andrews, 2008).
2.2.3. Generational changes

In addition to the dramatic changes to the demographic profile and workplaces of Australia, generational values are also changing (Duxbury & Higgins, 2008). Researchers in the field suggest that young people today emphasise and value achievement of work-life balance more than their predecessors (Cennamo & Gardner, 2008; Smola & Sutton, 2002; Sturges & Guest, 2004). Furthermore, the emerging and perhaps stereotypical ‘Gen Y’ employee, considers lifestyle to be their ‘anchor’, as opposed to the anchors of career and a strong work ethic, with its emphasis on ‘face time’, that are identified by older employees (McDonald & Hite, 2008). Emerging generations within the workplace, termed ‘Gen Ys and ‘Millennials’, regard career development and success differently (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002; McCrindle & Wolfinger, 2009), although some researchers (e.g., Hewlett, Sherbin and Sumberg, 2009; Sabatini Fraone, Hartmann & McNally, 2007) suggest that employees from across the generations are equally concerned about seeking flexible working arrangements to strike a balance between their work and non-work life spheres. Within the Australian context, research by Duxbury and Higgins (2008) and Pocock and colleagues (2010) suggested that all generational cohorts were seeking work-life balance and flexibility but that Generation X are affected by higher levels of work-life interference because of their longer work hours and life-stage of family formation and child rearing.

The ‘boundaryless’ career, where career success transcends any single employer, has become a topic of increasing interest to both researchers and practitioners due to the changing employment context (Arthur, Khapova & Wildercom, 2005). According to boundaryless and career theorists, the career actor (i.e., the employee) is more concerned with independent rather than organisational goals and engages in the development of ‘metacompetencies’ or skills, experience and knowledge that allow for mobility between successive employers (Hall,
2002; McDonald & Hite 2008). The quest for a better work-life balance and stimulating work environment means that some employees are exploring a boundaryless career path (Smith-Ruig, 2008). According to one respondent in the McDonald & Hite study, ‘My career is not where I work. I am my career and I am portable, and I have a degree and a license and a skill set’ (2008, p. 97). This comment captures the individual nature of the modern career for many employees, and the emergence of the boundaryless career path as an alternative option has raised expectations of employees staying on the traditional career path around their employment relationship and WLB responsibilities and aspirations (Maguire, 2003; Sturges, 2008).

2.2.4. Emergence of the knowledge-based economy and the knowledge worker

The knowledge-based economy is one driven by knowledge intensity as opposed to the labour, materials or energy intensive sectors that dominated the industrial revolution and postmodern market-based economies (Drucker, 1989). The term ‘knowledge worker’ describes ‘individuals who carry knowledge as a powerful resource which they, rather than the organisation, own’ (Horwitz, Heng & Quazi, 2003, p. 23). As the carrier of knowledge, human capital, often referred to as ‘talent’, is the source of competitive advantage for organisation’s competing in knowledge based industries (Zhao, 2008). As the knowledge-based economy continues to grow, knowledge workers will represent a growing proportion of the overall workforce (Duxbury & Higgins, 2008). Highly skilled and sought after, many knowledge workers have enjoyed considerable market power in recent years and tend to expect flexible work arrangements, a high degree of autonomy and generous rewards because of the nature of the work they do and the potential value they represent to the company (Barrett, 2001; Benko & Weisberg, 2008). In addition, given that the very nature of knowledge work often involves remote work away from the traditional office it will place
greater focus on the potential for flexibility both in terms of days and hours worked and work location (Scholarios & Marks, 2004). In summary, the growth of the knowledge-based economy and subsequent rise in the prevalence of knowledge-based workers is significant because knowledge workers tend to have different expectations about work-life balance and their employment relationship overall.

2.2.5. War for talent

One of the most pressing business issues driving strategic planning over the past decade has been the so called ‘war for talent’ first espoused by The McKinsey Consulting Group in the late 1990s (Chambers, Foulon, Handfield-Jones, Hankin & Michaels III, 1998; Guthridge, Komm & Lawson, 2008). While a handful of academics have questioned the underlying logic and utility of the ‘war for talent’ organisational mindset (e.g., Capelli, 2005; Pfeffer, 2001; Somaya & Williamson, 2008), a range of academic literature (e.g., Ng & Burke, 2005; Trank, Rynes & Bretz Jr, 2002) and coverage in the business press (e.g., PR Week, 2009; The Economist, 2009) have reinforced the strategic imperative of recruiting and retaining the best talent, cementing the use of the ‘war for talent’ mantra in the academic and practitioner business lexicon. Despite the global financial crisis (GFC) experienced in 2009-2010 in most developed economies, the competition for the best and brightest is still intense and does not appear to have dulled the ‘war for talent’ (Holland & Hecker, 2010; PWC, 2011). In response to this ‘war for talent’, organisations are increasingly using WLB as an attraction and retention tool (Holland & Hecker, 2010; Raynaud & Watkins, 2011). Furthermore, in Australia, organisations proactively utilised and in some instances introduced work-life balance initiatives as a way to mitigate job losses at the height of the GFC, including job-sharing and part-time work in the airline, timber and professional services industries (e.g., Myer, 2009; Schneiders, 2009; Toomey, 2009).
2.2.6. Current business environment context

The preceding sections have outlined some of the most significant and mostly irreversible changes taking place in the Australian and broader business environment and workforce over the last few decades. Despite the GFC, the global business environment, while slowed, is still characterised by an aging and knowledge-based workforce and a renewed focus on how to attract, engage and retain the best and brightest human capital. At the same time, the workforce has changed from being a predominantly male workforce, often with a stay-at-home spouse to tend to all of the non-work responsibilities, to a diverse workforce characterised by dual-income earning couples with multiple caring responsibilities and a young workforce with significantly different expectations about their relationships with their employers than those held by preceding generations.

The changes outlined in Section 2.2 provide the context for understanding why work-life balance and psychological contracts have become important business issues over the last ten to twenty years. In Section 2.3 this changed business environment is linked to the resource based view (RBV) of the firm and the emergence of strategic SHRM.

2.3. Strategic HRM

In this section the emergence of SHRM, underpinned by the resource based view (RBV) of the firm, will be briefly reviewed. As part of this review, the implications for the HR function will be presented and discussed. Those implications include an increased emphasis and focus on managing the employment relationship through psychological contracts and concern for the work-life balance issues facing the modern employee. The review will then provide coverage of the work-life balance concept in Section 2.4 and the psychological contract in
Section 2.5 before introducing the theoretical foundations of the study and research hypotheses in subsequent sections.

**2.3.1. Resource based view of the firm**

The resource-based view of the firm has provided one of the most oft-used theories for explaining and justifying HR’s potential role as a strategic asset in recent times (Barney, Ketchen & Wright, 2011; Becker & Huselid, 2006). The RBV departed from the earlier strategy literature and theories espoused by Michael Porter in the 1980s that tended to focus on external factors in the firm’s competitive environment and attendant competitive strategy (Barney 1991; Barney et al., 2011). The RBV, on the other hand, examines the link between strategy and the internal resources of the firm (including human, capital and technological) as a source of competitive advantage (Barney 1991; Barney et al., 2011). According to Barney, an organisation enjoys a competitive advantage when it is implementing a value-creating strategy not simultaneously being implemented by any current or potential competitors (Barney 1991). More specifically, possession of human resource management systems that are rare, valuable, non-substitutable and difficult to imitate provide the greatest potential source of sustainable competitive advantage (Boxall & Purcell, 2000). The influence of RBV theory is that it provides an appealing rationale for HR’s strategic importance and provides a theoretical basis for examining the implications of HR for firm performance via the emergence of SHRM. Work-life researchers Morris, Heames and McMillan (2011) utilise RBV as a framework for explaining how work-life initiatives can be strategically developed and executed to help organisations achieve a sustainable competitive advantage in measurable ways.
2.3.2. The emergence of Strategic HRM

SHRM provides a macro-oriented approach to viewing the role and function of HRM in the larger organisation (Butler, Ferris & Napier, 1991). According to Schuler and Walker (1990), traditional HRM focussed on the more micro-oriented and short-term business issues. They defined traditional HRM as ‘a set of processes and activities jointly shared by human resources and line managers to solve people-related business problems’ (Schuler and Walker, 1990, p. 7). SHRM is devoted to exploring HR’s role in supporting the implementation of business strategy and some researchers claim it emerged as a result of the HR discipline needing to justify its position in the organisation (e.g., Wright et al., 2001). It coincided with the increasing interest in vertically aligning the strategic management of organisations with horizontally aligned internal functions, including HRM, to better achieve strategic outcomes (Wright & McMahan 1992).

Buoyed by the focus on internal resources such as human capital as espoused by the RBV theory, SHRM is concerned with ensuring that ‘HRM is fully integrated into strategic planning; that HRM policies cohere both across policy areas and across hierarchies and that HRM practices are accepted and used by line managers as part of their everyday work’ (Guest 1989, p.2). The SHRM perspective is focused on how to sustain competitive advantage by strategically aligning HR policies and programs, like work-life initiatives, in order to attract and retain high-quality, motivated and talented employees (Bailyn & Harrington, 2004; Kossek & Friede, 2006; Morris et al., 2011).

2.3.3. Implications for the HR Function

Alongside the growing use of RBV theory over the last three decades, the changing business environment, workforce and much-hyped global ‘talent wars’ outlined in earlier sections of
this review have underpinned the emergence of SHRM (Becker & Huselid, 2006; Martin 2009). These developments have reinforced the strategic imperative of managing an organisation’s human capital in order to achieve superior organisational performance and competitive advantage (Becker & Huselid, 2006). A direct implication of the SHRM approach is the emergence of frameworks and concepts designed to identify, position and tend to the needs of the best and brightest employees, invariably referred to as knowledge workers, who have the potential to provide a competitive advantage (Horibe, 1999; Lepak & Snell, 2002), core employees (Lepak, Taylor, Tekleab, Marrone & Cohen, 2007; Lopez-Cabrales, Valle & Herrero, 2006), pivotal talent (Boudreau & Ramstad, 2007), and ‘A players’ (Huselid, Beatty & Becker, 2005). Importantly, SHRM has focussed attention on the strategic alignment of the organisation’s HR system of policies and programs. Based on the premise of the RBV and emergence of SHRM, an organisation’s HR system of policies and programs should be different and, by association, superior to that of the competition, if the organisation is to attract, engage and retain the best talent to achieve competitive advantage. Three important concepts that have emerged from the convergence of the changed business environment discussed in Section 2.2 of this review and SHRM form the basis of this study. The three concepts include employer branding, work-life balance and psychological contracts.

Employer branding researchers Backhaus and Tikoo (2004) make the link with strategic HRM by noting that ‘the practice of employer branding is predicated on the assumption that human capital brings value to the firm, and through skilful investment in human capital, firm performance can be enhanced’ (p. 503). According to Dell and Ainspan (2001), ‘the employer brand establishes the identity of the firm as an employer. It encompasses the firm’s values, systems, policies, and behaviours toward the objectives of attracting, motivating, and retaining the firm’s current and potential employees’ (p.10). Ewing and colleagues (2002)
define employer branding activities (e.g., recruitment advertising, internal communication, publicity) as those that establish the identity of the organisation in the minds of the potential labour market as a ‘great place to work’ above and beyond other organisations. Employer branding is increasingly used as part of an organisation’s SHRM system of HR policies and programs to attract and retain valuable and rare human resources.

Just as a tight labour market pre-GFC foreshadowed the emergence of employer branding, at the same time work-life balance has also become an important SHRM consideration in light of the trends outlined in Section 2.2 of this chapter. Furthermore, an organisation’s WLB program is providing a popular basis for differentiation, as employer branding and organisational communication activities (e.g., recruitment advertising, induction programs, employee handbooks) are used to position the organisation as WLB ‘friendly’ (Collins, 2007; Harrington, 2007; Sutton & Noe, 2005). Organisations that actively promote their WLB credentials to differentiate themselves as an ‘employer of choice’ in a bid to attract and retain the best talent can be said to be using a WLB employer branding strategy (e.g., Balancing Australia, n.d.). In summary, both employer branding and WLB strategies are considered important elements of an organisation’s strategic HRM effort to align HRM policies and practices with business strategy (Kossek & Ozeki, 1999; Martin & Hetrick, 2006).

However, despite the emergence of WLB employer branding and organisational communication activities, researchers have lagged behind in their understanding of how these communication activities shape the expectations of individual employees through signalling mechanisms (Suazo, Martanez & Sandoval, 2009) that shape how employees make sense of their own experience of the organisation and its approach to WLB (Guest & Conway, 2002).
The psychological contract provides a sound theoretical foundation to examine how communication of organisational WLB promises and commitments raises employee expectations around WLB support (Guest & Conway, 2002). Psychological contract theory has been increasingly used as a framework to understand the employment relationship and employee expectations within that employment relationship (Chaudhry, Wayne & Schalk, 2009; Rousseau, 1995). Furthermore, researchers have argued that the psychological contract concept provides a useful basis to examine the dynamics of employee emotional, attitudinal and behavioural outcomes that result from breaching of WLB promises and commitments by organisations (Botsford, 2009; Scholarios & Marks, 2004; Xu, 2008). This thesis presents a study that introduces the concept of a WLB psychological contract. A WLB psychological contract refers to the employee’s beliefs and expectations of the support the organisation will provide in terms of enhancing the employee’s sense of balance between their work and non-working life (De Vos et al., 2003).

Building on the work of researchers who have explored responses to work-family psychological contract breach, the current study relies on signalling theory (Celani & Singh, 2011; Suazo et al., 2009) and sensemaking theory (De Vos et al., 2003) as useful theoretical frameworks to understand how the WLB psychological contract is formed in the first place. Sensemaking (Chaudhry et al., 2009); social exchange (Deery et al., 2006) and affective events (Guerrero & Herrbach, 2008) theories provide the basis to examine how employees respond to perceived psychological contract fulfilment.

Having provided an overview of the context of the research and the importance of SHRM, the review now goes on to delineate the key constructs and theoretical foundations underpinning
the study. Finally, the research questions and hypotheses that form the basis of the research will be introduced and then presented in a Research Model in Figure 2.1.

2.4. Work-life balance

Due to the transformational changes outlined in earlier sections of this review, there has been a growing body of academic research examining work-family and work-life integration issues (Bardoel et al., 2008; Brough & O’Driscoll, 2010). Academic and practitioner research in both developed (e.g., Meurs et al., 2008) and developing countries (e.g., Baral & Bhargava, 2010; Malik, Zaheer, Khan & Ahmed, 2010) is increasing. In this section the evolution of the WLB concept will be briefly addressed in Section 2.4.1 and the scholarly perspectives of the concept will be reviewed in Section 2.4.2. This coverage is important to frame the context within which WLB will be explored in the current study.

2.4.1. Evolution of the WLB concept

Early definitions of work-life balance focused on work-family balance and the ‘family-friendly’ programs introduced as part of workforce diversity management to enable employees to meet their family responsibilities (Lewis & Rapoport, 2005). While earlier discourses in the area focus on the issue of gender, equal opportunities, positive discrimination and family-friendly policies, contemporary organisational, government and academic discourses utilize the language of choice, flexibility, and of work-life balance or work-life integration (Matz & Pitt-Catsouphes, 2003; Smithson & Stokoe, 2005). As the ‘balance’ literature has evolved, a more expansive definition including work-life balance has emerged that looks beyond family care responsibilities (Bardoel & Grigg, 2010; Harrington, 2007). This is due to the widespread recognition that WLB issues are highly salient for many people beyond traditional caregivers (Casper et al., 2007; Spector et al., 2004; Siegel et al.,
Research in the Australian context by Pocock et al. (2010), suggests that work-life balance issues are much wider than the traditional focus on work-family and that many employees who do not have children also report poor work-life integration.

It is also important to acknowledge that the term work-family or work-life has been used to examine both the negative and positive associations relating to an individual’s work and non-work roles and aspirations (Brough & O’Driscoll, 2010). Examples of positive associations include enrichment (e.g., Greenaus & Powell, 2006) and positive spillover from one role to another (e.g., Haar & Bardoel, 2008). Negative associates include conflict (e.g., Lapierre et al., 2008) and work intensification (Kelliher & Anderson, 2010). Consistent with other contemporary researchers in the field (e.g., Brough & O’Driscoll, 2010; Harrington, 2007), the more expansive work-life balance concept will be used in this review of the relevant literature. WLB strategies are defined as those that enhance the autonomy of workers in the process of co-ordinating and integrating work and non-work aspects of their lives (Felstead et al., 2002; Sturges & Guest, 2004; Wallace, 1999). A sample of policies includes flexible hours, part-time work, job sharing, telecommuting and working from home arrangements (Bardoel, 2003).

2.4.2. Scholarship of WLB

Work-life balance research spans the boundaries of a diverse range of disciplines, including sociology, psychology, organisational behaviour, labour economics, management, HRM, industrial relations and women’s studies (Bardoel et al., 2008). Despite, or perhaps because of the multidisciplinary nature of the concept, the scholarship of WLB has been plagued by definitional problems and at times a lack of theoretical rigour (Eby, Casper, Lockwood, Bordeaux & Brinley 2005; Guest, 2002b). The ‘U.S. biased’ nature of much of the WLB
research and lack of cross-cultural comparisons present additional causes for concern (Bardoel et al., 2008; Spector et al., 2007). These concerns have led to the call for researchers to continue examining the work-life phenomenon in a variety of cultural contexts underpinned by a sound theoretical basis. While a significant body of work-life research has been conducted in the Australian context (e.g., De Cieri, Holmes, Abbott & Pettit, 2005; Duxbury & Higgins, 2008; Skinner & Pocock, 2011), this study adds to that literature base by conducting work-life balance research across three industry sectors in the Australian context, underpinned by theories that will be outlined in the following sections.

Recent decades have seen a shift in the work-life paradigm and this has had implications for the scholarship of the concept. Overtime, work-life researchers have attempted to identify and chart the blurring boundaries between the individual’s work and non-working life (Matz & Pitt-Catsouphes, 2003). As these boundaries have blurred due to the transformational changes taking place in the broader society and global business environment, different forms of interactions between the work and non-work domains of an individual’s life will occur, and these interactions are captured in the various theoretical frameworks that have evolved from the work-life literature (Schultz & Higbee, 2010; Xu, 2008). The most commonly referred to frameworks include work-life segmentation, spillover, work-life systems, facilitation, enrichment, compensation, conflict and enrichment (Schultz & Higbee, 2010; Zedeck & Mosier, 1990). While an extensive review of the variety of work-life frameworks presented in the extant literature is beyond the scope of this chapter, it is important to introduce the various frameworks to provide a level of context and understanding when the work-life literature is drawn together with the psychological contract literature in subsequent sections to present the study’s hypotheses.
The *segmentation* framework suggests work and family (or life) domains can operate independently. According to Zedeck (1992), individuals who intentionally maintain the boundaries of the two domains are able to segment work and life time, space and function. Compartmentalization, disengagement and detachment are terms that have been used interchangeably in the work-life literature as part of the segmentation framework (Lambert, 2000; Xu, 2008).

*Spillover* theory is an example of an open-systems theory that postulates that, in spite of physical and temporal boundaries, emotions and behaviours in one sphere carry over to the other (e.g., employees having a bad day at work are more likely to be in a bad mood when they get home) (Clark, 2000). Barnett’s work-life systems framework extends the research on spillover theory. According to Barnett’s (1999) framework, the employee is part of an interactive system, including the employee’s workplace and non-workplace needs, values and aspirations and the employee’s spouse, children, parents and community. This spillover effect has been framed in both positive and negative perspectives and the bi-directional nature of this relationship has been well documented (Losoncz & Bortolotto, 2009). With positive spillover, satisfaction from one domain can enhance satisfaction in the other. An example of work positively interacting with life is when success at work improves general quality of life outside of work. Conversely, an example of negative family (or life) interfering with work is when fatigue from caring for a sick child has a detrimental impact on work performance and/or satisfaction.

A complementary theory to spillover theory is *compensation* theory (Schultz & Higbee, 2010). Compensation theory refers to the efforts by employees aimed at countering negative experiences in one domain through increased efforts for positive experiences in another.
domain (Schultz & Higbee, 2010). According to Staines (1980), an example includes the stereotypical workaholic who has an unsatisfying family and/or personal life or the dedicated family man/woman compensating for a boring and unsatisfying working life. Zedeck and Mosier (1990) suggest that compensation can be viewed in two broad categories: supplemental and reactive. Supplemental compensation occurs when positive experiences are insufficient at work and are therefore pursued at home. Reactive compensation occurs when negative work experiences are made up for in positive home experiences (Zedeck & Mosier, 1990). In other words, according to compensation theory, there is an inverse relationship between work and family, so employees attempt to satisfy voids from one domain with satisfactions from the other (Clark, 2000).

Building on the work of positive spillover theory, facilitation theory examines the extent to which engagement in the work or life domain contributes to growth in the other (Grzywacz, Carlson, Kacmar, & Holliday Wayne, 2007). Facilitation theory moves beyond the individual perspective of spillover theory by exploring the broader cross-level changes that can take place by the ongoing facilitation that can lead to beneficial impacts beyond the individual, including the individual’s family, community and work group. An example is when a young male paediatrician’s new-found father status improves his ability to treat his young patients, understand and empathise with the concerns of fellow parents who come to his practice, and the practice itself benefits from his more holistic approach to the treatment of his patients (Grzywacz et al., 2007).

Closely linked to facilitation theory, enrichment theory espoused by Greenhaus and Powell (2006) specifies the conditions under which work and family roles are ‘allies’ rather than ‘enemies’ (Friedman & Greenhaus, 2000). Beyond describing how work-life conflict can be
minimised, the Greenhaus and Powell (2006) enrichment framework identified opportunities where resources (e.g., psychological, physiological, knowledge, skills and abilities) generated in one role actually improve performance in the other role (Maertz & Boyar, 2011). Based on the work of Greenhaus and Powell (2006), Carlson, Kacmar, Wayne and Grzywacz (2006) developed a measure of work-family enrichment that incorporates the potential for work to positively enrich family life and for family life to positively enrich the individual’s working life (Maertz & Boyar, 2011).

The conflict perspective of work-life issues has dominated the research agenda over the past thirty years (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). It is based on the role and limited resources perspective that suggests individuals have certain roles they are expected to perform and limited resources (e.g., time and energy) with which to perform these roles, so that something has to give (Grandey & Cropanzano, 1999; Xu, 2008). Work-family conflict refers to ‘a form of inter-role conflict in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect’ (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985, p. 77).

Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) identified three forms of conflict including time-based, strain-based and behaviour-based conflict. Time-based work-life conflict is experienced when time pressure from one domain produces preoccupation or makes it physically impossible to fulfil the other role. For example, wanting to attend a child’s first morning drop-off to school may prevent the individual from attending a critical work meeting. When the strain produced by one domain (e.g., a deadline at work) makes it more difficult to meet the demands of the other role (e.g., patience with a dependant and fragile elderly parent) this is referred to as strain-based conflict. Finally, behaviour-based conflict is said to occur when an employee exhibits
behaviours in life outside work that, although perhaps appropriate in working life (e.g., a police officer), may not be suitable for the home environment (Xu, 2008).

In the same way that spillover theory can be applied from work to family and family to work, work-life conflict researchers have demonstrated that conflict can flow in two directions (e.g., Byron, 2005; Cavazos-Garza, 2011; Frone, Russell & Cooper, 1992). Distinguishing between the bi-directional nature of work interference with family (WIF conflict) and family interference with work (FIW conflict) is important, because researchers have identified different antecedents and consequences for the two forms of conflict (Frone et al., 1992). In a meta-analysis by Byron (2005) a range of antecedents to WIF conflict and FIW conflict were identified. As expected, work factors (e.g., job involvement, hours spent at work) were more strongly related to WIF, while non-work factors (family stress, number of children) were more strongly related to FIW (Byron, 2005). When work interferes with family, and this interference exceeds the employee’s expectations and range of tolerance, it may result in a series of consequences for the employee and the organisation (Xu, 2008). WIF has been linked to a range of outcomes, including negative job satisfaction (Allen, Herst, Bruck & Sutton, 2000; Hammer, Neal, Newsom, Brockwood, & Colton, 2005; Kossek & Ozeki, 1998); affective commitment (Carr, Boyar & Gregory, 2008; Muse, 2008), and job performance (Muse, 2008), and related positively to intentions to leave the organisation (Allen et al., 2000; Karatepe & Uludag, 2008). Similarly FIW has been linked to organisational outcomes, including negatively to job satisfaction and positively to intentions to leave the organisation (Cavazos-Garza, 2011).

The above-mentioned frameworks outlined in this section of the review are important because they provide the motivation for organisations to develop, promote and implement work-life
strategies. In summary, the changes outlined in the earlier sections of the chapter have increased the potential for employees to experience work-life spillover, conflict and enrichment. In response to some of those demographic, socio-cultural and business factors outlined in this review (e.g., the rise in dual-earner households, delayed fertility, increased working hours and the hyper-competitive business environment), organisations have developed work-life policies and programs to reduce conflict and enhance potential enrichment benefits as part of their human capital strategy. In addition, other factors explain the increased use of WLB programs. There is a growing body of literature from the work-life field that suggests employees, as a form of social-exchange and reciprocity, respond favourably to organisational support for WLB. Research demonstrates that employees respond in the form of emotions, attitudes and behaviours that benefit the organisation in response to policies, programs, supervisor and organisational support designed to reduce work-life conflict or enhance enrichment (e.g., Batt & Valcour, 2003; Bilal, Zia-ur-Rehman, & Raza, 2010; Haar, 2004; Kossek & Friede, 2006; Scholarios & Marks, 2004). A basic understanding of the various work-life frameworks is also important because this study is based on the premise that organisations, and their agents, play an important role in shaping employee expectations about the support that employees will receive in a bid to reduce conflict and enhance enrichment associated with the work-life interface.

This literature review will now turn to the psychological contract concept to explore how employee expectations are formed and how employees respond to organisational efforts to deliver on promises and commitments around WLB support.
2.5. The psychological contract

Similar to the work-life balance concept, the employment relationship has also undergone a significant transformation due to a variety of factors. These factors, outlined in Section 2.2 of the literature review, include the demographic and socio-cultural changes shaping the mix of participants in the new workplace, the emergence of the ‘knowledge worker’, and the ‘war for talent’, that dramatically shaped the employment relationship pre-GFC and the subsequent slowdown during and after the GFC. While some in the academic and popular press (e.g., Briner, 2010; De Hauw & De Vos, 2010; Duff, 2009) note that the GFC has in some ways restored the balance of power in the employment relationship back to the employer, the underlying changes outlined in the preceding and following sections have forever changed the relationship between employer and employee.

In this section, the psychological contract will be defined and a brief overview of the evolution of the concept will be presented before introducing the concept of a work-life balance psychological contract and identification of the research problem.

2.5.1. Definition and evolution of the psychological contract construct

While there is no clear consensus among researchers on the definition of the psychological contract (Cullinane & Dundoon, 2006; Guest, 1998; Guest & Conway, 2002), there is widespread agreement it is a useful concept for examining the explicit and implicit, or hidden, aspects of the employment relationship between employer and employee (Guest & Conway 2002; Maguire, 2003).

Beyond disagreements about the exact definition of the psychological contract are differences over the beliefs of researchers on what actually constitutes a psychological contract.
According to Roehling (2008), while some researchers focus on expectations (e.g., Bunderson, 2001; Sutton & Griffin, 2004), others focus on perceived obligations (e.g., Coyle-Shapiro & Neuman, 2004; Lester, Kickul & Bergmann, 2007) or perceived promises (e.g., DeCupyer & DeWitte, 2006; DeVos et al., 2003).

While acknowledging the psychological contract can be defined in a number of different ways, for the purposes of this study the psychological contract refers to the individual employee’s beliefs about the terms and conditions of a reciprocal and social-exchange agreement between that person and the organisation (Robinson et al., 1994; Rousseau, 1990; Rousseau, 1995; Rousseau & Tijoriwali, 1998). The idea of a reciprocal social-exchange underpins the employee’s contribution to the organisation in the form of loyalty, effort and performance in return for organisational inducements (often referred to as psychological contract content items in the literature) and these may include financial rewards, interesting work assignments, professional development opportunities and support for work-life balance (De Vos, & Meganck, 2009; Herriot, Manning & Kidd, 1997). Thus the concept of the psychological contract provides a way of examining how organisations, by promoting WLB as part of the ‘employer brand’ and other factors, including supervisor support and organisational culture, influences how employees form expectations based on the promises they perceive their organisation has made.

Furthermore, the psychological contract provides an insight into employee responses to perceived fulfilment or breach of those promises. Based on the seminal work of Blau (1964), in social exchange relationships, employees strive to maintain a reciprocal or balanced relationship with their organisation. Thus, when the promises and commitments inherent in the psychological contract are fulfilled by the organisation, the employee is more likely to
report the psychological contract has been fulfilled; but if the employee perceives the
organisation has failed to keep its promises and commitments, the psychological contract is
said to be breached (Rousseau, 1995). The employee’s cognitive appraisal and assessment of
the organisation’s ability and willingness to deliver on the promises and commitments can be
thought of as a spectrum ranging from psychological contract breach as one anchor point (i.e.,
a discrepancy between what was promised and what was delivered) to psychological contract
fulfilment (i.e., promises are kept) anchored at the other end of the psychological contract
spectrum (Lambert, Edwards & Cable, 2003).

Psychological contract breach and fulfilment have been linked to a range of employee
responses, both negative and positive, in the form of employee emotions, attitudes and
behaviors (Bordia, Restubog & Tang, 2008; Chaudhry et al., 2009). The terms psychological
contract ‘violation’ and ‘breach’ were often used interchangeably until Morrison and
Robinson (1997) made a distinction between the two concepts. Breach is defined as the
cognitive appraisal that an organisation has failed to keep its promises, while violation is the
extreme negative affective state (i.e., emotion) that can arise from the perception of
psychological contract breach (Morrison & Robinson, 1997; Suazo, 2009; Zhao et al., 2007).

Given that psychological contract breach has received significant research attention
(Cullinane & Dundon, 2006), the focus in this study is on psychological contract fulfilment.

Previous theoretical and empirical psychological contract research has classified the elements
or content items of psychological contract as relational or transactional inducements (Raja,
Johns & Ntalianis, 2004; Restubog, Hornsey, Bordia & Esposo, 2008; Robinson et al., 1994;
Rousseau, 1995). Transactional elements (e.g., competitive compensation) are based on the
notion of an economic exchange and are more calculative in nature and, as a result, employees
are vigilant about balance and repayment (Montes & Irving, 2008; Morrison & Robinson,
1997). In contrast, relational psychological contract items are described as ‘affect-laden, open-ended exchanges with an intrinsic and highly subjective focus’ (Montes & Irving, 2008, p. 1368). The work-life balance psychological contract may be an interesting blend of transactional and relational elements, in that it is possible that programs such as on-site child care and part-time work schedules may be characteristic of a transactional psychological contract, while the promise of a supportive WLB organisational culture, direct supervisor and reasonable workload may be more in line with the concept of a relational psychological contract (Xu, 2008).

The following section defines the WLB psychological contract and provides justification for it to be studied as a discrete component of an employee’s overarching psychological contract.

2.5.2. The WLB psychological contract

Despite the fact that WLB is now widely regarded as a key content item of the modern psychological contract (Bellou, 2007; Kelley-Patterson & George, 2002; Roehling et al., 2000), to this researcher’s knowledge, no conceptual or empirical research to date has explored how psychological contracts around WLB are formed in the first place, and only a limited body of work has explored how employees respond when they perceive the organisation has breached or failed to support their WLB needs and aspirations (e.g., Botsford, 2009; Hornung & Glaser, 2010; Scholarios & Marks, 2004). However, in this study, WLB psychological contract fulfilment provides the main focus to consider how employees respond when they perceive the organisation has kept their promises and commitments to support their WLB needs and aspirations. This study is based on the premise that WLB psychological contracts are an important subset of the overall psychological contract (Botsford 2009; De Vos et al., 2003; Xu, 2008). The WLB psychological contract refers to
those promises and commitments the employee perceives the organisation has made to provide a supportive work environment, through the use of WLB policies, programs, supervisor and organisational cultural support, that enhances the employee’s sense of balance between their work and non-working life. This study is designed to address gaps that exist in the research to aid understanding of how WLB psychological contracts are formed in the first place, the specific processes that lead to perceptions of fulfilment from the employee’s perspective and how employees respond to WLB psychological contract fulfilment.

Understanding the WLB psychological contract is becoming increasingly important for both individual employees and their employers due to the rapid changes that have taken place in the demographics of the workforce, family patterns, male and female roles and career expectations over recent years (Barnett, 1999; Kossek & Distelberg, 2008; Meurs et al., 2008). For the individual employee, consideration of how organisations can support them to better manage their work and life responsibilities and aspirations has become an important component of many psychological contracts (Hornung & Glaser, 2010). Consistent with Barnett’s (1999) work-life systems framework that takes into account the complex lives of today’s employees, the foundation of this study is based on a belief that the work-life sphere of influence extends beyond other more traditional and well researched components of the psychological contract including pay and career development opportunities that primarily impact on the individual employee. As such they are an important and discrete component of the employee’s overall psychological contract.

Moreover, in light of the emergence of organisational communication activities that promote WLB employer branding, organisational researchers have lagged behind in understanding how these communication activities shape the expectations of individual employees. How
these activities shape expectations is a salient issue for HR researchers and practitioners, because HR is the organisational function that typically interprets and promotes WLB as a strategic issue to senior management, develops WLB communications and policies, works with line managers on WLB policy implementation, and develops and implements organisation change programs to move towards a more supportive WLB organisational culture (Bardoel, Morgan & Santos, 2007; Guest & Conway, 2002; McCarthy, Darcy & Grady, 2010; Milliken et al., 1998; Polach, 2003).

The psychological contract provides a sound theoretical foundation to explore the communication of WLB promises from the employee perspective and responses to perceived fulfilment.

The strategic importance and increasing use of organisational work-life programs and concerns for the impact those programs have on individual employees as outlined in this literature review provide the impetus for the research problem. The research problem is to answer the question:

*Does employee awareness of WLB policies and perceptions of the effectiveness of communication of WLB promises and commitments lead to WLB psychological contract formation? If so, once formed what are the antecedents and outcomes of WLB psychological contract fulfilment?*

The following sections will provide coverage of the various theories underpinning the WLB psychological contract that can be used to examine the formation of the employee’s WLB psychological contract and employee responses to WLB psychological contract fulfilment.
2.6. WLB psychological contract formation: A signalling theory perspective

Building on Suazo, Martinez and Sandoval’s (2009) and Aggarwal and Bhargava’s (2009) conceptual contributions on the link between the psychological contract and HRM policies, this study uses signalling theory to examine if WLB policies and communication activities create WLB psychological contracts in the minds of individual employees.

2.6.1. Signalling theory: Definition and discussion

Based on the seminal work on labour markets of Spence (1973), signalling theory explains how communication is made more effective by reducing information asymmetry between two parties. Spence’s (1973) research demonstrated how a job applicant might engage in behaviours to reduce information asymmetry with prospective employers. For example, Spence demonstrated how a self-perceived high-quality job applicant might attempt to distinguish themselves from low-quality prospects via the costly signal of a tertiary degree (Spence, 2002). According to signalling theory, the tertiary degree signals to the prospective employer that the job applicant is a hard working, bright and committed person, and thus it distinguishes the applicant from other applicants who do not have a tertiary degree.

Spence’s economic research (1973, 1974) on job-market signalling has provided the foundation for research on a range of organisational issues. While Spence (1973, 1974, 2002) views the role of signalling from the employer’s perspective, other researchers have extended the work of Spence to include the job applicant’s perspective (e.g., Casper & Harris, 2008; Rynes, 1991; Turban & Greening, 1997; Turban, 2001; Suazo et al., 2009; Wanous, 1992; Williams & Bauer, 1994). Notably, Rynes (1991) and Wanous (1992) used signalling theory to examine perceptions of organisational attractiveness from the job applicant’s perspective. Signalling theory is relevant to this discussion because it helps to understand how the
communication of HRM policies and employer branding activities (e.g., via recruitment process and induction) lead to the formation of the individual employee’s psychological contract (Aggarwal & Bhargava, 2009; Celani & Singh, 2011; Guzzo & Noonan, 1994; Suazo et al., 2009).

According to signalling theory, when faced with a lack of information about the organisation, job applicants use cues or signals from the organisation, in the form of policies, advertising and/or reputation, to imagine life inside the organisation, including the organisation’s intentions, actions and characteristics (Celani & Singh, 2011; Rynes, 1991; Turban, 2001). For example, Casper and Buffardi’s study (2004) found that an organisation’s WLB policies (schedule flexibility and dependent care assistance) were related to applicants’ anticipated organisational support and job pursuit intentions. Similarly, Williams and Bauer (1994) demonstrated that an organisation’s diversity management policy may enhance its attractiveness as an employer to prospective job seekers. Both studies acknowledge that the respective WLB and diversity management policies promoted by the organisations signalled a proactive approach to the management of and support for WLB and diversity. While the aforementioned studies have focussed on job applicants and their job pursuit intentions and/or perceptions of organisational attractiveness, Casper and Harris (2008) extended signalling theory to existing employees to test the relationship between employee awareness of HR policy use and perceptions of positive organisational support.

The current discussion provides support for signalling theory to be applied as a lens for examining the formation of the WLB psychological contract, as called for by researchers in the field (e.g., Guzzo & Noonan, 1994; Sonnenberg, Kroene & Paauwe, 2008; Suazo et al., 2009).
2.6.2. Employee perceptions of effective communication of WLB policies and programs and WLB policy awareness

Using signalling theory, Casper and Harris (2008) provided empirical support for the notion that for women the existence of WLB policies indirectly facilitates organisational attachment, including affective commitment and decreased turnover intentions, through perceptions of organisational support. In other words, the employee’s awareness of WLB policy availability (irrespective of their use) signals the organisation’s support for the employee, leading to the more distal outcomes of increased affective commitment and reduced turnover intentions (Casper & Harris, 2008).

While signalling theory has been used to explain the role of HRM policies in shaping the employee’s psychological contract, the role of effective communication of those policies from the employee’s perspective is less well understood. Kirby and Krone (2002), in a qualitative study using discourse analysis, demonstrated the important role communication through interpersonal discourse between organisational members plays in WLB policy utilization; however, little is known about what effect formal and informal organisational communication has on WLB psychological contract formation. Of relevance to this review, research by Guest and Conway (2002) demonstrated the importance of effective organisational communication (e.g., recruitment, induction, staff handbook) by the employer, as reported by managers, in communicating the psychological contract to the organisation’s employees. Given that many organisations are now using a range of organisational communication methods to communicate their HR policies and practices to position themselves as ‘employers of choice’ and strengthen their employer brand (Joo & McLean, 2006; Joyce, 2003), signalling theory and the empirical work of Guest and Conway (2002) would suggest effective communication and awareness of WLB policies and practices will facilitate the development of WLB
psychological contracts for individual employees. This body of knowledge leads to the development of the first research question and accompanying hypotheses:

**RQ1:** What is the relationship between employee perceptions of effective communication of WLB programs, WLB policy awareness and WLB psychological contract formation?

**H1:** Perceived effectiveness of communication of WLB promises/commitments will be positively related to the formation of employees’ WLB psychological contract.

**H2:** Awareness of WLB policy availability will be positively related to the formation of employees’ WLB psychological contract.

2.7. **WLB psychological contract formation: The moderating role of a sensemaking process perspective**

While signalling theory does provide a useful lens for examining the role of WLB policies and communication of policies and practices in forming the employees’ WLB psychological contract, it does not address the importance of the employee’s ‘lived’ experience within the organisation. Nor does it provide any insight into how an employee cognitively reconciles the signals employers send in relation to WLB support and the employee’s actual experience of reality within the organisation. Following on from De Vos, Buyens and Schalk (2003) and Hamel (2009), it is proposed that sensemaking theory provides an additional theoretical lens from which to examine how employees form their WLB psychological contract and react in the form of employee emotions, attitudes and behaviours to perceived psychological contract fulfilment. The application of sensemaking theory to employee reactions to WLB psychological contract fulfilment will be discussed in Section 2.10 of this chapter.
2.7.1. Sensemaking theory: Definition and discussion

According to Weick (1995), when humans are faced with incongruous information or events, they employ sensemaking behaviours to sort through and make sense of the information. HR activities such as WLB policies and programs are communicated both explicitly and implicitly through either human (e.g., recruiters, managers, co-workers) or administrative (e.g., policies, training, manuals/handbooks) contract makers (Rousseau, 1995). It is possible that signals sent out by the organisation about its supportive approach to WLB (for example, by way of WLB policies and recruitment advertising and induction programs) may be at odds with the employee’s own experience of the organisation. Consistent with Weick’s conceptualisation of sensemaking and supported by the empirical work of De Vos et al. (2003), employees will use cognitive processes to reconcile and constantly re-interpret the complex web of signals sent out by the organisation and their own actual experiences to form a WLB psychological contract, that is, the extent to which they believe the organisation has made promises or commitments to provide WLB support.

In the study by De Vos and colleagues (2003, p. 540), this process was conceptualised as 
*unilateral adaption of perceived promises to interpretations of experiences*. The researchers use this concept to explain how newcomers reconcile their perceptions of promises conveyed by their employer with their experiences at the organisation.

2.7.2. Employee perceptions of WLB organisational culture and supervisor support

Applying the concept of unilateral adaption of perceived promises to interpretations of experiences to the realm of WLB policies and programs, it follows that employees will continually reinterpret and readjust their WLB psychological contract if their actual
experience within the organisation does not align with the signals sent out from the organisation about its approach to WLB. While organisations might signal their WLB credentials in their recruitment advertising and internal communications, an employee who experiences an unsupportive organisational culture (e.g., where long hours are the organisational norm) might lower expectations about the WLB support likely to be received from the organisation.

The two most important concepts that work-life researchers have consistently found to reflect how the employer’s action and attitudes towards WLB support are perceived by employees are work-family culture (Brough & O’Driscoll, 2010; Thompson et al., 1999) and supervisor support (Lambert, 2000; Hammer, Kossek, Yragui, Bodner & Hanson, 2009). Work-family culture refers to the ‘shared assumptions, beliefs and values regarding the extent to which an organisation supports and values the integration of employees’ work and family lives’ (Thompson et al., 1999, p. 392). Supervisor work-life support is defined as perceptions that one’s supervisor cares about an individual’s work-life well-being, as demonstrated by behaviours that help resolve work-life conflicts and attitudes such as empathy with an employee’s desire for work-life balance (Hammer et al., 2009; Kossek, Pichler, Bodner & Hammer, 2011; Thomas & Ganster, 2005). Supervisor support may reduce both work interference with family and family interference with work by reinforcing employee perceptions of positive organisational support (Lambert, 2000; Muse, 2008).

According to sensemaking theory and as applied by De Vos et al., (2003), if the employee experiences a supportive organisational WLB culture and supervisor support, this will re-confirm and reinforce the signals being sent by the organisation and strengthen formation of the employee’s WLB psychological contract. On the other hand, it is conceivable that a
negative experience of work-family organisational culture and supervisor support will dampen expectations in terms of WLB support and thereby affect WLB psychological contract formation.

Hence, employee perceptions of WLB organisational culture and supervisor support will play an important moderating role in forming the employee’s WLB psychological contract. This leads to the second research question and hypotheses 3a/b and 4a/b:

**RQ2:** What is the relationship between WLB organisational culture, WLB supervisor support and WLB psychological contract formation?

**H3a:** Employee perceptions of a supportive WLB organisational culture will moderate the relationship between perceived effectiveness of communication of WLB promises/commitments and employees’ WLB psychological contract. Specifically, the WLB psychological contract will be stronger when employees perceive a supportive WLB organisational culture.

**H3b:** Employee perceptions of a supportive WLB organisational culture will moderate the relationship between awareness of WLB policy availability and the extent of employees’ WLB psychological contract. Specifically, the WLB psychological contract will be stronger when employees perceive a supportive WLB organisational culture.

**H4a:** Employee perceptions of WLB supervisor support will moderate the relationship between perceived effectiveness of communication of WLB promises/commitments and the extent of employees’ WLB psychological contract. Specifically, the WLB psychological contract will be stronger when employees perceive a supportive supervisor.
H4b: Employee perceptions of WLB supervisor support will moderate the relationship between awareness of WLB policy availability and extent of employees’ WLB psychological contract. Specifically, the WLB psychological contract will be stronger when employees perceive a supportive supervisor.

2.8. Antecedents of WLB psychological contract fulfilment

2.8.1. Employee perceptions of WLB organisational culture and supervisor support

Employee perceptions of WLB organisational culture and supervisor support may go beyond aiding the sensemaking process of WLB psychological contract formation. Both concepts have been identified as antecedents to a range of important outcomes for employees and employers (Lambert, 2000; Mesmer-Magnus, & Viswesvaran, 2006; Muse, 2008; Thompson et al., 1999). A supportive work-family organisational culture has been linked to employees’ use of work-family benefits (Kirby & Krone, 2002; Thompson et al., 1999). Both benefit availability and perceptions of a supportive work-family culture were positively related to affective commitment and negatively related to work-family conflict and intentions to leave the organisation (Thompson et al., 1999). Lappiere and colleagues (2008) demonstrated a causal link between employee perceptions of a supportive work-family culture and lower levels of work-family conflict which led to greater job and family satisfaction and ultimately enhanced overall life satisfaction. More recently ten Brummelhuis and van der Lippe (2010) demonstrated that a supportive work-family culture improved work performance amongst parents. Supervisor/line manager support has been shown to have an important impact on engendering enhanced levels of job performance and organisational citizenship behavior and mitigate work–life spillover and intention to leave the organisation (Lambert, 2000; Muse, 2008).
As previously stated, when employees perceive (i.e., through sensemaking processes) that the promises and commitments inherent in the psychological contract are ‘honoured’ by the organisation, the employee is more likely to report that the psychological contract has been fulfilled (Chaudry, Coyle-Shapiro & Wayne, 2011). But if the employee perceives that the organisation has failed to deliver on those promises and commitments, the psychological contract is said to be breached (Rousseau, 1995). Empirical findings from the WLB literature (e.g., McDonald, Brown & Bradley, 2005) suggest that employee perceptions of work-family organisational culture and supervisor support may perform the dual role of determining the strength of the employee’s WLB psychological contract through the moderating impact these variables have on WLB policy awareness and perceptions of effective WLB communication and explaining circumstances under which fulfilment is perceived. Furthermore, according to Veiga, Baldridge and Eddleston (2004), employees are less likely to participate in WLB programs when they perceive the organisational culture and supervisor is unsupportive of their work and non-work lives. It is proposed this non-participation may also result in feelings of WLB psychological breach. In summary, it is argued that, when employees perceive their organisational culture and workplace supervisor is supportive of their WLB needs and aspirations, they are more likely to participate in WLB programs and are more likely to report WLB psychological contract fulfilment.

Hence, employee perceptions of WLB organisational culture and supervisor support will play an important role in leading to the employee’s perception of WLB psychological contract fulfilment and this leads to the third research question and Hypotheses 5 and 6:
**RQ3:** What is the relationship between WLB organisational culture, WLB supervisor support and WLB psychological contract fulfilment?

**H5:** Employee perceptions of WLB organisational culture support are positively related to WLB psychological contract fulfilment.

**H6:** Employee perceptions of supervisor support are positively related to WLB psychological contract fulfilment.

### 2.9. Outcomes of WLB psychological contract fulfilment: Social exchange theory

Outcomes or responses to employee perceptions of psychological contract breach or fulfilment are one of the most widely researched areas within the sphere of psychological contract literature (Cullinane & Dundon, 2006). In a similar vein, examining employee responses to work-life conflict, enrichment and supervisory and organisational support has received significant attention in the work-life field (e.g., Forsyth & Polzer-Debruyne, 2007; Kelliher & Anderson, 2010; Muse et al., 2008). Both streams of research have consistently drawn on social exchange theory to examine employee outcomes of psychological contract breach or fulfilment or WLB support. Building on previous research, this study utilises social exchange theory to examine the employee outcomes of WLB psychological contract fulfilment. The study also draws upon affective events theory (AET) to apply additional rigor to the examination of how employees respond to WLB psychological contract fulfilment by examining the relationship between the various responses to fulfilment in the form of employee trust, job satisfaction, commitment, intention to leave and performance (Zhao et al., 2007). Discussion of the application of AET to the examination of WLB psychological contract outcomes is provided in Section 2.10 of this chapter.
2.9.1. Social exchange theory: Definition and discussion

Social exchange theory posits that the parties in an exchange relationship, in this case the employee and employer, provide benefits to one another in the form of tangible or intangible benefits and the exchange of these benefits is a result of the norm of reciprocity (Blau, 1964; Suazo, 2009). Social exchange theory has been frequently used as a means of explaining how employees may respond to psychological contract fulfilment and breach (e.g., Deery et al., 2006; Robinson & Morrison, 1995; Sturges et al., 2005; Turnley et al., 2003). Applying the principles of social exchange theory, employees are motivated by a desire to maintain a reciprocal or balanced relationship with their employer in terms of inducements offered by the employer and the work-related contributions made by employees (Deery et al., 2006). Should the employee feel that the organisation has not fulfilled its psychological contract obligations, this perceived breach will tend to undermine assumptions of reciprocity and fair dealing that underlie employment relationships (Rousseau & McLean Parks, 1993) and in turn erode trust in the organisation (Deery et al., 2006). Alternatively, social exchange theory suggests that if employees receive support from their employers, in the form of support for their work and non-work responsibilities and aspirations, then they will in turn feel obliged to reciprocate (Eisenberger, Fasolo & Davis- LaMastro, 1990). According to Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison & Sowa (1986), empirical findings ‘...support the social exchange view that employees’ commitment to the organisation is strongly influenced by their perception of the organisation's commitment to them’ (p. 500).

Social exchange theory and the norms of reciprocity have also been applied to the work-life concept to demonstrate how employees ‘repay’ the organisation when they perceive the organisation has provided support around their work-life balance needs (e.g., Kelliher & Anderson, 2010; Scholarios & Marks, 2004). Similar to the psychological contract literature,
this reciprocation takes the form of a range of employee emotions (e.g., trust), attitudes (e.g., job satisfaction, commitment, intention to leave) and behaviour (e.g., in-role and contextual behaviour) (Kossek & Ozeki, 1999; Muse, 2008; Scholarios & Marks, 2004).

The aforementioned job-related emotions, attitudes and behaviours are considered critical to the performance of the organisation when applying a resource based view of the firm lens to organisational performance (Wright et al., 2001) and, together with the macro-environmental changes outlined in Section 2.2 of this review, this underscores the importance of understanding the emergence of the WLB psychological contract. So while research focussing on how employees respond in the form of emotions, attitudes and behaviours to generic psychological contracts or work-life conflict or workplace flexibility is abundant, very little is known about how employees respond to the WLB psychological contract as a discrete component of the employment relationship. This gap in the literature leads to the fourth research question and the subsequent hypotheses based on each of the employee outcomes drawn from the literature:

RQ4: *What is the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and employee trust, job satisfaction, affective commitment, intention to leave the organisation and in-role and contextual performance?*

### 2.9.2. Trust

Trust is the cornerstone of the social exchange relationship between employee and employer as the relationship evolves over time, as long as both parties fulfil their promises (Aggarwal, Datta & Bhargava, 2007). Accordingly, it is important for employees to trust the organisation they work for. Robinson (1995) argued that employees whose psychological contracts have
been breached may not feel that they can trust their organisation to fulfil the remaining obligations of the contract. Supporting this view, research has consistently demonstrated the negative impact perceptions of psychological breach have on employee trust in the organisation (e.g., Deery et al., 2006; Dulac, Coyle-Shapiro, Henderson & Wayne 2008; Montes & Irving, 2008; Robinson, 1996). Conversely, in a study that drew together the psychological contract concept and a single WLB policy (i.e., telecommuting), Hornung and Glaser (2010) demonstrated the positive impact fulfilment of the relational psychological contract had on employees’ sense of trust in the organisation. In the study, 601 telecommuting employees working in the German Civil Service had more positive representations of social exchange with their organisation and reported higher levels of trust, when compared to 346 regular peer workers.

From the WLB literature, Scholarios and Mark’s (2004) study of software developers used social exchange theory (Eisenberg et al., 1986) and Clark’s (2000) work/family border theory to examine employers’ flexibility to their employees’ work-life issues. They defined flexibility in terms of supervisor supportiveness, time flexibility and organisational support and found these variables had a significant and positive impact on employee trust. Based on these findings, Hypothesis 7 tests the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and trust:

\[ H7: \quad \text{WLB psychological contract fulfilment will be positively associated with trust in the organisation.} \]
2.9.3. Job satisfaction

Work attitudes are employees’ evaluation of the employer and the work in general and in the case of job satisfaction it is ‘a positive or negative evaluative judgment of one’s job or job situation’ (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996, p. 2). Job satisfaction is an employee attitude that is more evaluative by nature than the trust variable, and according to social exchange theory it represents another form through which the individual employee will ‘respond’ to perceptions of psychological contract breach or fulfilment (Zhao et al., 2007). Job satisfaction is an employee attitude worthy of research attention because it is considered an important predictor of employee turnover intentions, absenteeism and job performance (Concha, 2009).

According to Locke (1969), job satisfaction is a function of the perceived relationship between what an individual wants from a job and what he/she perceives it as offering. Job satisfaction is a highly subjective attitude, and following the logic prescribed by Locke (1969) and others (e.g., Pate, Martin & McGoldrick, 2003; Tekleab & Taylor, 2003) a discrepancy between promised and received inducements (e.g., training opportunities, pay and benefits) is likely to lead to feelings of job dissatisfaction, while fulfilment of inducements or organisational promises will most likely lead to enhanced levels of job satisfaction.

Job satisfaction has been widely examined in the extant psychological contract and work-life literature (e.g., Forsythe & Polzer-Debruyne, 2007; Robinson et al., 1994; Scholarios & Marks, 2004). Within the psychological contract literature, employee perceptions of fulfilment (i.e., the keeping of organisational promises and commitments) are consistently linked to enhanced levels of employee job satisfaction (e.g., De Jong, Schalk & De Cuyper, 2009; Pate et al., 2003; Robinson et al., 1994). In contrast, psychological contract breaches
have been found to undermine employees’ job satisfaction (e.g., Robinson & Rousseau, 1994; Tekleab & Taylor, 2003).

From the work-life literature, a meta-analysis by Kossek and Ozeki (1998) found a consistent and negative relationship between all forms of work-life conflict and job satisfaction. Hammer et al. (2005) demonstrated that use of organisational work-life supports by dual-earner couples was positively related to job satisfaction, and Forsythe and Polzer-Debruyne (2007) found a positive relationship between visible organisational support for work-life balance and job satisfaction. Based on this literature, Hypothesis 8 articulates the expected relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and job satisfaction:

\[ H8: \text{WLB psychological contract fulfilment will be positively associated with job satisfaction.} \]

2.9.4. Affective commitment
Organisational commitment refers to the strength of an individual’s identification with the organisation and is considered a critical employee attitude because of its link to organisational citizenship behaviours and intentions to stay with the organisation (Meyer & Allen, 1984; Zhao et al., 2007). Following others in the psychological contract and WLB field, the focus of the current study is on affective, as opposed to continuance or normative organisational commitment because it is argued that it reflects a more meaningful representation of the social exchange process in that employees remain with the organisation because they want to (e.g., Dulac et al., 2008; Muse et al., 2008). Continuance commitment reflects the employee’s decision to stay at the organisation because they need to and normative commitment refers to
the situation where employees feel they have an obligation to remain at the organisation (Meyer & Allen, 1991).

The positive relationship between employee perceptions of psychological contract fulfilment and affective commitment is demonstrated in a study of 151 journalists, technology experts and marketing specialists (Sturges et al., 2005). Research by Hornung and Glaser (2010) studying German telecommuters based in the Civil Service also demonstrated a positive association between psychological contract fulfilment and affective commitment. Similarly, a study of 118 public servants based in Finland found psychological contract fulfilment was positively linked to affective commitment (Parzefall, 2008). Consistent with the studies examining the psychological contract fulfilment and affective commitment relationship, a range of studies has also demonstrated that employee perceptions of contract breach tend to yield diminished levels of affective commitment (Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 2000; Dulac et al., 2008; Sturges et al., 2005; Suazo, 2009).

Research findings from the work-life domain also demonstrate the social-exchange process at play in the relationship with affective commitment. In a WLB study based in the health sector, Muse et al. (2008) demonstrated a positive relationship between employees’ use and perceived value of a work-life benefit package and employee affective commitment. The Scholarios and Marks (2004) study based on software workers also demonstrated a positive relationship between perceived flexibility and employees’ affective commitment. Haar and Spell (2004) demonstrated a positive relationship between programme knowledge of work-family policies and affective commitment amongst a sample of 203 government workers in New Zealand, although the results examining the link between perceived value of work-family practices and affective commitment failed to reach significance. Finally, in a study of
216 managers working in the Indian manufacturing and information technology sectors, Baral and Bhargava (2010) reported a positive relationship between organisational interventions for work-life balance and affective commitment.

Based on these collective findings, Hypothesis 9 articulates the expected relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and affective commitment:

\[ H9: \text{WLB psychological contract fulfilment will be positively associated with affective commitment.} \]

2.9.5. Intention to leave the organisation

Turnover intentions report on the subjective probability that an individual employee will leave his or her organisation over a certain period of time and, unlike turnover behaviour, the intention to turnover construct is less constrained by exogenous factors (e.g., an alternative job opportunity) and more accurately reflects an employee’s attitude toward the organisation (Zhao et al., 2007). The construct presents an important attitude because, similar to organisational commitment, it serves as an indicator of the employee’s psychological commitment to the organisation (Zhao et al., 2007). Furthermore, researchers have demonstrated that, when employees with intentions to leave the organisation stay with the organisation, they are less likely to engage in organisational citizenship behaviours and tend to perform poorly on the job (e.g., Cropanzano, Rupp & Byrne, 2003; Podsakoff, Whiting, Podsakoff & Blume, 2009). Finally, intention to leave the organisation is a powerful predictor of actual turnover behaviour (Chen, Ployhart, Thomas, Anderson & Bliese, 2011; Griffith, Hom & Gaertner, 2000).
Turnover intentions are one of the most studied job related outcomes in both the psychological contract and work-life literature (Haar, 2004; Zhao et al., 2007). Psychological contract breach has been consistently and positively associated with employees’ intention to leave the organisation (e.g., Dulac et al., 2008; Lum, Kervin, Clark, Reid & Sirola, 1998; Suazo, 2009). In turn, psychological contract fulfilment symbolises an employer’s commitment and willingness to continue the exchange relationship and should be reciprocated by reduced intentions to leave the organisation. This was shown in Parzefall’s (2008) study which demonstrated a negative relationship between psychological contract fulfilment and intention to leave the organisation.

From the work-life literature, organisational support for enhanced employee work-life balance has been linked to reduced intentions to leave the organisation (e.g., Forsyth & Polzer-Debruyne, 2007; Scholarios & Marks, 2004). A study of 332 frontline employees in the Turkish hotel industry showed work interfering with family and family interfering with work conflict were associated with increased turnover intentions (Karatepe & Uludag, 2008). Haar (2004) examined the relationship between work interfering with family and family interfering with work and intentions to leave and found that both relationships were positive. However, employee perceptions of organisational work-family support failed to moderate these positive relationships, suggesting that a supportive work place may not diminish the employee’s intention to leave the organisation when experiencing conflict from the home and work.

Despite this contrary finding from the Haar (2004) study, based on the findings from both the psychological contract and work-life literature, Hypothesis 10 outlines the expected relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and intention to leave the organisation:
H10: WLB psychological contract fulfilment will be negatively associated with intention to leave the organisation.

2.9.6. In-role performance

Work behaviours, that is, employees work–related actions, including in-role performance can have a more tangible impact on the workplace when compared to workplace emotions and attitudes (e.g., trust, job satisfaction, affective commitment, intention to leave) (Zhao et al., 2007). In-role performance, also referred to as in-task performance, refers to the assigned responsibilities associated with an individual’s formal employment contract and that which differentiates one job from another (Kickul, Lester & Finkl, 2002; Muse et al, 2008). In-role performance centres on those activities that contribute to the ‘organisation’s technical core’ (Borman & Motowidlo, 1997, p. 99). As such, in-role performance has been extensively researched in both the psychological contract and work-life balance literature (e.g., Forsythe & Polzer-Debruyne, 2007; Muse et al., 2008; Sturges et al., 2005; Turnley et al., 2003).

From the psychological contract literature, fulfilment has been positively associated with in-role job performance (e.g., Turnley et al., 2003; Sturges et al., 2005), while breach has been negatively associated with in-role job performance (e.g., Suazo et al., 2005; Suazo, 2009).

Results from the work-life balance literature are mixed and do not always support the view that employees recalibrate their work performance based on their perceptions of organisational support for work-life balance. Forsythe and Polzer-Debruyne (2007) demonstrated a statistically significant negative relationship between perceptions of organisational work-life balance support and in-role performance. Muse (2008) failed to establish a statistically significant relationship between work-interfering with family (WIF)
conflict or family-interfering with work (FIW) conflict and in-role performance. The findings of Muse (2008) and Forsythe and Polzer-Debruyne are, however, at odds with some results from the WLB literature more generally which demonstrate increased job performance resulting from employee perceptions of WLB organisational support (e.g., Friedman & Greenhaus, 2000; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). While acknowledging the mixed results from the WLB literature, the consistent findings from the psychological contract literature about the positive relationship between fulfilment and enhanced in-role performance leads to the articulation of Hypothesis 11:

**H11:** WLB psychological contract fulfilment will be positively associated with in-role performance.

### 2.9.7. Contextual Performance: Interpersonal facilitation and job dedication

Unlike in-role job performance, contextual performance behaviours as conceptualised in this study are not tied to any one specific job but are common to many jobs within the organisation (Muse et al., 2008). Similar to the organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) construct, contextual performance describes another way through which employees reciprocate and repay the organisation for delivering on its promises and commitments and for supporting the employee (Muse et al., 2008; Turnley, Bolino, Lester & Bloodgood, 2003). Unlike in-role performance that relies on technical skill and knowledge to perform a certain role within the organisation, contextual performance is extra-role and involves behavioural patterns, including helping others or suggesting ways to improve organisational processes that support the psychological and social context in which in-role activities are performed (Van Scotter, Motowidlo & Cross, 2000).
Within the contextual and OCB performance literature, two distinct dimensions of performance are identified (Organ, 1988; Van Scotter et al., 2000). Following the lead of Muse (2008), this review relies on the delineation presented by Van Scotter and colleagues (2000) that identifies performance directed at the employee’s co-workers, referred to as contextual interpersonal facilitation performance (CIFP), and performance directed at the employee’s job and organisation, referred to as contextual job dedication performance (CJDP).

According to Van Scotter et al., (2000), an example of contextual interpersonal facilitation performance (CIFP) behaviours includes praising a co-worker or helping a co-worker without being asked. This behaviour is important to the overall performance of the organisation because it builds on the social capital available to the organisation and has been linked with organisational effectiveness (e.g., Chuang & Liao, 2010; Bolino, Turnley & Bloodgood, 2002). Social capital refers to the relationships between employees that engender knowledge exchange and has been consistently viewed as an important predictor of organisational innovative capability (Martin, 2009; Wright et al., 2001). Adler and Kwon describe social capital as ‘the goodwill that is engendered by the fabric of social relations and that can be mobilized to facilitate action’ (2002; p.17).

Contextual job dedication performance (CJDP) presents another way the employee repays the organisation for fulfilling his or her WLB psychological contract by behaving in a way that ultimately benefits the organisation. Unlike CIFP that is directed at co-workers, the organisation is the target of CJDP (Van Scotter et al., 2000; Williams & Anderson, 1991). Examples of the job dedication construct include taking the initiative to solve a problem and working harder than necessary (Muse et al., 2008).
Within the psychological contract literature, the examination of contextual performance as an outcome of fulfilment or breach has been approached in a variety of ways. For example, Coyle-Shapiro and Kessler (2000), in a large study of employees and managers at a local authority in the U.K., demonstrated a positive relationship between psychological contract fulfilment and contextual behaviour directed at the organisation. Using Williams and Anderson’s (1991) distinction between citizenship behaviours intended to benefit the organisation (OCB-O) and those intended to be benefit individual co-workers (OCB-I), Turnley et al. (2003) demonstrated that the extent of psychological contract fulfilment is positively related to contextual behaviour directed at both the organisation and one’s co-workers. In addition, the study including 134 supervisor-subordinate dyads research conducted by Turnley and colleagues (2003) indicated that psychological contract fulfilment was more strongly related to contextual behaviour directed at the organisation than to contextual behaviour directed at one’s colleagues.

While some limited research has examined the link between support for work-life and contextual behaviour, calls have been made by researchers to examine behavioural outcomes in addition to the rich body of research examining attitudinal responses to work-life support (Eby et al., 2005; Kossek & Ozeki, 1999). In a study by Muse (2008), family interfering with work conflict had a negative relationship with the contextual job dedication performance variable while, contrary to the researchers’ expectations, work interfering with family had a positive relationship with both the interpersonal facilitation and job dedication dimensions of contextual performance. Lambert (2000), in a study of 325 employees from a U.S. based manufacturer, demonstrated a positive link between employee perceptions of usefulness of work-life benefits and contextual performance behaviour directed at both the employees’ organisation and colleagues. However, the Lambert results did not support the hypothesised
premise that employees target their reciprocation toward a particular exchange partner. Contrary to expectations, perceived work-life benefit usefulness was not more strongly associated with contextual performance behaviours directed at the organisation than those performance behaviours directed at individual colleagues (Lambert, 2000).

Based on the combined findings from the psychological contract and work-life literature, Hypotheses 12 and 13 identify the expected relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and both dimensions of contextual performance:

H12: WLB psychological contract fulfilment will be positively associated with contextual interpersonal facilitation performance.

H13: WLB psychological contract fulfilment will be positively associated with contextual job dedication performance.

2.10. Outcomes of WLB psychological contract fulfilment: Affective events theory

In addition to relying on social exchange theory to examine the hypothesised main effects relationships between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and the previously cited outcomes, this study draws insights from AET as a theoretical extension to explain employees’ positive emotions, attitudes and behaviours and the nature of the relationship between those outcomes (Zhao et al., 2007).

2.10.1. Affective events theory: Definition and discussion

Weiss and Cropanzano (1996) developed AET in order to explain how affective states, such as trust, emerge from work events and, in turn, give rise to attitudes and behaviours (Guerrero & Herrbach, 2008). AET serves as a guide to understanding how employee responses to WLB
psychological contract breach and fulfilment relate to one another. Of relevance to this study, it provides a theoretical framework for understanding how trust as an affective state potentially mediates the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and workplace attitudes and behaviours, including job satisfaction, affective commitment, intention to leave, in-role and contextual performance (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996; Zhao et al., 2007).

2.10.2. The mediating role of trust

As previously discussed, trust, in its own right, is an important work-related emotion expressed by employees that forms the cornerstone of the social exchange relationship between employee and employer (Aggarwal et al., 2007). While empirical research applying AET to the psychological contract literature is limited, a small body of literature provides support for the mediating role of trust in determining the attitudinal and behavioural responses of employees (e.g., Lo & Ayree, 2003; Zhao et al., 2007). Robinson (1996) reported the effects of psychological contract breach on civic virtue, performance and intentions to remain with the organisation were fully mediated by trust. Lo and Ayree (2003) reported results consistent with the Robinson (1996) study, demonstrating that trust fully mediated the effects of psychological contract breach on employee psychological withdrawal behaviours and civic virtue. Montes and Irving (2008) draw on the theoretical distinctions between transactional and relational elements of the psychological contract and previous analysis by Robinson and Morrison (1995) to examine the mediating role of trust. The results demonstrated that trust had a more powerful mediating effect on the relationship between fulfilment of the relational elements of the psychological contract and employee reactions, in the form of satisfaction, feelings of violation and employment intentions, than did the transactional elements of the psychological contract (Montes & Irving, 2008).
As discussed in Section 2.5.1, the WLB psychological contract may be composed of a blend of transactional and relational elements. While an on-site child care centre may be considered an element of a transactional psychological contract, the promise of a supportive supervisor is considered an element of a relational psychological contract (Xu, 2008). While this study does not seek to make a distinction between transactional and relational psychological contracts, the combined findings of the Robinson and Morrison (1995) and Montes and Irving (2008) studies add support to the suggestion that trust may potentially mediate the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and the attitudinal and behavioural outcomes included in this study.

From the psychological contract literature, and consistent with the findings from previous AET-inspired research (e.g., Migonac & Herrbach, 2004; Rupp & Spencer, 2006), a meta-analysis by Zhao et al. (2007) demonstrated the mediating role of distrust and psychological contract violation in the relationship between perceived psychological contract breach and job satisfaction, affective commitment, intention to leave and performance.

From the work-life literature, Scholarios and Marks (2004) demonstrated that trust partially mediated the relationship between employee perceptions of work-life boundaries and certain job attitudes. For the software workers included in the study by Scholarios and Marks (2004), positive work-life balance generated greater trust in the organisation, which in turn generated positive attitudinal reciprocity in the form of job satisfaction and affective commitment.

In answering the call by researchers to examine indirect paths between psychological contract breach or fulfilment and employee attitudes and behaviours (e.g., Raja et al., 2004; Suazo et al., 2005; Turnley & Feldman, 2000), Hypotheses 14a to 14f outline the expected mediating
role trust will perform in the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and the previously described main affects of job satisfaction, affective commitment, intention to leave, in-role and contextual performance behaviours directed at the employees colleagues and organisation:

**H14a:** Trust in the organisation will mediate the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and job satisfaction.

**H14b:** Trust in the organisation will mediate the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and affective commitment.

**H14c:** Trust in the organisation will mediate the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and intention to leave the organisation.

**H14d:** Trust in the organisation will mediate the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and in-role performance.

**H14e:** Trust in the organisation will mediate the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and contextual interpersonal facilitation performance.

**H14f:** Trust in the organisation will mediate the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and contextual job dedication performance.

2.11. **Outcomes of WLB psychological contract fulfilment: A sensemaking perspective**

In addition to assisting with understanding how employees form psychological contracts, sensemaking theory also assists with understanding why employees react to perceived breaches or fulfilment in the way that they do (Chaudhry et al., 2009; Hamel, 2009; Morrison & Robinson, 1997; Robinson & Morrison, 2000). A key application of sensemaking theory is understanding organisational life from the employee perspective and this is in line with the view of the psychological contract as a subjective perceptual concept that resides in the eyes
of the beholder, or, in this case, the eyes of the employee (Chaudhry et al., 2009; Robinson & Rousseau, 1994). In this context, and following the lead of Chaudhry and colleagues (2009) and Hamel (2009), sensemaking theory can be applied to understanding how evaluations by the employee lead to a change in response in the form of employee trust.

2.11.1. The moderating role of WLB organisational justice

While most of the empirical research on the psychological contract has investigated employees’ reactions to unfulfilled or fulfilled organisational promises (i.e., contract breach or fulfilment), researchers have more recently noted that the strength of the responses may be moderated by how the employee cognitively assesses the organisational context that surrounds breach or fulfilment (Chaudhry et al., 2009; Kickul et al., 2002). An interpretation of how fairly the employee was treated by the organisation may form part of this cognitive assessment (Kickul et al., 2002; Morrison & Robinson, 1997). According to researchers in both the psychological contract and work-life fields, in situations where an individual perceives that unfair decisions, procedures or interactions occur alongside perceived breaches of the psychological contract, more intense emotions and responses may result (Kickul et al., 2002; Morrison & Robinson, 1997; Poelmans & Beham, 2008; Siegel et al., 2005). The organisational justice construct provides a lens through which to examine employee perceptions of fairness (Poelmans & Beham, 2008).

According to Judge and Colquitt (2004), the literature identifies four dimensions of organisational justice. The first dimension of the justice schema, distributive justice, suggests that employees evaluate the fairness of organisational decision outcomes to gauge whether their rewards or inducements match their contributions to the organisation or the rewards received by their colleagues (Leventhal, 1976, cited in Judge & Colquitt, 2004). Second, procedural justice refers to perceptions about the fairness of the decision-making process in
that employees are not just concerned with the outcome of a decision itself but that the procedures associated with the outcomes are viewed as fair (Lind & Tyler, 1988; Siegel et al., 2005). Specifically employees judge whether the procedures are consistent, unbiased, accurate, correctable and representative of worker concerns and opinions (Judge & Colquitt, 2004). The third and fourth dimensions of organisational justice fall under the broader interactional justice schema, and include the sincerity and respect shown towards the employee and the extent of adequate and honest explanations provided to the employee, referred to as interpersonal and informational justice, respectively (Judge & Colquitt, 2004). Of particular relevance to this study is the meta-analysis by Colquitt and colleagues that linked the four justice dimensions (distributive, procedural, interpersonal, informational) to a variety of important work-related outcomes including job satisfaction, commitment, citizenship and withdrawal (Colquitt, Wesson, Porter, Conlon & Ng, 2001).

Organisational justice research suggests that if employees feel they have been treated fairly, they demonstrate an increased acceptance of performance appraisals (Taylor, Tracy, Renard, Harrison & Carroll, 1995), recruitment decisions (Ployhart & Ryan, 1998) and recruitment instruments (Wallace & Page, 2006), salary determination (Cloutier & Vilhuber, 2008), and psychological contract breach (Kickul et al., 2002; Robinson & Morrison 2000). However, despite the importance of the organisational justice concept, it has received limited research attention within the broader psychological contract and work-life literatures (Jepsen & Rodwell, 2010; Judge & Colquitt, 2004).

From the psychological contract literature, drawing on the theoretical model developed by Morrison and Robinson (1997), Kickul, Lester and Finkl (2002) examined how procedural and interactional justice moderated the relationship between breach of the extrinsic and
intrinsic psychological contract. Consistent with expectations, the results of the Kickul et al. (2002) study did indeed demonstrate the moderating role of both forms of justice in the relationship between job satisfaction, intentions to leave the organisation, in-role performance, and contextual performance directed at both the organisation and colleagues.

In addition to the empirical work of Kickul and colleagues (2002) from the psychological contract literature, researchers in the work-life field have examined the role organisational justice perceptions perform in determining how employees interpret and therefore how they respond to work-life conflict (e.g., Siegel et al., 2005) and supervisor discretionary decisions about work-life policies (e.g., Poelmans & Beham, 2008).

In a conceptual contribution by Poelmans and Beham (2008), the favourability of the allowance decision by the employees’ supervisor to access a work-life policy or program was the central construct to explore how employees respond to supervisor decisions about work-life support. Poelmans and Beham conceptualised the decisions made about an employee’s access to WLB policies as ‘allowance decisions’ made by supervisors (2008, p. 395). The researchers proposed that fairness perceptions by the employee, in the form of an assessment of organisational justice, would moderate the relationship between the favourability of the supervisor’s allowance decision (e.g., the supervisor disallows an employee’s request to access telecommuting policy) and individual employee and relational outcomes (e.g., job satisfaction, organisational commitment, quality of the employee–supervisor relationship). The Poelmans and Beham contribution highlights the potential for perceptions about organisational justice to manifest throughout the process of supervisors making discretionary decisions about subordinates’ access to WLB policies and practices. As McCarthy, Darcy and Grady note, ‘as HR policies cascade down the organisational hierarchy, middle and line
managers become relevant stakeholders in influencing how HR policies are interpreted and enacted’ (2010, p. 159). According to Poelmans and Beham (2008, p. 404), organisational justice perceptions of the employee have the potential to impact on how the employee responds to the decision: ‘...perceptions of a fair decision process, demonstrations of honest concern about the employee, and the provision of full information about the decision criteria and process may dilute negative responses’.

The empirical work of Judge and Colquitt (2004) makes a significant contribution to the application of the organisational justice construct to the work-life literature. Judge and Colquitt developed WLB organisational justice constructs based on the four existing organisational justice dimensions, including distributive, procedural, informational and interpersonal justice, and applied them to employee perceptions of the decisions made around organisational support for work-life balance. In a study of 174 faculty members of universities based in the U.S., the results revealed that procedural and interpersonal justice was negatively related to stress, and that these effects were mediated by work-family conflict. Controlling for job satisfaction and the presence of organisational work-life policies, the presence of justice seemed to allow participants to better manage the interface of their work and family lives, and this in turn was associated with lower levels of stress (Judge & Colquitt, 2004). While the study did not test the moderating role of WLB organisational justice dimensions, it did provide empirical support for the reliability and validity of the WLB organisational justice measures.

Siegel and colleagues (2005) utilised organisational justice as a key construct to examine the relationship between employees’ work-life conflict and organisational commitment. In a series of three studies using a variety of methodologies, the researchers demonstrated the
moderating role of procedural justice in the inverse relationship between work-life conflict and organisational commitment. That is, when employees perceived high levels of procedural fairness they were less likely to respond negatively, in terms of organisational commitment, to high levels of work-life conflict. According to the Siegel et al. study, even (or especially) when work-life conflict is present, perceptions of procedural fairness may help to minimise negative consequences.

As this review identifies, prior research attention has focussed on how organisational justice perceptions interact with psychological contract breach and the impact that interaction has on attitudinal and behavioural responses in the form of job satisfaction, organisational commitment, intention to leave and performance. Research has yet to examine if organisational justice perceptions perform the same moderating role on the relationship between psychological contract fulfilment and the employee response of trust. Underpinned by sensemaking theory that suggests employees readjust their response to certain events based on their actual experiences and perceptions within an organisation, this study draws on the albeit-limited extant literature to examine if the four dimensions of WLB organisational justice strengthen the positive relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and trust in the organisation. In addition to addressing this gap in the literature, trust is the focal response to fulfilment under examination, because of the trust building nature of justice perceptions (Lo & Aryee, 2003; Saunders & Thornhill, 2004). Drawing on the four WLB organisational justice dimensions developed by Judge and Colquitt (2004), the study will examine the potential for justice perceptions to have a strengthening influence on employee trust when WLB psychological contract fulfilment is perceived. This leads to the fifth research question and accompanying hypotheses:
RQ5: What effect does WLB distributional, procedural, interpersonal and informational justice have on the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and trust?

H15a: Perceptions of distributive justice will moderate the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and employee trust. Specifically, the positive relationship will be stronger when employees report high levels of distributive justice.

H15b: Perceptions of procedural justice will moderate the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and employee trust. Specifically, the positive relationship will be stronger when employees report high levels of procedural justice.

H15c: Perceptions of interpersonal justice will moderate the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and employee trust. Specifically, the positive relationship will be stronger when employees report high levels of interpersonal justice.

H15d: Perceptions of informational justice will moderate the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and employee trust. Specifically, the positive relationship will be stronger when employees report high levels of informational justice.
Figure 2.1: Research Model

- **Perceived effectiveness of communication of WLB promises/commitments**
- **Awareness of WLB policy availability**
- **Formation of WLB psychological contract**
- **WLB psychological contract fulfilment**
- **Employee perceptions of a supportive WLB organisational culture**
- **Employee perceptions of WLB supervisor support**

- **Perceptions of distributive justice**
- **Perceptions of procedural justice**
- **Perceptions of interpersonal justice**
- **Perceptions of informational justice**

- **Job satisfaction**
- **Affective commitment**
- **Intention to leave**
- **In-role performance**
- **Contextual interpersonal facilitation performance**
- **Contextual job dedication performance**

- **Trust**
- **H7**
- **H1 / H2**
- **H3a/b**
- **H4a/b**
- **H5 / H6**
- **H15a/b/c/d**
- **H8 / H9 / H10 / H11 / H12 / H13**
- **H14a/b/c/d/e/f**
2.12. Summary

This chapter reviewed the trends in the broader business environment and HR discipline that have elevated work-life balance and psychological contracts as strategic human capital issues for both researchers and practitioners. The review revealed a rich body of literature from both the psychological contract and work-life fields and various opportunities to merge the two concepts to examine the formation of the WLB psychological contract, factors antecedent to fulfilment and responses to WLB psychological contract fulfilment through the eyes of employees. Finally, a research model representing all of the hypotheses included in the study is provided.

The cross-sectional survey method and data analysis techniques used to examine employees experience of the WLB psychological contract will be introduced and discussed in the following chapter.
Chapter Three

Methodology

3.1. Introduction

In Chapter One the research problem was introduced and the directions of the research project were established. Chapter Two reviewed the relevant HR, work-life balance (WLB) and psychological contract literature and mapped out the development of the research questions and research hypotheses. This chapter details the method adopted to address those research questions.

This chapter commences with an overview of the research design adopted for the study. A detailed outline of the study undertaken is then provided, including the sample selection procedure, the measures utilised and an overview of the data analysis procedures employed in this study.

3.2. Research design

Consistent with the aims of this study to identify how employees form WLB psychological contracts and respond to WLB psychological contract fulfilment, the research design draws on established constructs and research methods used in previous WLB and psychological contract research.

3.2.1. Overview of the research design

Research is undertaken in order to explore, describe and explain phenomena and the expected relationship between variables of interest (Babbie, 2004; Graziano & Raulin, 1993). The design of the research should be dependent on the underlying purpose of the study and
accompanied by an awareness of the inherent strengths and weaknesses of the selected research design (Mitchell, 1985; Tharenou et al., 2007). Mitchell (1985) argues that by being aware of the potential problems of a particular research design, it is then possible to actively address or at the very least acknowledge the weaknesses of the design. The limitations associated with the research design used in this study were briefly introduced in Chapter One and are addressed again in detail in the relevant sections of this chapter.

The research design used in this study is a cross-sectional correlational survey designed to examine the relationship between one or more dependent variables and one or more independent variables (Cooper & Schindler, 2008; Tharenou et al., 2007). The two surveys used in the study (Stage 1 and Stage 2 Surveys) were both cross-sectional in nature and are described and justified in significant detail in Section 3.3 of this chapter. According to de Vaus (2002), cross-sectional surveys represent the most common research design used in survey research. Cross-sectional studies involve collecting data at the same point of time (Tharenou et al., 2007). As an example in the current study, when the independent variable of employee perceptions of WLB psychological contract was measured, the dependent variable of employee trust was also measured in the same survey. Because the data were collected at the same point in time, the study can identify that a relationship exists (or does not exist) between the various dependent and independent variables being examined. The research, however, cannot infer whether the independent variables cause the dependent variables (de Vaus, 2002; Tharenou, 2007).

An alternative design that does allow the researcher to infer stronger cause and effect relationships is a longitudinal research design, involving the collection of data at multiple time periods (Cooper & Schindler, 2008). While a longitudinal research design for this
particular study would have been a useful alternative to examine the relationships between the variables of interest in greater detail, time and financial restrictions and a lack of guaranteed and on-going access to the participating organisations meant that a longitudinal design was not feasible or practical.

Tharenou et al. (2007) identify a number of circumstances where it is suitable to use a cross-sectional correlation survey, which applies to this research design. First, the study was used to test theories including a large range of independent, dependent, mediator and moderator variables. Second, the study tested the hypotheses/research questions on a large sample of people at one time. Third, the surveys examined real-life employees and their supervisors, in their work settings, by assessing the effects of several independent variables, while taking into account other control variables (e.g., individuals’ demographics and organisation).

The aims of the current study are compatible with the empiricist/positivist paradigm using a quantitative correlational research approach, as suggested by Tharenou et al. (2007). Psychological contracts and WLB strategies within organisations have been widely investigated as separate phenomena but less so as a stand-alone WLB psychological contract construct. As was discussed in Chapter Two, the existing theories used in this study to examine WLB psychological contract formation and outcomes, including signalling, sensemaking, social exchange and AET, are supported by a significant empirical literature base. The extant theories used in the empirical and conceptual literature provide the basis for the investigation being undertaken in this current study, which examines the formation and fulfilment of perceived WLB promises and commitments through the eyes of employees working in Australian organisations. The research questions that emerged from the literature review in Chapter Two examine the size of the effects of a number of relationships. These
include relationships between a variety of constructs identified in Chapter Two, including independent variables (e.g., WLB policy awareness, WLB organisational culture, WLB psychological contract fulfilment), dependent variables (e.g., WLB psychological contract formation, job satisfaction, affective commitment, performance), mediator variables (e.g., trust) and moderator variables (e.g., WLB supervisor support, procedural justice) of a large population of employees working in Australian organisations. Based on the requirements and aims of this study, a quantitative research approach to data collection and analysis was adopted in order to address the research questions.

3.3. Data collection and procedures

3.3.1. Population and sample

The research study focuses on the formation of WLB psychological contracts and the responses of employees in large organisations, because it has been found that larger organisations tend to offer and explicitly promote a more sophisticated range of formal WLB policies than their smaller counterparts (Bardoel, 2003). Larger organisations also tend to offer a range of work-life balance policies and promote them through a variety of means, including their recruitment website, intranet, HR handbooks, newsletters and workshops (Mescher, Benschop & Doorewaard, 2010; Wise & Bond, 2003). Based on data collected by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the working arrangements highlighted in Table 3.1 demonstrate the relative availability of flexible working arrangements in Australian organisations (by employment size) and reinforce previous findings in the literature (e.g., Bardoel, 2003) that employees are more likely to have access to WLB policies in larger organisations.
Table 3.1: Employee working arrangements (a) (b), by employment size in Australia, 2008 – 09

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Businesses offering:</th>
<th>0-4 persons</th>
<th>5-19 persons</th>
<th>20-199 persons</th>
<th>200 or more persons</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>flexible work hours (e.g., to enable employees to deal with non-work issues)</td>
<td>46.3%</td>
<td>64.7%</td>
<td>63.5%</td>
<td>80.9%</td>
<td>53.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ability to buy extra annual leave, cash out annual leave or take leave without pay</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
<td>26.8%</td>
<td>44.1%</td>
<td>66.8%</td>
<td>18.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>selection of own roster or shifts</td>
<td>19.9%</td>
<td>26.1%</td>
<td>25.9%</td>
<td>31.0%</td>
<td>22.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>job sharing</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
<td>17.8%</td>
<td>19.2%</td>
<td>43.1%</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ability for staff to work from home</td>
<td>21.5%</td>
<td>18.0%</td>
<td>29.2%</td>
<td>59.7%</td>
<td>21.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>paid parental leave</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>13.0%</td>
<td>47.2%</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>flexible use of personal sick, unpaid or compassionate leave (e.g., to care for other people)</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
<td>37.2%</td>
<td>52.1%</td>
<td>79.5%</td>
<td>25.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(a) Proportions are of all businesses in each employment size category.  
(b) Businesses could identify more than one type of working arrangement and were not required to report working arrangements other than those listed.

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (2010a)

The proportion of businesses in the ABS sample outlined in Table 3.1 offering paid parental leave to employees ranged from 2% of businesses that employed 0–4 persons, to 47% of businesses with 200 or more persons employed. However, it is important to note that since these data were collected the Australian Federal Government introduced a Paid Parental Leave Scheme on 1 January 2011 that will substantially increase the number of Australians receiving paid parental leave (Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations, 2009). Flexible work hours presented the most frequently reported type of working arrangement offered to employees, with 81% of all organisations employing more than 200 employees offering flexibility to deal with non-work issues. Across all forms of flexible working arrangements, larger organisations (as defined by number of employees) were more likely to offer flexible working policies (ABS, 2010a).
Haar and Spell (2004) note that ‘when testing for reciprocation between employers and employees, the organisation researched should ideally already offer multiple work-life practices and have been doing so for some time, thus allowing for a moral obligation to develop’ (p. 1042). Following the work of Haar and Spell (2004) and Muse et al. (2008), the organisations selected for the current study include large Australian organisations with a history of offering and promoting WLB policies. Accordingly, while all of the organisations participating in the study had offered a range of WLB policies for some period of time, the explicitness of the promotion of the policies and the level of uptake varied from organisation to organisation.

Nine Australian-based organisations were approached to participate in the study and the final results are based on data collected at the seven organisations that agreed to participate. The two remaining organisations were unwilling to participate after several months of negotiation and consideration. A number of factors may explain their reticence to participate. The key contacts at the organisations were already conducting research around the issue of WLB and did not want to overload their workforce with an additional survey. In addition, Poelmans, Kalliath and Brough (2008) suggest two alternative explanations for why organisations might opt out of research projects. First, organisations may not see the need for adopting work-life policies, despite their public claims, and so do not value and therefore do not want to participate in this type of research. Second, despite explicit assurances of confidentiality and anonymity by the researcher, some organisations are reticent to grant access to their employees, due to concerns about disclosure of their performance on implementing WLB programs.
Data were collected in late 2009 and early 2010 from the seven research sites. The sites chosen include three private health organisations (Organisations A, B and F), three local government organisations (Organisations C, D and E) and one large global manufacturer in the fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) sector (Organisation G). The demographic details of the organisations sampled are summarised in Table 3.2. Organisations A, B, C, D, E and F all offer and promote a diverse range of WLB policies. Organisation G from the FMCG sector, by admission of its key contact, offers a more limited range of WLB policies and access to and implementation of the policies across the organisation is inconsistent. Given that organisations A to F offer and explicitly promote their WLB policies, this might reduce the generalisability of the results to organisations with less well-developed work-life programs; however, generalisability was enhanced by choosing organisations from three very different industries (private healthcare, local government and FMCG) which include employees performing a wide variety of jobs.

Respondents were employed in a variety of public and private organisational settings, including hospitals, libraries, botanical gardens, community health centres, sporting grounds, art galleries, manufacturing plants, R&D laboratories and corporate offices. As a result, respondents represented a diverse range of employees, including marketers, accountants, nurses, janitors, managers, engineers, sales associates, HR specialists, child care workers, librarians, gardeners and factory workers. These jobs provided a wide range of work experiences relevant to psychological contract investigation (Lambert et al., 2003; Rousseau & Schalk, 2000). Most importantly, this sample answers the call to extend psychological contract research to include participants beyond MBA students and other occupational elites that dominate the existing psychological contract literature (Autry et al., 2007; Deery et al., 2006; Suazo, 2009).
The final sample size for the Stage 1 survey includes 627 respondents, representing a response rate of 13.6% of the employees in the seven organisations that received a survey. The relatively low response rate can be attributed to the poor response rate of the three hospital sites (9%, 8%, 5% response rate for organisations A, B and F respectively), where the survey was distributed in traditional paper and pencil format. However, this type of response rate is not unusual in lengthy mail-out voluntary surveys (Babbie, 2004). Furthermore, the three hospitals all reported concerns about the frequent surveying of employees to comply with Australian state and federal legislation and accreditation and the impact this may have on the response rate to the survey distributed as part of the current study. As outlined in the limitations section in Chapters One and Seven, the researcher acknowledges that the low response rate limits the conclusions that can be drawn from the study.
Table 3.2: Research Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>G</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tr>
<td>Sample Size (n)</td>
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<td>32</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>627</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response Rate (%)</td>
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<td>14</td>
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<td>20</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>F</td>
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<td>From 6 months to less than a year</td>
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<td>11</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
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<td>At least 3 years but less than 4</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>At least 5 years but less than 10</td>
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<td>At least 15 years but less than 20</td>
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<tr>
<td>20 or more years</td>
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<td>9</td>
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<tr>
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<td>32</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>210</td>
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<td>Employment Arrangement (%)</td>
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<td>Full-time</td>
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<td>43</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>72</td>
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<tr>
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<td>43</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>42</td>
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<tr>
<td>Casual</td>
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<tr>
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<td>16</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>627</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total (n)</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>WLB Policy Use in last 12 months (%)</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>64</td>
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<td>Surveys distributed</td>
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<td>Sample Size (n)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Response Rate (%)</td>
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<td>75</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>67</td>
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The following discussion provides an overview of the sample at the individual level rather than the organisational level because it is the individual level that is the unit of analysis in the current study. However, Table 3.2 also provides a breakdown of the data at the organisational level as a reference point for the chi-squared tests that precede it. As reported in Table 3.2, the sample for the Stage 1 survey included 263 (42%) female and 364 (58%) male respondents. Seventy-two per cent of respondents were partnered. Forty-five percent of the sample had dependent children. Eight per cent of respondents were employed at Organisation A (Private Hospital), 5% at Organisation B (Private Hospital), 18% at Organisation C (Local Government), 16% at Organisation D (Local Government), 16% at Organisation E (Local Government), 3% at Organisation F (Private Hospital) and 33% were employed at a large manufacturer of fast moving consumer goods. Eight per cent of the respondents had been tenured at their organisation for less than a year, 69% had worked at their organisation between 1 and 14 years and the remaining 23% reported organisational tenure of 15 years or more. Seventy-two per cent of the overall respondents were employed on a full-time basis; 24% and 4% were employed on a part-time and casual basis, respectively. Sixty-four per cent of the sample reported using one of the WLB policies listed in the Stage 1 survey (see Appendix 1) in the twelve months prior to completing the survey.

The final sample size for the Stage 2 (see Appendix 2) survey includes 167 respondents, representing a response rate of 67% of the two hundred and fifty one supervisors who were sent a survey asking respondents to provide a performance rating of their direct report. This relatively high response rate is reflective of the short length of the survey. The questions were included on a single A4 page and required a time commitment of approximately 5 minutes. No demographic data were collected for this sample, as this was not required in the final data analysis. See Table 3.2 for a full breakdown of the sample.
3.3.2. Non-response bias

The potential for non-response error of a sampling frame occurs when some members of the targeted population do not respond to the survey (Simsek & Veiga, 2001). Non-response can create two main problems, including an unacceptable sample size and non-response bias (de Vaus, 2002). Non-response bias occurs when non-responders are different in crucial aspects from responders (e.g., sex, age, organisational tenure) and those differences potentially account for differences in responses (de Vaus, 2002). Rogelberg, Luong, Sederbury and Cristol (2000) suggested that non-responses to organisational surveys occur as a result of multiple factors, including personality traits such as agreeableness, survey-specific variables such as attitude toward the survey topic and contextual variables such as social norms within the organisation. While Rogelberg et al. (2000) did not empirically test the effects of all these factors, they did hypothesize that such non-responders will have less organisational commitment, less job satisfaction, greater intentions to quit, and be more pessimistic about how their organisation handles and uses survey data than those employees who comply with a survey request. These observations underscore the importance of increasing the response rate in a bid to reduce the potential impact of non-response bias.

Based on the recommendations of the key contact at the participating organisations, participation was encouraged by administering the survey in two different formats (online and paper and pencil). As a result, at Organisations C, D, E and G, participants had access to both the online and paper and pencil survey, while at Organisations A, B and F, participants only received a paper and pencil format. Furthermore, the study was widely promoted throughout the participating organisations and multiple reminders were circulated via email and fliers to all potential participants. Despite these efforts, the overall participation rate was still low (13.6%) for the Stage 1 survey and thus the potential for non-response error is a concern.
In order to test for the potential of non-response error, chi-square tests were carried out on the data from the organisations that could provide a gender and employment arrangement (i.e., casual, part-time, full-time) profile of their workforce (Organisations C, D, E and G). Chi-square tests were also carried out on the data collected from the three private hospitals (Organisations A, B and F) comparing it to data collected from the 2006 Australian Census (ABS, 2006c) on selected health occupations. At the time of writing this was the most recently available Census data available on the Australian nursing population. The study relied on an archival analysis to determine the potential for non-response bias by comparing the gender and employment arrangement (i.e., full-time versus part-time or casual) of respondents and non-respondents from organisations C, D, E and G using the demographic information provided by the three organisations and organisations A, B and F using the 2006 Census data. The archival analysis check was utilised because the researcher did not have access to the non-responders as the survey was anonymous, but using this method the respondents were compared to a wider population in aggregate. While this approach does not provide a definitive test of non-response bias, it does identify the potential for non-response bias to exist (Rogelberg & Stanton, 2007).

A chi-square goodness-of-fit test indicates there were no significant differences in terms of the participants’ gender between the samples used in the study and the population of Organisations C, D, E and G. In the current sample, 51% of respondents were female, as compared with the value of 48% of the population, $\chi^2 (1, n = 480) = 2.03, p < .15$. However, there were significant differences in the employment arrangement of the study participants when compared to the population of Organisations C, D, E and G. The result of the chi-square goodness-of-fit test suggests a non-response bias may be inherent in the sample due to the over-representation of respondents working in a full-time position. In the current sample, 79%
of respondents were employed on a full-time basis, compared with 63% of the population included in the chi-square analysis (i.e., organisations C, D, E, and G), and this constitutes a significant difference between the sample and population, $\chi^2 (1, n = 485) = 50.35, p < .000$.

The under-representation of part-time and casual employees may be explained by their lack of access to the survey in the first place. In Organisations C, D and E from the local government sector, the key contact at each organisation advised at the outset that casual employees were particularly difficult to access as they often lacked access to the on-line survey, due to the nature of their role (e.g., swim or gym instructors at the council’s sport and recreation facilities) and/or the very seasonal and sporadic nature of their roles may mean they did not work during the survey period (e.g., a librarian who only gets called in to work over the busy school holiday period). As a result of this testing, and in an effort to reduce the impact of this potential bias, employment arrangement was included as a control variable in the subsequent stages of data analysis. The potential impact of the non-response bias inherent in the data collected from Organisations C, D, E and G will be discussed in more detail in the Limitations section of Chapter Seven.

The data collected from organisations A, B and F was also tested for the potential of non-response bias using chi-square tests against nursing profile data from the 2006 Census conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. The use of the census data for comparison was required because Organisations A, B and F were unable to provide a reliable profile for two reasons. First, the survey was distributed to an ad hoc selection of departments that could not be reliably discerned from the organisation’s overall workforce and the key contacts from the organisations revealed concerns about the reliability of the data that could be made available. However, the key contacts all acknowledged that nursing staff were the primary
target of the survey because of the survey distribution method. At the three private hospitals pay-slips were distributed to nurses on hard-copy pay-slips while the majority of administrative and professional staff receives their payslip electronically. Surveys were distributed at Organisations A, B and F by being stapled to pay-slips and hence it is deduced that nurses were the primary target of the survey.

A chi-square goodness-of-fit test was applied to the data from the three hospitals using Australian Bureau of Statistics 2006 statistics of nurses. There were no significant differences in terms of the participants’ gender and employment arrangement (i.e. employed on a part-time) between the samples used in the study from organisation’s A, B and F and the broader nursing population. In the current sample, 88% of respondents were female, as compared with the value of 91% of the population, $\chi^2 (1, n = 102) = .88$, $p < .35$. In terms of employment status, 50% of respondents from the current sample were working on a part-time arrangement, as compared with 49% from the broader nursing population in Australia based on the 2006 Census data $\chi^2 (1, n = 103) = .04$, $p < .84$. While these tests do not provide a definitive test of non-response bias, the results suggests that the data collected from the three private hospitals were not potentially impacted by non – response bias on the variables of gender and employment arrangement.

### 3.3.3. Procedure

While the researcher was conducting the literature review, research was undertaken to identify large organisations within Australia known to offer a range of WLB policies and practices including some level of promotion of these policies. Nine organisations known either to the researcher and/or the researcher’s supervisors were identified and the most appropriate person to contact to discuss the research project was determined. In each organisation this was the
HR Manager or Director, and in the case of Organisations A and B it was the State Workforce Planning Co-ordinator. The person who was the contact person for the research study is referred to as the ‘key contact’ in this study.

An initial phone call was made by the researcher to the key contact to make a formal introduction and briefly outline the study and ask for the opportunity to meet with the key contact to discuss the study, the opportunity for the organisation to participate and some of the anticipated benefits of participation.

All nine key contacts agreed to meet with the researcher, and prior to the meeting an Explanatory Statement (see Appendix 3) outlining the study was emailed to the key contact in preparation for the meeting. At the meeting, the researcher outlined the organisation’s potential commitment in terms of time and resources required to participate in the study and the anticipated benefits for the organisation. This included the opportunity to receive a copy of the final report, including an analysis of how the organisation performed in comparison to other participating organisations. During this meeting, the researcher reassured the key contacts of complete confidentiality and answered questions asked by the key contact at the organisation. All nine key contacts expressed their interest in participating in the research but advised participation was subject to the final approval of their senior management team. Seven out of the nine organisations granted approval for data collection without further conditions.

The research was conducted over several phases. During the first phase, a rigorous literature review was conducted to develop the research questions and hypotheses and to identify relevant measures to use in the survey instrument. During this phase two surveys were
established. The Stage 1 survey was developed to be distributed to all employees at the participating organisations. This survey was ten pages in length (including a covering letter) and consisted of a range of structured questions to measure employee perceptions on a range of variables, including awareness of WLB policy availability, effectiveness of WLB communications, WLB organisational culture, supervisor support, WLB psychological contract, trust, job satisfaction, commitment, intention to leave, organisational justice, self-reported work performance and demographic information (see Appendix 1).

Included in the Stage 1 survey was a space for the respondent to opt in to Stage 2 of the study. By opting in to the Stage 2 survey, they gave permission to the researcher to send an in-role and contextual performance rating survey to their supervisor. The Stage 2 Survey was then distributed to the Stage 1 Survey respondents’ supervisor and was developed to guard against common method bias and to complement the self-report performance data provided by participants in the Stage 1 survey. Common method bias variance refers to the extent of the erroneous relationship that is inferred between two or more variables measured with the same data source, for example, by the same respondent, at the same time, on the same survey (Podsakoff et al., 2003). The Stage 2 Survey is an important component of this study because collecting multiple source data is a critical research design strategy used to overcome the perceived problems of self-report data and common methods bias (Muse et al., 2008; Podsakoff et al., 1990). This survey was two pages in length (including a covering letter) and only included the performance measures originally included in the Stage 1 survey (see Appendix 2). The Stage 2 survey was distributed to the supervisors of the consenting Stage 1 respondents.
The researcher distributed the drafts of both the Stage 1 and Stage 2 surveys to an expert panel that included published academics, WLB Consultants and HR practitioners with both local and international expertise in the area. The purpose of the expert panel was to elicit feedback on the choice of measures, the order of the questions and text introducing the survey requesting participation. Expert panels have the potential to enhance the content validity of the survey questions to ensure the measures in the survey instrument actually represent the specific concept/s under investigation (Aiken, 2003). Based on feedback received from the expert panel, several small modifications were made to wording and ordering of questions, but the integrity and reference points of the measures were maintained.

Once the modifications had been made to both surveys, the Stage 1 and Stage 2 surveys were distributed to employees in the participating organisations from the private healthcare, local government and fast moving consumer goods sectors.

Stage 1: Employee survey

Given the diverse nature of the organisations, two methods were used to administer the Stage 1 survey. Based on the feedback from the key contact at each organisation a decision was made to distribute a traditional paper and pencil survey to employees working in positions with limited computer access. In Organisations A, B, D and E the pencil and paper survey and reply paid envelope were stapled to the employee’s pay packet. Organisation C arranged for the surveys and reply paid envelopes to be posted to each employee’s home address. The key contact at Organisation G asked each shift manager in the plant to distribute the survey and reply paid envelope to every employee so they would have the opportunity to complete the survey during their shift. Posters promoting the study and encouraging participation were displayed in each organisation.
Other participants with regular computer access received an email from the participating organisation outlining their support for the survey and including the hyperlink to the online survey. The survey introduction outlined the time requirement to complete the survey (20-25 minutes) and a reassurance that all information was confidential and anonymous and that only the researcher would have access to their individual responses. In a bid to increase the response rate, the key contacts sent out a reminder email on a weekly basis for the three weeks the survey remained open. Survey Monkey software was used to administer the online survey. The use of online surveys presents efficiency advantages in terms of cost and time savings. Furthermore, the survey software is programmed to collect summaries of the data that can be easily tabulated and analysed (Dommeyer & Moriarty, 2000; Simsek & Veiga, 2001).

Researchers who have compared on-line and traditional mail respondents have reported contradictory results on the differences in response rate and potential for bias. Some researchers conclude that there are no significant response biases on attitudinal data and/or demographic data or psychometric properties or response rate differences between these two methods (e.g. Baruch & Holtam, 2008; Cole, Bedeian & Feild, 2006; Truell, Bartlett II & Alexander, 2002). Although other researchers in the field have found that response rates for on-line surveys are consistently lower than traditional surveys (e.g. Mavis & Bocato, 1998; Spector, 2005; Spijkerman, Knibbe, Knoops, van de Mheen & van den Eijnden, 2009; Yetter & Capaccioli, 2010). However, a study by Clayton, Applebee and Pascoe (1996) demonstrated that using both on-line and traditional mail surveys could help increase the reliability of the survey instrument and the response rate while reducing the cost of the survey. Following the advice of Hinkin, Holtom and Klag (2007) the researcher worked
collaboratively with the key informant at each organisation to determine the most appropriate method for administering the surveys and this resulted in using a combination of on-line and traditional paper based survey for the Stage 1 survey.

**Stage 2: Supervisor survey**

On the final page of the Stage 1 survey (see Appendix 1) employees were given the opportunity to opt-in to the second stage of the survey. Employees who agreed to have a performance survey sent to their direct supervisor were asked to provide their own name and the name of their supervisor. All respondents were reassured that at no time would their supervisor or the organisation have access to their own completed self-reported survey. They were also advised that at no time would they have the opportunity to access the performance survey completed by their supervisor should he/she choose to participate. Once the completed Stage 1 surveys were received, the researcher set up a database to record the individual identification number of each survey that included approval to send out a supervisor survey. This database also included the individual identification number, organisation, organisation address, direct report name and supervisor name. Using these details, the researcher sent out a survey to supervisors asking them to provide an assessment of their direct report’s performance using the same measures used in the Stage 1 survey to capture data on in-role and contextual performance.

The Stage 2 survey was administered using traditional paper and pencil format because it was short and relatively easy to complete. In the introduction to the Stage 2 survey (see Appendix 2), the supervisors were advised that their direct report had given permission for a survey to be sent to their supervisor and that the organisation had also given permission for the researcher to distribute the Stage 2 survey. The introduction clearly indicated the voluntary
and confidential nature of the survey and the five minute time commitment required to complete the survey. When a completed Stage 2 survey was received from a supervisor the original database was used to match it to the relevant reports’ survey to form an employee – supervisor dyad. It is important to note that the dyads were discrete in nature in that after all Stage 2 surveys were received and matched; it was found that no supervisors provided multiple performance ratings for multiple reports. These dyads were then used to test the hypotheses that examined the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and in-role performance, contextual interpersonal facilitation performance and contextual job dedication performance.

3.4. Reliability and validity of measures

Evaluating the measures used in the study is an important step in any quality research study and Zikmund (2003) suggests the measures be tested against the criteria of reliability and validity.

3.4.1. Reliability

An important dimension of reliability is internal consistency, which refers to the consistency of a subject’s response on a scale item compared to their response on the other scale items that make up the measure; this is an important dimension of reliability (de Vaus, 2002). An index of the measure’s internal consistency can be provided by Cronbach’s alpha coefficient (Nunnally, 1978). The Cronbach alpha represented by a coefficient ranging in size from 0 to 1 is the most widely used measure to assess the internal consistency of a measure (de Vaus, 2002; Hair et al., 2006). To meet the test of reliability and internal consistency, a scale should ideally have a Cronbach alpha coefficient of at least 0.7, although this may decrease to 0.6 where the research is exploratory and the scale has been recently developed (Nunnally, 1978).
In this study, all measures met the minimum Cronbach alpha coefficient 0.7 standard of internal consistency, with coefficients ranging from 0.82 to 0.96.

3.4.2. Validity

A valid measure is one which measures what it is intended to measure (de Vaus, 2002). Three dimensions of validity assessments were used to examine the validity of the measures used in the study; these included construct, content and face validity (Tharenou et al., 2007).

Construct validity evaluates a measure by the degree to which the measure conforms to its expected theoretical relationship with other measures and includes two dimensions: convergent and discriminant validity (de Vaus, 2002; Tharenou et al., 2007). Convergent validity of a measure is established when the measure is related to measures of other similar constructs (Pallant, 2007). Discriminant validity would be present when the measure was less related to scores on dissimilar constructs according to the underlying theory (Tharenou et al., 2007).

According to Schwab (2005), the convergent and divergent validity of a measure is determined by whether the pattern of relationships in the current study matches those in the nomological network. In this study, many of the relationships observed in the intercorrelation tables in Chapters Four and Five did suggest acceptable levels of convergent validity (e.g., the large and statistically significant correlation between WLB organisational culture and WLB supervisor support, \( r = .63, p < .001 \)) of the measures used in the study. Furthermore, divergent validity of the measures was also evident in the relationships presented in the intercorrelation tables (e.g., the negative and statistically significant correlation between intention to leave the organisation and affective commitment \( r = -.47, p < .001 \)).
Content validity is established when the items within the measure adequately represent the domain or phenomenon of interest (Tharenou et al., 2007; Vogt, 2005). The content validity of the measures used in this study was developed by sending a draft copy of the survey to an expert panel that included five academics actively researching in the field and five HR practitioners working in the area of WLB and workplace flexibility and/or employment relations.

3.5. Measures

3.5.1. Awareness of WLB policies

Respondents were given a list of 21 WLB policies and asked if each was available at their organisation. Responses were coded as 0 = not available, 1 = available, 2 = don’t know. Following Grover and Crooker (1995) and Casper and Harris (2008), ‘don’t know’ responses were treated as missing data. Following the work of Allen (2001) and Casper and Harris (2008), a score was computed for awareness of policies by adding one point for each WLB policy the participant was aware of, so that higher scores indicated a greater awareness of WLB policies.

3.5.2. Use of WLB policies

Respondents reported their use of the WLB policies over the last twelve months at the organisation. Responses were coded as 0 = yes and 1 = no.
3.5.3. Employee perceptions of effectiveness of methods used to communicate WLB promises and commitments

Each participant was asked to rate how effective each method of communication was in communicating the organisation’s promises and commitments in relation to supporting the employees’ work and personal life. Guest and Conway (2002) developed a list of 11 methods used by organisations to communicate the elements of the organisation’s psychological contract. Two of those methods (individual objectives and targets and team targets) were removed based on the feedback of the expert panel due to their lack of relevance to this study. For each communication method participants rated each item from 1 = ‘it is not effective at all’ to 5 = ‘it is very effective’. Furthermore, coding 0 = ‘not used’ eliminated methods that were not used at the organisation as reported by participants. A mean score was computed to develop an ‘employee perceptions of communication effectiveness’ index by calculating the average of the items on the 1 to 5 scale so that a high score will indicate the employee perceives the organisation effectively communicates its WLB promises and commitments.

3.5.4. Formation of WLB psychological contract

Formation of a WLB psychological contract was measured with four items to tap work-life content dimensions of the psychological contract developed by De Vos et al. (2003). Measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = not promised at all, 5 = promised to a very great extent), example items include ‘To what extent has the organisation made a promise or commitment to provide opportunities for flexible working hours depending on your personal needs’ and ‘To what extent has the organisation made a promise or commitment to provide respect for your personal situation’. A mean score was computed averaging the four items. A higher score indicates a strong WLB psychological contract. In the De Vos et al. (2003) study, the alpha coefficient was .66, while in the current study, the alpha coefficient was .84.
3.5.5. WLB psychological contract fulfilment

Following De Vos and Meganck (2009), the same four items from De Vos et al. (2003) were used to capture participants’ perceptions of WLB psychological contract fulfilment or the extent to which the organisation had delivered on its promises and commitments to support the work-life requirements of the employee. A 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = promises not at all fulfilled to 5 = promises completely fulfilled was used. For example, participants were asked ‘To what extent has the organisation fulfilled its promise or commitment to provide opportunities for flexible working hours depending on your personal needs’. A mean score was computed averaging the four items. A higher score demonstrates an individual’s sense of WLB psychological contract fulfilment. In the De Vos and Meganck (2009) study the alpha coefficient was .83, while in the current study the alpha coefficient was .89.

3.5.6. WLB organisational culture

Thompson, Beauvais and Lyness’ (1999) 20 item measure was used to measure WLB organisational culture. Sample items include ‘In this organisation, employees can easily balance their work and family lives’ and the negatively worded question ‘In this organisation employees who use work-life balance policies are less likely to advance their careers than those who do not use them’. Responses were coded as 1 = Strongly disagree to 7 = Strongly agree. A mean score was computed averaging the 20 items. A high score for this measure indicates an individual’s perception of an organisational culture that is supportive of the employee’s work-life balance requirements. An alpha coefficient of .92 was reported in the Thompson et al. (1999) study. In the current study, the alpha coefficient was .92.
3.5.7. Supervisor support

Employee perceptions of the personal and family-related support they receive from their supervisor were measured using eight items developed by Lambert (2000). Responses were coded on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. The alpha coefficient in the Lambert (2000) study was .92. Example items include ‘My supervisor is helpful to me when I have a family or personal emergency’ and ‘My supervisor feels each of us is important as an individual’. A mean score was computed averaging the eight items. High scores indicate that the individual perceives their direct supervisor is supportive of their work-life balance needs. The alpha coefficient for the current study was .95.

3.5.8. Organisational justice

Items measuring the four organisational justice dimensions were sourced from Judge and Colquitt (2004). Responses were coded on a 5-point Likert scale of 1 = to a very small extent to 5 = to a very large extent. The distributive justice measure includes items such as ‘Is the availability of work-life balance assistance appropriate for the work you have completed’ and ‘Does the availability of work-life balance assistance reflect what you have contributed to the organisation’. The procedural justice items includes ‘Have you been able to express your views and feelings regarding work-life balance issues’ and ‘Do you feel you could successfully appeal a work-life balance policy decision’. Interactional and information justice was measured with questions in reference to the participant’s supervisor such as ‘Has he/she treated you in a polite manner’ and ‘Has he/she treated you with respect’ for interactional justice and ‘Has he/she explained the work-life balance policies and issues thoroughly’ and ‘Has he/she communicated details about work-life balance policies in a timely manner’ for informational justice. For all four measures a mean score was computed averaging the four items, with higher scores indicating perceptions of organisational justice. The reliabilities of
the distributive, procedural, interpersonal and informational dimensions of organisational justice in the Judge and Colquitt (2004) study were .84, .84, .96 and .90, respectively. In the current study, the corresponding coefficient alphas were .91, .92, .96 and .93.

3.5.9. Trust

Seven items from Robinson and Rousseau (1994) were used to measure trust in the organisation. Following Deery, Iverson and Walsh (2006) the referent used was ‘organisation’ in place of ‘employer’, as used in the Robinson and Rousseau (1994), to ensure consistency with the rest of the survey. Responses were coded on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. Sample items include ‘The organisation is open and upfront with me’ and ‘I believe the organisation has high integrity’. A mean score was computed averaging the seven items. The alpha coefficient for the Robinson and Rousseau (1994) study was .93. The alpha coefficient for the current study was .88. Higher scores indicated a higher degree of employee trust in the organisation.

3.5.10. Affective commitment

Allen and Myer’s (1990) eight items were used to measure affective organisational commitment. The alpha coefficient for the original study was .86. A sample item is ‘I would be happy to spend the rest of my career with this organisation’. Responses were on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). A mean score was computed averaging the eight items. The alpha coefficient for the current study was .83. Higher scores indicated a higher degree of affective commitment to the organisation by the employee.
3.5.11. Job satisfaction

Following Allen (2001), three items were used to measure job satisfaction based on the scale from the widely used Michigan Organisational Assessment Questionnaire (Cammann, Fichman, Jenkins, & Klesh, 1979). This subscale gives an indication of an employee’s affective response to his or her job (Kickul et al., 2002). Responses were coded on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree) and an example item is ‘all in all, I am satisfied with my job’. A mean score was computed averaging the three items. Alpha coefficient for the Allen (2001) study was .88 and .86 for the current study. Higher scores indicated a higher degree of job satisfaction.

3.5.12. Intention to leave

The current study used a single item measure from Duxbury and Higgins (2008). Participants were asked to indicate how often in the last six months they had thought about leaving their current organisation to work elsewhere. Options provided to participants were coded as 1 = never, 2 = monthly, 3 = weekly, 4 = several days per week and 5 = daily. Higher scores indicated a stronger intention to leave the organisation.

3.5.13. In-role performance

Both participants and their supervisors were asked to rate the participants’ in-role performance using seven items from Williams and Anderson (1991) which has been used extensively by subsequent researchers (e.g., Kickul et al., 2002; Muse et al., 2008). Sample items included ‘I adequately complete assigned duties’ and ‘I neglect aspects of the job I am obliged to perform’ (reverse scored). Responses were coded on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly agree to 5 = strongly agree) and higher scores indicate perceptions of higher performance levels. A mean score was computed averaging the seven items. Coefficient alpha
for the original Williams and Anderson (1991) study was .91. For the current study coefficient alphas for the self report and supervisor surveys were .82 and .82, respectively.

3.5.14. Contextual performance
Contextual performance was measured using 15 items from Van Scotter et al. (2000). Both employees (Stage 1 Survey) and their supervisors (Stage 2 Survey) were asked to assess the employee’s contextual performance. Two dimensions of contextual performance identified by Van Scotter et al. (2000) were measured including interpersonal facilitation and job dedication. Responses were coded on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly agree to 5 = strongly agree) and higher scores indicate perceptions of higher contextual performance levels. Interpersonal facilitation includes helpful, considerate and cooperative aspects of contextual performance and sample items include ‘I praise co-workers when they are successful’ and ‘I treat others fairly’. A mean score was computed averaging the seven items. The job dedication dimension measures dedication to the job characterised by effort, initiative, persistence and self-discipline and includes items such as ‘I put in extra hours to get work done on time’ and ‘I take the initiative to solve a work problem’. A mean score was computed averaging the eight items. Coefficient alpha for the Van Scotter et al. (2000) study was .89 and .94 for interpersonal facilitation and job dedication, respectively. The corresponding alpha coefficients for the current study were .84 and .83 for employee self-report and .90 and .88 for the supervisor measures.

3.5.15. Controls
A review of the WLB and psychological contract literature suggests there are several factors that can impact on the individual’s development of and response to a WLB psychological contract. Therefore, in order to ensure that any conclusions drawn from this study can be
specifically attributed to the WLB psychological contract and not another form of WLB ‘sensitivity’, the following control variables were measured and included in the subsequent analysis. A range of variables related to the work-life interface were incorporated into the study to assist identify employees who may be more sensitive to the making and keeping of WLB promises and commitments. For instance, employees with spouses and children are more likely to use WLB policies (Scandura & Lankau, 1997; Young, 1996), as are women (Eby et al., 2005; Scandura & Lankau, 1997). Employees employed on a part-time or casual basis and those who have used WLB policies would also be expected to be more attuned to the making and keeping of organisational WLB promises and commitments (Kossek, Lautsch & Eaton, 2006; Scandura & Lankau, 1997). Given that correlating age with a range of the study’s dependent variables resulted in low r statistics (at insignificant levels) and the growing realisation that WLB concerns are salient for individuals across a spectrum of age and life stage intervals (Smola & Sutton, 2002; Sturges & Guest, 2004), age was not included as a key demographic control variable in this study.

Organisational tenure, however, was included, since it is intuitive that the length of time spent at an organisation may have a considerable impact on the dependent variable included in this study, including trust, job satisfaction, affective commitment, intention to leave and performance dimensions. Furthermore, following Deery, Erwin and Iverson (1999) and Deery et al. (2006), it is expected that longer-tenured employees would view the employment relationship as more co-operative, because they enjoy the benefits that come with seniority within an organisation. Following Kossek et al. (2006), the participant’s organisation was also controlled for in order to identify any fixed differences across the organisations, given that they were from different industries.
Dummy variables were established to determine marital/relationship status (single = 0, married or cohabiting = 1) and the presence of dependent children (no dependent children = 0, dependent children = 1). Sex (male = 0, female = 1), employment status (full time = 0, part time or casual = 1), WLB policy use over the last twelve months (no = 0, yes = 1) and place of employment. To allay participant’s concerns in regards to anonymity, the organisational tenure variables were categorical in nature using 10 ordinal categories and age was measured using 11 ordinal categories.

### 3.6. Data analysis overview

Several stages of analyses were conducted to obtain the results presented in Chapters Five and Six. Prior to hypotheses testing and after cleansing the data, reliability testing was conducted to ensure the items used in the survey demonstrated acceptable internal consistency. Second, intercorrelations among the variables in the study were calculated. Third, hierarchical multiple regression analysis was utilised to test the main effects hypotheses (H1, H2, H5, H6, H7, H8, H9, H10, H11, H12, H13). Next, to test for mediation the joint significance procedure developed by MacKinnon, Lockwood, Hoffman, West and Sheets (2002) was used to test H14a – H14f. Finally, hierarchical multiple regressions following Tabachnick and Fidell (2007) and Tharenou et al. (2007) were performed to examine the moderating role of employee sensemaking processes in the formation and response to WLB psychological contracts. The moderating role of employee perceptions of WLB organisational support and supervisor support between awareness of WLB policies and perceptions of effective communication of WLB promises and commitments and strength of WLB psychological contract were examined in H3a/b, H4a/b). H15a to H15d examined the moderating role of organisational justice between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and employee outcomes.
3.6.1. Data cleaning and preparation

For the pencil and paper surveys, data were manually entered into an SPSS 14.0 data editor spreadsheet; online responses were downloaded from the survey website, manipulated in Microsoft Excel to meet formatting requirements, and imported into SPSS. The Stage 2 surveys received from supervisors were matched with the corresponding Stage 1 survey received from the employee (i.e., the supervisor’s report) and manually entered into SPSS to form a sample of employee-supervisor dyads. The values of the data from negatively worded items were reversed. After checking the data range of each variable using scatterplots and frequency tables for potential errors from data entry, importing and merging of the online and hard copy survey data, several steps were carried out for further data cleaning.

The first step involved checking for missing data. While randomly scattered missing data rarely poses a serious problem, non-random patterns of missing data may detract from the potential generalisability of the results (Tabachnick & Fiddell, 2007). Furthermore, a high percentage of missing data can be of concern. According to Tharenou et al. (2007), it is generally accepted that under 5% of missing data for an individual case is permissible so long as it is considered random missing data. To overcome this potential problem, respondents were identified as having answered at least 90% of the core items. This resulted in the removal of 12 cases, and a sample size of 627.

The next step involved dealing with random missing data from each case. It is preferable that a complete data set is available for multivariate analysis to take place. However, Pallant (2007) identifies three commonly used solutions for dealing with missing data. In SPSS the ‘Exclude cases listwise’ option will only include cases in the analysis if they have the full data set on all of the variables listed in the Variables box for that particular case. As a result, a case
will be totally excluded from all the analyses even if it is missing just one piece of information (Pallant, 2007). This could potentially result in the loss of an inordinate number of respondents from the overall sample and reduced power (Tharenou et al. 2007). The ‘Replace with mean’ option available in SPSS for dealing with missing data calculates the mean value for the variable and gives every missing case this value. However, Pallant (2007) and others (e.g., Schafer & Graham, 2002; Tharenou et al., 2007) warn against using this method as it may distort intercorrelations between variables. A preferred method available in SPSS is the ‘Exclude cases pairwise’ option (Pallant, 2007). While some researchers have identified computational problems with pairwise deletion (e.g., Roth, Campion & Jones, 1996), this method has the advantage over listwise deletion of removing fewer cases while still acknowledging, and dealing with, the missing data. It has the potential to bias the sample less and provide a more accurate estimate than the previously discussed mean substitution method (Tharenou et al., 2007). Based on this analysis of the various methods used to deal with missing data, the pairwise deletion option was used in this study.

3.7. Quantitative data analysis techniques

In management research, data analysis techniques are generally categorised as univariate, bivariate or multivariate and the use of each technique is motivated by a different purpose in terms of what is being sought in the actual data analysis (Tharenou et al., 2007). Univariate analysis provides analysis of a single variable, and in this study descriptive statistics were calculated to describe the sample. Statistics such as means, standard deviations and coefficient alpha values were used to describe the contextual variables and reliability of the measures making up the study sample and these are presented in Tables 4.1, 5.1 and 5.2. Bivariate analysis, in the form of correlation analysis, was used to measure the relationships between two variables. Correlation coefficients were calculated to determine the strength of the
relationships between two variables as reported in Tables 4.1, 5.1 and 5.2 in the following chapters. In this analysis, Pearson’s correlation coefficients were used to test this relationship with results ranging from -1 to +1, with the size of the absolute value indicating the strength of the relationship between the two variables (Pallant, 2007). Multivariate analysis examines the relationship between three or more variables, including the impact that two or more independent variables have on one or more dependent variables (de Vaus, 2002). In this study, hierarchical multiple regression was used to examine the relationship between the independent and dependent variables identified in the literature review and the hypothesised effect of the mediating and moderating (or interacting) variables identified in the literature review and subsequent Research Model. A detailed discussion of the assumptions that underpin multivariate analysis and various multivariate analysis techniques used in the study follows.

3.7.1. Normality of data

The regression techniques used in the current study assume that the distribution of scores on the dependent variable is ‘normal’ (Pallant, 2007). Normality is considered the most fundamental assumption in multivariate analysis, particularly when inference is the goal of the analysis (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Normality of the data refers to a symmetrical, bell-shaped curve which has the greatest frequency of scores in the middle, with smaller frequencies towards the extremes of the data range (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2004; Pallant, 2007). The shape of the distribution and sample size will determine the impact of non-normality of the data (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Meanwhile, the shape of the distribution can be described by the degree of skewness and kurtosis (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Skewness refers to the symmetry of the distribution around the mean with perfect symmetry resulting in a skewness statistic of zero and thus normal distribution, while a skewed variable
is a variable whose mean is not in the centre of the distribution (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Kurtosis refers to the ‘peakedness’ of a distribution with kurtosis values above zero indicating a distribution that is too peaked with short thick tails and kurtosis values below zero, indicating a distribution that is too flat, including too many cases in the tails (de Vaus, 2002; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Following the advice of Kendall and Stuart (1958), the dependent variables used in the study were checked to ensure that absolute values of kurtosis should be no greater than five and absolute values of skewness were no greater than two. These conditions of normality were met on all dependent variables and thus no further data transformations were required.

3.7.2. Outliers

The term outlier refers to values that lie outside the normal range of a data set (Zikmund, 2003). These outliers can be unusually high or low and can influence and distort the statistical analysis that relies on them (Tharenou et al., 2007). Tabachnick and Fidell (2007, p. 73) identify four explanations for the presence of outliers: (1) incorrect data entry; (2) failure to specify missing-value codes in computer syntax so that missing-value indicators are read as real data; (3) the outlier is not a member of the population from which the researcher intended to sample; and (4) the outlier is from the intended population but the distribution has more extreme values than a normal distribution. Measures taken to identify these problems include: the careful checking of scatter plots and frequency tables to identify data entry errors; careful input of missing value data into SPSS; correct sampling technique to ensure that only data from the intended population were collected and entered into SPSS; and, finally, careful checking of normality assumptions, as outlined in the previous section.
3.7.3. Linearity

Linearity is the term used to describe the assumed straight-line relationship between two variables (Tharenou et al., 2007). According to Pallant (2007), when looking at a scatter plot of variables to check for linearity, a rough straight line rather than a curve should be observed. Linearity is an important requirement of effective correlation analysis, because, in a practical sense, Pearson’s $r$ only captures the linear relationships among variables. If substantial non-linear relationships exist among those variables, those relationships are ignored (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Scatter plots were examined to check for the linearity of the relationship between the dependent and independent variables in the current study and none were found to be non-linear.

3.7.4. Homoscedasticity

Homoscedasticity assumes ‘the variance in the dependent variable is constant for each value of the independent variable’ (de Vaus, 2002, p. 327). It is an important assumption underpinning multivariate analysis, including hierarchical multiple regression and Pearson correlation coefficient, because the variance of the dependent variable as explained by its dependent relationship with the independent variables should not be concentrated only in a limited range of values of the independent variables included in the study (Hair et al., 2006; Tharenou et al., 2007). Similar to checking for linearity, researchers should generate bivariate scatter plots for each combination of variables to ensure the shape of the scatter plot should roughly conform to an oval or cigar shape (Tharenou et al., 2007). As discussed in Section 3.7.3, all relationships between dependent and independent variables in the current study were found to meet the criteria of linearity and furthermore the assumption of multivariate normality was met and this further confirms the homoscedastic nature of the relationship between the variables in this study (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007).
3.7.5. Multicollinearity

Multicollinearity occurs when two (or more) independent variables are highly correlated. This high level of correlation between independent variables can lead to both computational and interpretational problems in techniques including multiple regression analyses (Tharenou et al., 2007). If independent variables are highly correlated, this can potentially inflate the $R^2$ statistic and make it impossible to accurately distinguish between the separate effects of the independent variables (de Vaus, 2002). Checking the bivariate correlations between the independent variables is one commonly used method of checking for multicollinearity (Tharenou et al., 2007). According to de Vaus (2002), if two independent variables are correlated over .70 in large samples, they are likely to reflect multicollinearity. Furthermore, this level of correlation suggests they are so similar the theoretically least defensible independent variable should be dropped from the analysis or combined in some way (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). In the current study, the correlation matrix (see Table 5.2 in Chapter Five) identifies only two inter-correlations above 0.7, but they do not infer multicollinearity because the identified independent variables are not included in the same hierarchical multiple regression analysis with a common dependent variable. Tharenou et al. (2007) also recommend inspection of the tolerance and variance inflation factor (VIF) statistics to find evidence of multivariate multicollinearity. According to Kline (2005), a tolerance statistic below .10 or a VIF statistic above 10 may indicate multicollinearity. In the current study, the tolerance and VIF statistics all met these criteria indicating that multicollinearity was not a concern for the data analysis in this study.

3.7.6. Hierarchical multiple regression analysis

Hierarchical multiple regression analysis was used in this study to test the hypothesized relationships between the independent variables and dependent variables identified in the
In hierarchical multiple regression independent variables enter the regression equation in a sequence specified by the researcher. Each set of independent variables identifies the variability in the dependant variable beyond that explained by previously entered variables (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Hierarchical multiple regression is one of the most popular and flexible multivariate techniques used in management research (Stevens, 1996). In the current study, hierarchical multiple regression is used to examine the relationship between independent variables and dependent variables, taking into account of other control variables identified from the extant literature. The underlying premise of the analysis was that the determination of the variance in the dependent variables could be predicted by the independent variables (De Vaus, 2002; Tharenou et al. 2007). The objective of the analysis was to examine the relative contribution of the independent variables, also referred to as predictor variables, whose values were known, in predicting the value of the dependent variables (Hair et al., 2006). The $R^2$ statistic denotes the percentage of variance in the dependent variable that is explained or predicted by the group of independent variables included in the regression model. The $R^2$ statistic is an important component of the results, because it signals the predictive power of the regression model (Tharenou et al., 2007). Throughout the results chapters, both the $R^2$ and F-test statistics are reported to demonstrate the level of variance, and subsequent level of significance, at each step of the model. In order to test support for the hypotheses, the researcher needs to establish that the last increment in variance is statistically significant and that the direction and significance of the beta coefficients of the independent variables are also as predicted (Tharenou et al., 2007).

The standardised regression (beta) coefficients were examined in this study to analyse the direction and size of the relationship between the independent and dependent variables (Tharenou et al., 2007). Comparisons between variables that were measured on different
scales could be made by using the beta coefficients due to the removal of the variance from the dependent variable. Following Tharenou et al. (2007) and De Vaus (2002), only those variables with statistically significant coefficients (i.e., where \( p < .05 \)) were interpreted. The significance levels were measured by the probability levels of the associated beta coefficients. Both the direction (i.e., positive or negative) and magnitude (effect size) of the relationship was then inspected to determine the direction of and importance of the independent variable in predicting the dependent variable. Despite the value of hierarchical multiple regression analysis it is important to acknowledge that the evidence of association between the independent variables and dependent variables included in the study as a result of the regression analysis does not imply causality; it does, however, imply an association between the two variables (Cooper & Schindler, 2008; Tabachnick & Fiddell, 2007).

### 3.7.7. Sample size

The sample size of any study is an important consideration in maximising the statistical power of the regression analysis. In order to maintain adequate statistical power to detect any effects in the regression analysis, it is important to have a minimum number of cases (i.e., sample size) (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). While Stevens (1996) suggests conservatively that at least 15 cases are required for each independent variable, Green (1991) suggests a ‘rule of thumb’ formula of \( N \geq 104 + m \) (where \( m \) = number of independent variables) to determine the minimum number of cases required to detect effects in a regression analysis. In addition, power analysis was applied using Cohen’s \( f^2 \) measure of effect size for hierarchical multiple regression to evaluate the suitability of the sample size in this study (Maxwell, 2000). In evaluating the sample size in this study, both the Stage 1 survey sample size of 627 employees and Stage 2 sample size of 167 employee-supervisor dyads need to be examined. Firstly, when applying Green’s formula to the Stage 1 survey results, the sample size of 627
was greater than the 119 cases required and thus deemed adequate to perform the hierarchical multiple regression analysis. Furthermore, the sample of 627 employees from the Stage 1 survey provides a powerful sample size for statistical analysis. The sample has in excess of .80 power to detect a small effect of .10 using Cohen’s $f^2$ measure of effect size for hierarchical multiple regression (Maxwell, 2000). Second, when applying Green’s formula to the Stage 2 survey results, the sample size of 167 was greater than the 106 cases required and thus deemed adequate to perform the relevant hierarchical multiple regression analysis. Applying Cohen’s $f^2$ measure of effect size for hierarchical multiple regression the sample of 167 from Stage 2 has in excess of .80 power to detect a medium effect of .30 (Maxwell, 2000).

3.7.8. Mediation analysis

The purpose of mediation analysis is to determine whether an independent variable (X) leads to another variable, referred to as the mediator or intervening variable (I or M), which then transmits the effects of the independent variable to the dependent variable (Y) (Baron & Kenny, 1986; Rosopa & Stone – Romero, 2008; Tharenou et al., 2007). The common method for testing mediation in the HRM literature is the causal steps approach proposed by Baron and Kenny (1986). The Baron and Kenny (1986) model suggests four conditions for mediation and two types of mediation (i.e. full and partial). However, the Baron and Kenny approach was not used in this research because of the limitations of the approach identified by subsequent researchers (e.g. Hayes, 2009; Mackinnon, Fairchild & Fritz, 2007; Rosopa & Stone – Romero, 2008; Zhao, Lynch, & Chen, 2010).

According to Rosopa & Stone – Romero (2008, p. 308)) “...the Baron and Kenny procedure often has very low odds of producing evidence of mediation...” In addition, Mackinnon (1994)
also reported on the limited role of the Baron and Kenny procedure in explaining the links in the causal chain from X to Y through I as well as providing the full set of necessary conditions for mediation effects (Mackinnon, 1994). It has also been reported that the procedure has very low statistical power (Mackinnon, et al., 2002; Zhao, et al., 2010).

Instead, this research adopted a joint test method (i.e. the test of the joint significance of the two effects comprising the intervening variable effect) (Mackinnon, et al., 2002). Mackinnon et al., (2002) compared 14 methods to test mediation via simulations and concluded that the joint significance test provided the best balance of small Type 1 error and high statistical power. The joint significance test requires that the path from the independent variable to the mediator is statistically significant and the path from the mediator to the dependent variable, adjusted for the independent variable, is also significant (Chuang & Liao, 2010; Yuan & Woodman, 2010). Mediation is established if these two separate tests are jointly significant (Mackinnon, et al., 2002). Partial mediation is present when the above two conditions are significant and the direct effect between the independent variable and dependent variable is significant (Mackinnon et al., 2002).

Hypotheses H14a to H14f predicted trust would mediate the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and a range of work-related attitudes and behaviours, including job satisfaction, affective commitment, intention to leave, in-role performance and the interpersonal facilitation and job dedication dimensions of contextual performance. For the reasons highlighted in the preceding discussion, the joint significance test advocated by MacKinnon et al. (2002) was used to test the hypotheses examining the mediating role of employee trust.
3.7.9. Moderation analysis

A moderator variable is one that influences the relationship between an independent variable and dependent variable (Tharenou et al., 2007). Lindley and Walker (1993) describe the moderator effect as an interaction between an independent variable and moderator variable, such that the relationship between the independent variable and dependent variable differs depending on the level of the moderator, sometimes also referred to as the interactional effect. In this case, the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable is conditional upon the level of the moderator (Lindley & Walker, 1993). Hypotheses H3a/b, H4a/b and H15a to H15d were tested using hierarchical multiple regression, since this is the method of choice for analysing general linear models with moderator (interaction) effects (Aiken & West, 1991; Lindley & Walker, 1993). To reduce problems associated with multicollinearity and to generate correct standardized regression weights in moderated regression, all variables, including the dependent variable, were standardized (z scored) prior to analysis (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007).

In order to test Hypotheses 3a to 4b, WLB psychological contract formation was regressed on the relevant control variables (at Step 1), WLB policy awareness, perceptions of effective WLB communications, WLB organisational culture, WLB supervisor support (at Step 2) and the interaction terms of: perceptions of effective WLB communications x WLB organisational culture (H3a); WLB policy awareness x WLB organisational culture (H3b); perceptions of effective WLB communications x WLB supervisor support (H4a); WLB policy awareness x WLB supervisor support (H4b) at Step 3. To test Hypotheses H15a to 15d, employee trust was regressed on the relevant control variables at Step 1, WLB psychological contract fulfilment, distributive justice, procedural justice, interpersonal justice, informational justice at Step 2 and interaction terms including: WLB psychological contract fulfilment x
distributive justice (H15a); WLB psychological contract fulfilment x procedural justice (H15b); WLB psychological contract fulfilment x interpersonal justice (H15c); WLB psychological contract fulfilment x informational justice (H15d) at Step 3.

3.8. Ethical considerations

The fundamental purpose of research ethics is to protect participating organisations and individuals from any harm or adverse consequences that may result from the research effort (Emory & Cooper, 1991). Prior to conducting the current study, the researcher in consultation with her supervisors considered the potential ethical issues involved in the current study and obtained approval from the relevant authorities within the university that oversaw the research study. An application was made to the Standing Committee for Ethics Research on Humans (SCERH) at Monash University and approval was granted (see Appendix 4). The researcher explained the study to the potential participants with the provision of an Explanatory Statement (see Appendix 3). Both the Explanatory Statement and cover letter of the surveys outlined the voluntary nature of participation and this was communicated to potential participants, informing them of their right to withdraw from the study at any time they wished. In addition, consent to participate was assumed with the return of the survey by the participant. Potential participants were also reassured of confidentiality, and this was respected by the researcher through the use of only aggregated data in the subsequent data analysis. Potential respondents were also provided with the contact details of the researcher and supervising academic staff member and the contact details for the SCERH should any of the respondents have any questions or concerns pertaining to ethical considerations in relation to and in the conduct of the current study. These contact details were included in the covering letter of both the Stage 1 and Stage 2 surveys.
3.9. Summary

Chapter One outlined the research problem and directions of the research project. This chapter has outlined the method used to test the research hypotheses developed in the Literature Review (Chapter Two). The Methods chapter has provided a general overview of the research design adopted for the study including the sample selection, data collection procedure, measures utilised, a detailed description of the data analysis procedures employed in the study and, finally, an overview of the ethical considerations underpinning the study.

The following two chapters include the results of the hypotheses tested in the study. Chapter Four includes presentation of the results of Hypotheses 1 to 4 on the formation of the WLB psychological contract. Chapter Five presents the results of Hypotheses 5 to 15 examining antecedents to and employee responses to WLB psychological contract fulfilment.
Chapter Four

Results: Formation of the employees’ WLB psychological contract

4.1. Introduction

In Chapter One the research problem was introduced and the directions of the research project were established. Chapter Two reviewed the relevant WLB and psychological contract literature and presented the research question and hypotheses. Chapter Three detailed the method adopted to address the research problem and empirically test the hypotheses. This chapter presents the results from the testing of Hypotheses 1, 2, 3 and 4, focussing on the formation of the WLB psychological contract and underpinned by signalling and sensemaking theories.

Understanding if and how employees form WLB psychological contracts is important since organisations increasingly use promises of work-life balance (WLB) organisational support to recruit and retain skilled employees (Mescher et al., 2010). Organisations may use various activities and methods (e.g., recruitment advertising, induction programs and company websites) to communicate work-life policies and practices to both current and prospective employees (Collins, 2007; Mescher et al., 2010). These employer branding strategies focused on work-life balance are of interest to WLB researchers because they are designed to influence people’s expectations about access to ‘flexible’ working arrangements. According to signalling theory, employees use cues or signs from an organisation to form expectations about the organisation’s intentions, actions and characteristics (Casper & Harris, 2008; Rynes, 1991; Turban, 2001; Turban & Greening, 1997). Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 2 predict that employee awareness of WLB policies and perceptions of effective communication of WLB
policies and programs respectively will be positively associated with the strength of the WLB psychological contract.

Sensemaking theory was applied to Hypothesis 3 and Hypothesis 4 to examine if employees calibrate their expectations of WLB organisational support (conceptualised as WLB psychological contract) based on their perceptions of the organisational culture and the direct supervisor support they receive to balance their work and non-working personal life. Weick (1995) suggests humans use sensemaking behaviours to cognitively sort through a range of incongruent information and events. Hypotheses 3a/b and 4a/b test the moderating effect that WLB organisational culture and WLB supervisor support have on the relationship between awareness of WLB policies and perceptions of effective communication and the formation of the WLB psychological contract.

4.2. Inter-correlations of formation of WLB psychological contract variables

The summary of means, standard deviations, Cronbach alpha coefficients and intercorrelations between the variables of the study tested in Hypotheses 1, 2, 3 and 4 examining WLB psychological contract formation are presented in Table 4.1. The results of the correlation analysis presented in Table 4.1 are based on data collected from the Stage 1 Survey distributed to employees across the seven participating organisations. Bivariate correlations for all of the variables in the study were in the predicted directions. All measurement items utilised in this component of the study were found to be reliable, with Cronbach alphas ranging from .84 to .95.
Table 4.1 Summary of Means, Standard Deviations, Cronbach Alpha Coefficients and Intercorrelations

<table>
<thead>
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<td>4</td>
<td>WLB PU</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>PT/Cas</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Org tenure</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Eff WLB</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eff WLB Comms</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>WLB PA</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>3.8</td>
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<tr>
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<td>WLB OC</td>
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<td>.84</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note. *p < .05; **p < .01, ***p < .001
WLB PU: Work-life balance policy use
PT/Cas: Part-time / casual; Org tenure: Organisational tenure
Eff WLB Comms: Effectiveness of WLB Communication
WLB PA: WLB Policy Awareness
WLB OC: Work-life balance organisational culture
WLB SS: Work-life balance supervisor support
WLB PCFO: Work-life balance psychological contract formation
4.3. Formation of the WLB psychological contract

4.3.1. Hypotheses 1 and 2 results

H1: Perceived effectiveness of communication of WLB promises/commitments will be positively related to formation of employees’ WLB psychological contract.

H2: Awareness of WLB policy availability will be positively related to formation of employees’ WLB psychological contract.

Table 4.2: Hierarchical multiple regression results predicting WLB psychological contract formation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WLB policy use</td>
<td>.17***</td>
<td>.09*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time/casual</td>
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<td>.15**</td>
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<td>-.08</td>
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<tr>
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<td>-.03</td>
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<td>Organisation F</td>
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<td><strong>Signalling variables</strong></td>
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<td>WLB policy awareness</td>
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<tr>
<td>$R^2$</td>
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<tr>
<td>$\Delta R^2$</td>
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</table>

Note: Standardized regression coefficient reported

\*p < .05; \**p < .01, \***p < .001

A range of control variables including gender, marital status, children, employment status, organisational tenure and organisation were entered in Step 1 of the Model, explaining 10% of the variance in WLB psychological contract formation. After entry of the signalling variables at Step 1 and WLB communication methods and WLB policy awareness at Step 2, the total variance explained by the Model as a whole was 28%, $F(14, 561) = 15.24, p < .001$. 

134
The two signalling variables explained an additional 17% of the variance in WLB psychological contract formation, $R^2 = .17$, $F$ change $(2, 561) = 67.09, p < .001$.

In the second step, employee perceptions of effective communication of WLB promises/commitments was positively related to WLB psychological contract formation ($\beta = .31, p < .001$). Hence Hypothesis 1 on the relationship between employee perceptions of effective communication of WLB promises/commitments and WLB psychological contract formation was supported. Furthermore, WLB policy awareness ($\beta = .27, p < .001$) was positively related to WLB psychological contract formation. Hence Hypothesis 2 on the relationship between employee awareness of WLB policies and WLB psychological contract formation was supported.

Beyond providing support for Hypotheses 1 and 2, other key findings from the hierarchical regression analysis include the positive relationship between WLB policy use and Part-Time/Casual employment status and WLB psychological contract formation and the negative relationship between organisational tenure and WLB psychological contract formation.

4.3.2. Hypotheses 3a/b and 4a/b

H3a: Employee perceptions of a supportive WLB organisational culture will moderate the relationship between perceived effectiveness of communication of WLB promises/commitments and employees’ WLB psychological contract. Specifically, the WLB psychological contract will be stronger when employees perceive a supportive WLB organisational culture.
H3b: Employee perceptions of a supportive WLB organisational culture will moderate the relationship between awareness of WLB policy availability and extent of employees’ WLB psychological contract. Specifically, the WLB psychological contract will be stronger when employees perceive a supportive WLB organisational culture.

H4a: Employee perceptions of WLB supervisor support will moderate the relationship between perceived effectiveness of communication of WLB promises/commitments and extent of employees’ WLB psychological contract. Specifically, the WLB psychological contract will be stronger when employees perceive a supportive supervisor.

H4b: Employee perceptions of WLB supervisor support will moderate the relationship between awareness of WLB policy availability and extent of employees’ WLB psychological contract. Specifically, the WLB psychological contract will be stronger when employees perceive a supportive supervisor.
Table 4.3: Hierarchical multiple regression results predicting formation of WLB psychological contract

<table>
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<td>WLB policy use</td>
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<td>Part-time/casual</td>
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<td>Organisation A</td>
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Note: Standardized regression coefficient reported
* p < .05; ** p < .01, *** p < .001

A range of control variables including gender, marital status, children, employment status, organisational tenure and organisation were entered in Step 1 of the Model, explaining 10% of the variance in WLB psychological contract formation. After entry of the control variables at Step 1 and the signalling variables at Step 2 (WLB communication methods, WLB policy awareness, WLB organisational culture, WLB supervisor support), the total variance explained was 38%, \( F (20, 505) = 15.67, p < .001 \).
The four signalling variables entered at Step 2, explained an additional 27% of the variance in WLB psychological contract formation, $R^2$ change = .27, $F$ change (4, 509) = 55.36, $p < .001$. Adding the four interaction variables at Step 3, only explained an additional 1% of the variance in WLB psychological contract formation, $R^2$ change = .01, $F$ change (4, 505) = 1.73 but this failed to reach significance. In total the model explained 38% of the variance in WLB psychological contract formation.

Despite the lack of variance explained by the four interaction variables collectively, supervisor support (H4b) moderated the relationship between WLB policy awareness and WLB psychological contract formation, just reaching significance ($\beta = .08$, $p = .04$). This finding is demonstrated in Figure 4.1 showing the moderating effect that WLB supervisor support has on the relationship between WLB policy awareness and WLB psychological contract formation. Respondents who report high levels of WLB policy awareness within their organisation and report high levels of WLB supervisor support report relatively higher levels of WLB psychological contract formation. Hence Hypothesis 4b was supported.

Again part-time/casual employment status and WLB policy use acted as a significant and positive predictor of WLB psychological contract formation, while employment at Organisation A acted as a significant yet negative predictor of WLB psychological contract formation.
4.4. Summary

This chapter set out to establish if signalling and sensemaking theories explained how employees form WLB psychological contracts. Through the use of hierarchical multiple regression analysis the signalling role of employee awareness of WLB policy and perceptions of effective communication of WLB promises and commitments was clearly demonstrated in Hypotheses 1 and 2. Contrary to expectations, only partial support was found for the utility of sensemaking theory through the support of Hypothesis 4b.
While Chapter Four has focussed on the formation of the WLB psychological contract, Chapter Five presents the results of hypotheses examining antecedents to and employee responses to WLB psychological contract fulfilment.
Chapter Five

Results: Antecedents and outcomes of WLB psychological contract fulfilment

5.1. Introduction

In Chapter One the research problem was introduced and the directions of the research project were established. The relevant WLB and psychological contract literature was reviewed and research questions and hypotheses developed in Chapter Two. Chapter Three detailed the method adopted in the current study. Chapter Four reported the results of Hypotheses 1 to 4, examining factors that explain the formation of the WLB psychological contract. This chapter presents the results of Hypotheses 5 and 6, focussing on the factors antecedent to employee perceptions of WLB psychological contract fulfilment and Hypotheses 7 to 15 exploring the outcomes of WLB psychological contract fulfilment.

The results in this chapter rely on the self-report data collected by employees (Hypotheses 5 to Hypotheses 10 and Hypotheses 14a – 14c and Hypotheses 15a – 15d) and the performance rating data collected by supervisors (Hypotheses 11 – 13 and Hypotheses 14d – 14f). Given the positive relationship predicted between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and employee emotions, attitudes and behaviours (e.g., trust, job satisfaction, performance), it is important to examine factors that may lead to perceptions of WLB psychological contract fulfilment in the first place. Hypothesis 5 tests the relationship between WLB organisational culture support and WLB psychological contract fulfilment. The anticipated relationship is positive and underpinned by existing literature outlining the important role organisational culture performs in encouraging employees to access WLB policies (Thompson et al., 1999; Waters & Bardoel, 2006; Wharton & Blair-Loy, 2002). It is expected that perceptions of a supportive WLB organisational culture will be linked to perceptions of WLB psychological
contract fulfilment, since employees will perceive the organisation is keeping its WLB promises and commitments if it has a supportive WLB organisational culture in place. Similarly Hypothesis 6 articulates the expected positive relationship between perceptions of WLB Supervisor support and perceptions of WLB psychological contract fulfilment. Given the important and proximate role supervisors perform in making discretionary decisions to allow access to formal and informal WLB organisational arrangements (McCarthy et al., 2010; Veiga et al., 2004), it is expected that WLB supervisor support will prove to be a critical factor antecedent to employee perceptions of WLB psychological contract fulfilment.

Based on the principles of the resource based view of the firm and strategic HRM (Wright et al., 2001), Hypotheses 7 to 15 test the relationship between employee perceptions of WLB psychological contract fulfilment and a range of employee outcomes that are considered critical to the performance of the organisation. Hypotheses 7 to 13 test the main effects relationships between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and employee trust (Hypothesis 7), job satisfaction (Hypothesis 8), affective commitment (Hypothesis 9), intention to leave (Hypothesis 10), in-role performance (Hypothesis 11), contextual interpersonal facilitation performance (Hypothesis 12) and contextual job dedication performance (Hypothesis 13). The development of Hypotheses 7 to 13 was based on social-exchange theory that describes the process by which employees ‘repay’ the organisation in the form of loyalty, commitment and performance in return for perceived organisational inducements including WLB support (De Vos & Meganck, 2009).

Hypotheses 14a to 14f then draw on Affective Events Theory (AET) to determine if WLB psychological contract fulfilment, employee trust, attitudes and behaviours are related to one another. According to Weiss and Cropanzano’s (1996) AET, employees’ perceptions of negative work events (e.g., psychological contract breach) lead to negative affective states.
(e.g., distrust in the organisation), and this in turn will give rise to negative work attitudes and behaviours (Guerrero & Herrbach, 2008). The current study tests the alternative proposition that positive events including psychological contract fulfilment will lead to a positive affective state (i.e., enhanced trust), which will in turn give rise to positive work attitudes and behaviours in the form of job satisfaction, affective commitment, reduced intentions to leave the organisation and enhanced performance. Hypotheses 14a, 14b, 14c, 14d, 14e and 14f test the existence of a relationship between the variables using the joint test of significance to determine if trust mediates the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and the work attitudes and behaviours examined in the study.

Drawing on sensemaking theory, Hypotheses 15a to 15d test the moderating role of WLB organisational justice perceptions between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and the employee trust variable.

5.2. Intercorrelations of Variables

The summary of means, standard deviations, Cronbach alpha coefficients and intercorrelations between the variables of the study are presented in Tables 5.1 and 5.2. The data represented in Table 5.1 were collected as part of the self-report Stage 1 Survey, used to collect data from the participating respondents and subsequently analysed to test Hypotheses 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 14a – 14c, 15a -15d. Table 5.2 presents the employee-supervisor dyads based on performance data collected from supervisors using the Stage 2 Survey and matched to the data collected by their reports in the Stage 1 Survey. The data in Table 5.2 is analysed to test Hypotheses 11, 12, 13, 14d - 14f. Bivariate correlations for all the variables in the study were in the predicted directions. All measurement items utilised in this component of the study to
examine antecedents and outcomes of WLB psychological contract fulfilment were found to be reliable, with Cronbach alphas ranging from .80 to .96.
Table 5.1 Summary of Means, Standard Deviations, Cronbach Alpha Coefficients and Intercorrelations for variables included in testing of Hypotheses 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 14a, 14b, 14c, 15a, 15b, 15c, 15d using Stage 1 survey data

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*Note. *p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001

WLB PU: Work-life balance policy use
PT/Cas: Part-time / casual
Org tenure: Organisational tenure
WLB OC: Work-life balance organisational culture
WLB SS: Work-life balance supervisor support
WLB PCFU: Work-life balance psychological contract fulfilment
Job Sat: Job satisfaction
Aff Comm: Affective commitment
ITL: Intention to leave the organisation
Dist Just: Distributive justice
Pro Just: Procedural justice
Inter Just: Interactional justice
Inform Just: Informational justice

145
Table 5.1 Summary of Means, Standard Deviations, Cronbach Alpha Coefficients and Intercorrelations for variables included in testing of Hypotheses 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 14a, 14b, 14c, 15a, 15b, 15c, 15d using Stage 1 Survey data (Continued)

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Note. * p < .05; **p < .01, ***p < .001

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Aff Comm: Affective commitment
ITL: Intention to leave the organisation
Dist Just: Distributive justice
Pro Just: Procedural justice
Inter Just: Interactional justice
Inform Just: Informational justice
Table 5.2 Summary of Means, Standard Deviations, Cronbach Alpha Coefficients and Intercorrelations for variables included in testing of Hypotheses 11, 12, 13, 14d, 14e, 14f using Stage 2 Survey data

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<td>.00</td>
<td>.24**</td>
<td>.16**</td>
<td>.31***</td>
<td>.58***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. * p < .05; **p < .01, ***p < .001
WLB PU: Work–life balance policy use
PT/Cas: Part-time / casual
Org tenure: Organisational tenure
Eff WLB OC: Work–life balance organisational culture
WLB SS: Work-life balance supervisor support
WLB PCFU: Work-life balance psychological contract fulfilment
IRP: In-role performance
CIFP: Contextual interpersonal facilitation performance
CJDJP: Contextual job dedication performance
5.3. Antecedents of WLB psychological contract fulfilment

Hypotheses 5 and 6 focus on the relationship between antecedent contextual factors and perceptions of WLB psychological contract fulfilment. Based on the literature review, employee perceptions of WLB organisational culture support and supervisor support were posited to be important antecedent factors predicting WLB psychological contract fulfilment.

5.3.1. Hypotheses 5 and 6 results

H5: Employee perceptions of WLB organisational culture support are positively related to WLB psychological contract fulfilment.

H6: Employee perceptions of supervisor support are positively related to WLB psychological contract fulfilment.

Table 5.3: Hierarchical multiple regression results predicting WLB psychological contract fulfilment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Control variables</th>
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<th>Step 2</th>
</tr>
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<td>WLB policy use</td>
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<td>.11**</td>
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<td>Part-time/casual</td>
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<td>Organisational tenure</td>
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<td>Organisation A</td>
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<td>Organisation B</td>
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<td>-.02</td>
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<td>Organisation C</td>
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<td>Organisation D</td>
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<td>Organisation E</td>
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<td>Organisation F</td>
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<table>
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<th>WLB support variables</th>
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<td>WLB supervisor support</td>
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<tr>
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<td>.32***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Standardized regression coefficient reported
*p < .05; **p < .01, ***p < .001
The control variables entered at Step 1 explained 10% of the variance in WLB psychological contract fulfilment, $F(12, 516) = 4.97, p < .001$. The entry of WLB organisational culture and WLB supervisor support variables at Step 2 explained an additional 32% variance in WLB psychological contract fulfilment, $R^2$ change = .32, $F$ change (2, 514) = 139.96, $p < .001$. The total variance in WLB psychological contract fulfilment explained by the Model as a whole including Step 1 and Step 2 variables was 42%, $F(14, 514) = 26.55, p < .001$.

Both WLB organisational culture ($\beta = .35, p < .001$) and supervisor support ($\beta = .33, p < .001$) were positively related to WLB psychological contract fulfilment. Based on the analysis, both Hypotheses 5 and 6 were supported.

The control variable WLB policy use also proved to be statistically significant and positively associated with WLB psychological contract fulfilment in both Step 1 and 2 analyses. Working in a Part Time or Casual arrangement and organisational tenure were also positively associated with WLB psychological contract fulfilment in Step 1 of the model but no significant association was detected once the Step 2 variables were entered.

### 5.4. Outcomes of WLB psychological contract fulfilment

The following results focus on the employee work-related outcomes of WLB psychological contract fulfilment, including trust, job satisfaction, affective commitment, intention to leave, in-role performance, and contextual performance directed at colleagues and the organisation.

#### 5.4.1. Hypothesis 7 results

H7: WLB psychological contract fulfilment will be positively associated with trust in the organisation.
Table 5.4: Hierarchical multiple regression results predicting employee trust

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic variables</th>
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<th>Step 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>WLB policy use</td>
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<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time/casual</td>
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<td>-.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Org tenure</td>
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<td>-.09*</td>
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<td>-.05</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organisation B</td>
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<td>.00</td>
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<td>Organisation C</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.06</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organisation D</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation E</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>-.01</td>
</tr>
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<td>Organisation F</td>
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<td>-.06</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employee perception</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WLB psychological contract</td>
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<td>.51***</td>
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<tr>
<td>fulfilment</td>
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<td>.32***</td>
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<tr>
<td>$\Delta R^2$</td>
<td>.23***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Standardized regression coefficient reported
* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

A range of control variables including gender, marital status, children, employment status, organisational tenure and organisation were entered in Step 1 of the Model, explaining 9% of the variance in WLB psychological contract formation, $F (12, 552) = 4.53$, $p < .001$. The WLB psychological contract fulfilment variable explained an additional 23% of the variance in employee trust, $R^2$ change $= .23$, $F$ change $(1, 551) = 186.55$, $p < .001$. After the entry of both steps, the total variance explained by the Model as a whole was 32%, $F (13, 551) = 19.94$, $p < .001$.

The Step 2 results of the hierarchical regression analysis demonstrate that WLB psychological contract fulfilment was a statistically significant predictor of employee trust. WLB psychological contract fulfilment ($\beta = .51, p < .001$) was positively related to employee trust.

In relation to the control variables, in Step 1 being female and WLB policy use predicted a positive relationship with employee trust and organisational tenure predicted a negative
relationship with employee trust. All of the relationships held in Step 2 although WLB policy use was no longer significantly associated with employee trust and being partnered was negatively associated with employee trust. In summary, Hypothesis 7 on the relationship between employee perceptions of WLB psychological contract fulfilment and employee trust was supported.

5.4.2. Hypothesis 8 results

H8: WLB psychological contract fulfilment will be positively associated with job satisfaction.

Table 5.5: Hierarchical multiple regression results predicting employee job satisfaction

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<th>Step 1</th>
<th>Step 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Children</td>
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<td>WLB policy use</td>
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<td>Part-time/casual</td>
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<td>.01</td>
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<td>Org tenure</td>
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<td>.04</td>
</tr>
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<td>-.05</td>
</tr>
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<td>-.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation C</td>
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<td>-.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation D</td>
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<td>-.07</td>
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<td>-.05</td>
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<td>.18***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Standardized regression coefficient reported

*p < .05; **p < .01, ***p < .001

Control variables including gender, partnership status, children, employment status, use of WLB policies, organisational tenure and organisation were entered in Step 1 of the Model, explaining 4% of the variance in job satisfaction, $F (12, 552) = 1.99$, $p < .05$. The WLB psychological contract fulfilment variable entered at Step 2 explained an additional 18% of
the variance in job satisfaction, R squared change = .18, \( F \) change (1, 551) = 127.93, \( p < .001 \). After the entry of both steps, the total variance explained by the Model as a whole was 22%, \( F (13, 551) = 12.10, p < .001 \).

In Step 2 of the analysis, WLB psychological contract fulfilment was positively related to employee job satisfaction (\( \beta = .45, p < .001 \)). The female control variable also proved to be a statistically significant predictor of job satisfaction when entered in both steps. Hypothesis 8 on the relationship between employee perceptions of WLB psychological contract fulfilment and employee job satisfaction is supported.

5.4.3. Hypothesis 9 results

H9: WLB psychological contract fulfilment will be positively associated with affective commitment.

Table 5.6: Hierarchical multiple regression results predicting employee affective commitment

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Step 2</th>
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<td>Part-time/casual</td>
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<td>-.10*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation C</td>
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<td>-.18***</td>
</tr>
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<td>-.13**</td>
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<td>Organisation E</td>
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<td>-.07</td>
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<td>Organisation F</td>
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<td>-.05</td>
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<td>( \Delta R^2 )</td>
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</table>

Note: Standardized regression coefficient reported

\(*p < .05; **p < .01, ***p < .001\)
Control variables including gender, partnership status, children, employment status, use of WLB policies, organisational tenure and organisation were entered in Step 1 of the Model, explaining 5% of the variance in affective commitment, $F (12, 552) = 2.52, p < .05$. The WLB psychological contract fulfilment variable entered at Step 2 explained an additional 18% of the variance in affective commitment, $R^2$ change = .18, $F$ change (1, 551) = 124.31, $p < .001$. After the entry of both steps, the total variance explained by the Model as a whole was 23%, $F (13, 551) = 12.40, p < .001$.

In Step 2 of the analysis, WLB psychological contract fulfilment ($\beta = .44, p < .001$) was positively related to affective commitment. Of the control variables entered in Step 1 of the Model, a positive and statistically significant relationship between being female and affective commitment and a negative relationship between Organisation C and affective commitment was demonstrated. Both relationships remained statistically significant in Step 2. In summary, Hypothesis 9 on the relationship between employee perceptions of WLB psychological contract fulfilment and affective commitment is supported.

### 5.4.4. Hypothesis 10 results

H10: WLB psychological contract fulfilment will be negatively associated with intention to leave the organisation.
Table 5.7: Hierarchical multiple regression results predicting employee intention to leave

<table>
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<td>Children</td>
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<td>.05</td>
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<td>WLB policy use</td>
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<td>Part-time/casual</td>
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<tr>
<td>Org tenure</td>
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Employee perception

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</tr>
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<tbody>
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<tr>
<td>Δ R²</td>
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<td>.08***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Standardized regression coefficient reported
* p < .05; ** p < .01, *** p < .001

Control variables including gender, partnership status, children, employment status, use of WLB policies, organisational tenure and organisation were entered in Step 1 of the Model, explaining 3% of the variance in turnover intentions, $F(12, 548) = 1.42$ although this failed to reach significance. The WLB psychological contract fulfilment variable entered at Step 2 explained an additional 8% of the variance in intention to leave the organisation, $R^2$ change = .08, $F$ change $(1, 547) = 49.23, p < .001$. After the entry of both steps, the total variance explained by the Model as a whole was 11%, $F(13, 547) = 5.22, p < .001$.

As expected, WLB psychological contract fulfilment was negatively related to intentions to leave the organisation ($\beta = -.30, p < .001$). The relationship between the female control variable and intention to leave was also negative and statistically significant at Step 1 and the relationship remained negative in Step 2. Hypothesis 10 on the relationship between...
employee perceptions of WLB psychological contract fulfilment and intention to leave was supported.

5.4.5. Hypothesis 11 results

H11: WLB psychological contract fulfilment will be positively associated with in-role performance.

Table 5.8: Hierarchical multiple regression results predicting employee in-role performance

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Step 1</th>
<th>Step 2</th>
</tr>
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<td>.09</td>
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<tr>
<td>Children</td>
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<td>-.05</td>
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<td>WLB policy use</td>
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<td>-.12</td>
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<td>Org Tenure</td>
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<td>.00</td>
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<td>Part-time/casual</td>
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<td>Organisation C</td>
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<td><strong>Employee perception</strong></td>
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</tr>
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<td>.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Standardized regression coefficient reported
*p < .05; **p < .01, ***p < .001

Control variables including gender, partnership status, children, employment status, use of WLB policies, organisational tenure and organisation were entered in Step 1 of the Model, explaining 8% of the variance in in-role performance, $F (11, 149) = 1.18$ although this failed to reach significance. The WLB psychological contract fulfilment variable entered at Step 2 only explained an additional 1% of the variance, $R$ squared change = .01, $F$ change (1, 148) = 1.01. After the entry of both steps, the total variance in in-role performance explained by the
Model as a whole was 9%, $F (12, 148) = 1.16$, although this failed to reach significance ($p = .32$).

In summary, after controlling for gender, partnership status, children, employment status, use of WLB policies, organisational tenure and organisation, the relationship between psychological contract fulfilment and in-role performance was insignificant ($\beta = .08$, $p = .32$). Therefore Hypothesis 11 on the relationship between employee perceptions of WLB psychological contract fulfilment and in-role performance was not supported.

5.4.6. Hypothesis 12 results

H12: WLB psychological contract fulfilment will be positively associated with contextual interpersonal facilitation performance.

Table 5.9: Hierarchical multiple regression results predicting employee contextual interpersonal facilitation performance (CIFP).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Control variables</th>
<th>Step 1</th>
<th>Step 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>.02</td>
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<tr>
<td>Children</td>
<td>-.11</td>
<td>-.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WLB policy use</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>-.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Org Tenure</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time/casual</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation A</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation B</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation C</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>-.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation D</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation E</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation F</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employee perception</th>
<th>Step 1</th>
<th>Step 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WLB psychological contract fulfilment</td>
<td>.16*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$R^2$</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.14*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\Delta R^2$</td>
<td></td>
<td>.02*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Standardized regression coefficient reported

*p < .05; **p < .01, ***p < .001
Control variables including gender, partnership status, children, employment status, use of WLB policies, organisational tenure and organisation were entered in Step 1 of the Model, explaining 12% of the variance in contextual interpersonal facilitation performance (CIFP), $F$ change (11, 149) = 1.81 although this failed to reach significance. The WLB psychological contract fulfilment variable entered at Step 2 only explained an additional 2% of the variance, $R^2$ change = .02, $F$ change (1, 148) = 3.83, $p < .05$. After the entry of both steps, the total variance in CIFP explained by the Model as a whole was 14%, $F$ (12, 148) = 2.01, $p < .05$.

After controlling for gender, partnership status, children, employment status, use of WLB policies, organisational tenure and organisation, WLB psychological contract fulfilment was positively related to CIFP ($\beta = .16, p < .05$). Therefore using the data provided by respondents and their supervisors, the results of the hierarchical multiple regression analysis demonstrate that Hypothesis 12 on the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and CIFP is supported.

### 5.4.7. Hypothesis 13 results

H13: WLB psychological contract fulfilment will be positively associated with contextual job dedication performance.
Table 5.10: Hierarchical multiple regression results predicting contextual job-dedication performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Control variables</th>
<th>Step 1</th>
<th>Step 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partnered</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WLB policy use</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>-.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Org tenure</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time/casual</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>-.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation A</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>-.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation B</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation C</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>-.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation D</td>
<td>-.17</td>
<td>-.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation E</td>
<td>-.14</td>
<td>-.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation F</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Employee perception</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WLB psychological</td>
<td></td>
<td>.26**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contract fulfilment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>R²</strong></td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.13**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ΔR²</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>.06**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Standardized regression coefficient reported
* p < .05; ** p < .01, *** p < .001

Control variables including gender, partnership status, children, employment status, use of WLB policies, organisational tenure and organisation were entered in Step 1 of the Model, explaining 7% of the variance in contextual job dedication performance (CJDP), F (11, 149) = 1.05 although this failed to reach significance. The WLB psychological contract fulfilment variable entered at Step 2 explained an additional 6% of the variance, R squared change = .06, F change (1, 148) = 10.27, p < .01. After the entry of both steps, the total variance in CJDP explained by the Model as a whole was 13%, F (12, 148) = 1.88, p < .01.

In the Step 2 analysis, WLB psychological contract fulfilment was positively related to CJDP (β = .26, p < .01). Therefore Hypothesis 13 using data provided by respondents and their supervisors on the relationship between employee perceptions of WLB psychological contract fulfilment and CJDP was supported.
5.5. The mediating role of trust

Sections 5.4.1 to 5.4.7 have presented the main effects relationships between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and outcomes, including trust, job satisfaction, affective commitment, intention to leave, in-role and two forms of contextual performance. The following sections present the findings of the analysis exploring the mediating role of trust in the WLB psychological contract experience.

5.5.1. Hypothesis 14a results

H14a: Trust in the organisation will mediate the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and job satisfaction.

Table 5.11: Hierarchical multiple regression analysis predicting mediating role of trust in relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and employee job satisfaction.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Control variables</th>
<th>Model 1 (Trust)</th>
<th>Model 2 (Job Satisfaction)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Step 1</td>
<td>Step 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>.10*</td>
<td>.10*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Partnered</td>
<td>- .06</td>
<td>- .08*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Children</td>
<td>- .04</td>
<td>- .04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WLB policy use</td>
<td>.13**</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time/casual</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>- .04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Org tenure</td>
<td>-.14**</td>
<td>-.09*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation A</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>-.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation B</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation C</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>-.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation D</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation E</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>-.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation F</td>
<td>-.09*</td>
<td>-.06</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employee perception</th>
<th>Model 1 (Trust)</th>
<th>Model 2 (Job Satisfaction)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WLB psychological contract fulfilment</td>
<td>.51***</td>
<td>.17***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust</td>
<td>.09***</td>
<td>.32***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R²</td>
<td>.23***</td>
<td>.23***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Standardised regression coefficients reported; * p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001
In Model 1 examining the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and trust, the control variables entered at Step 1 account for 9% of the variance in employee trust, $F(12, 552) = 4.53, p < .001$. The WLB psychological contract fulfilment variable entered at Step 2 explained an additional 23% of the variance, $R^2$ change = .23, $F$ change (1, 551) = 186.55, $p < .001$. After the entry of both steps, the total variance in employee trust explained by Model 1 as a whole was 32%, $F(13, 551) = 19.94, p < .001$. The relationship between WLB psychological contract and trust examined in the Step 2 analysis is statistically significant ($\beta = .51, p < .001$) satisfying the first test of the joint significance test of mediation.

In Model 2 the control variables entered at Step 1 account for 4% of the variance in employee job satisfaction, $F(12, 552) = 1.99, p < .05$. The employee trust and WLB psychological contract fulfilment variables entered at Step 2 explained an additional 39% of the variance, $R^2$ change = .39, $F$ change (1, 551) = 186.61, $p < .001$. At step 2, the total variance in employee job satisfaction explained was 43%, $F(14, 550) = 29.81, p < .001$. The relationship between trust and job satisfaction was statistically significant ($\beta = .56, p < .001$), satisfying the second test of the joint significance test of mediation. The direct effect of WLB psychological contract fulfilment on job satisfaction remained statistically significant ($\beta = .17, p < .001$), indicating partial mediation.

The results of the analysis demonstrate that employee trust partially mediates the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and job satisfaction, therefore Hypothesis 14a is supported. The Model 1 and Model 2 results satisfy the joint significance test proposed by Mackinnon (2002), requiring that the relationship between the independent variable (WLB psychological contract fulfilment) and mediator (trust) (Model 1) is statistically significant.
and the relationship between the mediator (trust) to the dependent variable (job satisfaction) (Model 2), adjusted for the independent variable (WLB psychological contract fulfilment), is also significant.

5.5.2. Hypothesis 14b results

H14b: Trust in the organisation will mediate the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and affective commitment.

Table 5.12: Hierarchical multiple regression analysis predicting mediating role of trust in relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and employee affective commitment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Control variables</th>
<th>Model 1 (Trust)</th>
<th>Model 2 (Affective commitment)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Step 1</td>
<td>Step 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>.10*</td>
<td>.10*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partnered</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.08*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>-.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WLB policy use</td>
<td>.13**</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time/casual</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>-.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Org tenure</td>
<td>-.14**</td>
<td>-.09*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation A</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>-.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation B</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation C</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>-.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation D</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation E</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>-.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation F</td>
<td>-.09*</td>
<td>-.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust</td>
<td>.51***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WLB psychological contract fulfilment</td>
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<td>.64***</td>
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<tr>
<td>R²</td>
<td>.09***</td>
<td>.32***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Δ R²</td>
<td>.23***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Standardised regression coefficients reported; * p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001

In Model 1 the control variables entered at Step 1 account for 9% of the variance in employee trust, F change (12,552) = 4.53, p < .001. The WLB psychological contract fulfilment variable entered at Step 2 explained an additional 23% of the variance, R squared change = .23, F
change \((1, 551) = 186.55, p < .001\). After the entry of both steps, the total variance in employee trust explained by Model 1 as a whole was 32\% \(F (13, 551) = 19.94, p < .001\). The relationship between WLB psychological contract and trust is statistically significant \((\beta = .51, p < .001)\) satisfying the first test of the joint significance test of mediation.

In Model 2 the control variables entered at Step 1 account for 5\% of the variance in employee affective commitment, \(F \text{ change } (12,552) = 2.52, p < .01\). The employee trust and WLB psychological contract fulfilment variables entered at Step 2 explained an additional 46\% of the variance, \(R^2 \text{ change } = .46, F \text{ change } (1, 551) = 255.12, p < .001\). The total variance in employee affective commitment explained by Model 2 as a whole was 51\% \(F (14, 550) = 40.59, p < .001\). The relationship between trust and affective commitment is statistically significant \((\beta = .64, p < .001)\) satisfying the second requirement of the joint significance test of mediation. The direct effect of WLB psychological contract fulfilment on affective commitment remained statistically significant \((\beta = .12, p < .01)\), indicating partial mediation.

The results of the analysis demonstrate that employee trust mediates the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and affective commitment. The Model 1 and Model 2 results satisfy the joint significance test proposed by Mackinnon (2002). Therefore Hypothesis 14b is supported.

**5.5.3. Hypothesis 14c results**

H14c: Trust in the organisation will mediate the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and intention to leave the organisation.
Table 5.13: Hierarchical multiple regression analysis predicting mediating role of trust in relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and intention to leave.

| Control variables | Model 1 (Trust) | | Model 2 (Intention to leave) | |  
| | Step 1 | Step 2 | | Step 1 | Step 2 |  
| Female | .10* | .10* | | -.16** | -.12*** |  
| Partnered | -.06 | -.08* | | -.07 | -.09* |  
| Children | -.04 | -.04 | | .05 | .03 |  
| WLB policy use | .13** | .03 | | -.02 | .05 |  
| Part-time/casual | .01 | -.04 | | -.01 | .00 |  
| Org tenure | -.14** | -.09* | | .01 | .06 |  
| Organisation A | -.03 | -.05 | | .03 | .02 |  
| Organisation B | -.01 | .00 | | .03 | .03 |  
| Organisation C | -.05 | -.06 | | .05 | .04 |  
| Organisation D | .08 | .03 | | .06 | .10* |  
| Organisation E | .00 | -.01 | | .08 | .08 |  
| Organisation F | -.09* | -.06 | | .03 | -.02 |  

| Employee perception | WLB psychological contract fulfilment | .51*** | | -.09* |  
| Trust | | | | -.41** |  
| R² | .09*** | .32*** | | .03 | .23*** |  
| ΔR² | .23*** | .19*** |  

Note: Standardised regression coefficients reported; * p < .05; ** p < .01; *** p < .001

In Model 1 the control variables entered at Step 1 account for 9% of the variance in employee trust, $F(12,552) = 4.53, p < .001$. The WLB psychological contract fulfilment variable entered at Step 2 explained an additional 23% of the variance, R squared change = .23, $F$ change (1, 551) = 186.55, $p < .001$. After the entry of both steps, the total variance in employee trust explained by Model 1 as a whole was 32%, $F(13, 551) = 19.94, p < .001$. The relationship between WLB psychological contract and trust is statistically significant ($\beta = .51, p < .001$) satisfying the first test of the joint significance test of mediation.

In Model 2 the control variables entered at Step 1 accounted for 3% of the variance in employee intention to leave the organisation, $F(12,548) = 1.42$, although this failed to reach significance. The employee trust and WLB psychological contract fulfilment variables entered at Step 2 explained an additional 19% of the variance, R squared change = .19, $F$ change (2,546) = 68.41, $p < .001$. At Step 2, the total variance in employee intention to leave
explained by Model 2 as a whole was 23%, \( F (14, 546) = 11.29, p < .001 \). The relationship between trust and intention to leave is statistically significant (\( \beta = -.41, p < .001 \)) satisfying the second requirement of the joint significance test of mediation. The direct effect of WLB psychological contract fulfilment on intention to leave remained statistically significant (\( \beta = -.09, p < .05 \)), indicating partial mediation.

The results of the analysis demonstrate that employee trust mediates the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and intention to leave the organisation. The Model 1 and Model 2 results satisfy the joint significance test proposed by Mackinnon (2002). Therefore Hypothesis 14c is supported.

5.5.4. **Hypothesis 14d results**

H14d: Trust in the organisation will mediate the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and in-role performance.
Table 5.14: Hierarchical multiple regression analysis predicting mediating role of trust in relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and in-role performance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic variables</th>
<th>Model 1 (Trust)</th>
<th>Model 2 (In-role performance)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Step 1</td>
<td>Step 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partnered</td>
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<td>-.07</td>
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<tr>
<td>Children</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>WLB policy use</td>
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<td>.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time/casual</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Org tenure</td>
<td>-.20*</td>
<td>-.18*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation A</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td>-.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation B</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>-.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation C</td>
<td>-.15</td>
<td>-.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation D</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td>-.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation E</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td>-.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation F</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee perception</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WLB psychological</td>
<td></td>
<td>.38***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contract fulfilment</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$R^2$</td>
<td>.14*</td>
<td>.27***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\Delta R^2$</td>
<td></td>
<td>.13***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Standardised regression coefficients reported; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

In Model 1 the control variables entered at Step 1 account for 14% of the variance in employee trust, $F (11,149) = 2.20, p < .05$. The WLB psychological contract fulfilment variable entered at Step 2 explained an additional 13% of the variance, $R^2$ change = .13, $F$ change (1, 148) = 26.16, $p < .001$. After the entry of both steps, the total variance in employee trust explained by Model 1 as a whole was 27%, $F (12,148) = 4.54, p < .001$. The relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and trust is statistically significant ($\beta = .38, p < .001$) satisfying the first test of the joint significance test of mediation.

In Model 2 the control variables entered at Step 1 account for 8% of the variance in in-role performance, $F$ change (11,149) = 1.18 but this failed to reach significance. The employee trust and WLB psychological contract fulfilment variables entered at Step 2 explained only an
additional 1% of the variance, R squared change = .01, $F$ change $(2, 147) = .64$, but failed to reach significance. At Step 2, the total variance in in-role performance explained by Model 2 as a whole was 9%, $F (13, 147) = 1.1$, although this also failed to reach significance. Finally, the relationship between trust and in-role performance, while positive ($\beta = .05$), failed to reach significance. As a result the second test of the joint significance test requiring a statistically significant relationship between the mediator and dependent variable was not satisfied. Therefore Hypothesis 14d was not supported.

5.5.5. Hypothesis 14e results

H14e: Trust in the organisation will mediate the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and contextual interpersonal facilitation performance.

Table 5.15: Hierarchical regression analysis predicting mediating role of trust in relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and contextual interpersonal facilitation performance (CIFP)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic variables</th>
<th>Model 1 (Trust)</th>
<th>Model 2 (CIFP)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Step 1</td>
<td>Step 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partnered</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>-.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children</td>
<td>-.20*</td>
<td>-.16*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WLB policy use</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time/casual</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Org tenure</td>
<td>-.20*</td>
<td>-.18*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation A</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td>-.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation B</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>-.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation C</td>
<td>-.15</td>
<td>-.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation D</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td>-.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation E</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td>-.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation F</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Employee perception   |       |       |       |       |
| WLB psychological contract fulfilment | .38*** | .08 |
| Trust                 | .14*  | .27*** | .12  | .17* |
| $\Delta R^2$          | .13***| .05   |

Note: Standardised regression coefficients reported; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$
In Model 1 the control variables entered at Step 1 account for 14% of the variance in employee trust, $F (11,149) = 2.20, p < .05$. The WLB psychological contract fulfilment variable entered at Step 2 explained an additional 13% of the variance, R squared change = .13, $F$ change (1, 148) = 26.16, $p < .001$. After the entry of both steps, the total variance in employee trust explained by Model 1 as a whole was 27%, $F (12,148) = 4.54, p < .001$. The relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and trust is statistically significant ($\beta = .38, p < .001$) satisfying the first test of the joint significance test of mediation.

In Model 2 the control variables entered at Step 1 account for 12% of the variance in employee intention to leave the organisation, $F (11,149) = 1.81, p = .06$, although this just failed to reach significance. The employee trust and WLB psychological contract fulfilment variables entered at Step 2 explained an additional 5% of the variance, R squared change = .05, $F$ change (2, 147) = 4.45, $p < .05$. At Step 2, the total variance in CIFP explained by Model 2 as a whole was 17%, $F (13, 147) = 2.29, p < .05$. The relationship between trust and CIFP is statistically significant ($\beta = .20, p < .05$) satisfying the second requirement of the joint significance test of mediation. The direct effect of WLB psychological contract fulfilment on CIFP was positive but failed to reach significance ($\beta = .08, p = .34$), inferring full mediation. Therefore Hypothesis 14e is fully supported.

### 5.5.6. Hypothesis 14f results

**H14f:** Trust in the organisation will mediate the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and contextual job dedication performance.
Table 5.16: Hierarchical multiple regression analysis predicting mediating role of trust in relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and contextual job dedication performance (CJDP).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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Note: Standardised regression coefficients reported; * $p < .05$; **$p < .01$; ***$p < .001$

In Model 1 the control variables entered at Step 1 account for 14% of the variance in employee trust, $F (11,149) = 2.20$, $p < .05$. The WLB psychological contract fulfilment variable entered at Step 2 explained an additional 13% of the variance, $R^2$ change $= .13$, $F$ change (1, 148) $= 26.16$, $p < .001$. After the entry of both steps, the total variance in employee trust explained by Model 1 as a whole was 27%, $F (12,148) = 4.54$, $p < .001$. The relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and trust is statistically significant ($\beta = .38$, $p < .001$) satisfying the first test of the joint significance test of mediation.

In Model 2 the control variables entered at Step 1 account for 7% of the variance in employee contextual job dedication performance (CJDP) although this failed to reach significance, $F (11,149) = 1.05$, $p = .41$. The employee trust and WLB psychological contract fulfilment...
variables entered at Step 2 explained an additional 7% of the variance, \( R^2 \) change = .07, \( F \) change (2, 147) = 5.87, \( p < .05 \). At Step 2, the total variance in employee intention to leave explained by Model 2 as a whole was 14%, \( F \) (13, 147) = 1.85, \( p < .01 \). The relationship between trust and CIJD is positive but fails to reach significance (\( \beta = .11, p = .23 \)) therefore failing to satisfy the second requirement of the joint significance test of mediation. Therefore Hypothesis 14f is not supported.

5.6. The moderating role of WLB organisational justice

The previous sections of this chapter have presented the results of the hypotheses testing the mediating role of trust in the WLB psychological contract experience of employees. The following section presents the findings of the analysis exploring the moderating role of the WLB organisational justice dimensions, including distributive, procedural, interpersonal and informational justice. The analysis and subsequent reporting of results utilises the self-report data provided by participants in the Stage 1 survey.

5.6.1. Hypothesis 15 results

H15a: Perceptions of distributive justice will moderate the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and employee trust. Specifically, the positive relationship will be stronger when employees report high levels of distributive justice.

H15b: Perceptions of procedural justice will moderate the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and employee trust. Specifically, the positive relationship will be stronger when employees report high levels of procedural justice.

H15c: Perceptions of interpersonal justice will moderate the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and employee trust. Specifically, the positive
relationship will be stronger when employees report high levels of interpersonal justice.

H15d: Perceptions of informational justice will moderate the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and employee trust. Specifically, the positive relationship will be stronger when employees report high levels of informational justice.

Table 5.17: Hierarchical multiple regression results predicting the moderating role of organisational justice dimensions on employee trust.

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Note: Standardised regression coefficients reported; * p < .05; **p < .01; ***p < .001

A range of control variables including gender, marital status, children, employment status, organisational tenure and organisation were entered in Step 1 of the Model, explaining 9% of
the variance in WLB psychological contract formation, $F (12, 544) = 4.46, p < .001$. After entry of the employee perception variables at Step 2 the additional variance in trust explained was 36%, $R^2$ change = .36, $F$ change (5, 539) = 71.31, $p < .001$. Adding the four interactional variables at Step 3, failed to explain any significant variance in employee trust, $R^2$ change = .00, $F$ change (4, 535) = 1.09, $p = .36$. Total variance explained after all three steps had been entered was 46%, $F (21, 535) = 21.40, p < .001$.

Furthermore none of the interaction variables moderated the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and employee trust in a statistically significant manner. Hence Hypotheses H15a, H15b, H15c and H15d were not supported.

5.7. Summary

While Chapter Four examined the formation of the WLB psychological contract, this chapter set out to investigate and report on the antecedent factors and consequences linked to employee perceptions of WLB psychological contract fulfilment. As part of the analysis, the majority of hypotheses were supported as expected.

Hypotheses 5 and 6 confirmed the role WLB organisational culture and supervisor support perform in shaping employee perceptions of WLB psychological contract fulfilment. These results are consistent with literature from the work-life field demonstrating the critical role that both organisational culture and supervisor support play in encouraging employees to use WLB policies (e.g., Thompson et al., 1999), and also the mitigating effect of work-life spillover and conflict (e.g., Kossek & Hammer, 2008; Muse, 2008). Hypotheses 7 to 10 demonstrated the statistically significant association between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and a range of employee emotions and attitudes. These results are consistent with
other research findings from the work-life and psychological contract fields (e.g., Dulac et al., 2008; Forsythe & Polzer-Debruyne, 2007; Hornung & Glaser, 2010; Muse, 2008; Robinson et al., 1994; Sturges et al., 2005). The results also support a social exchange theory perspective since WLB psychological contract fulfilment was positively associated with trust, job satisfaction and affective commitment. As expected, and consistent with previous work-life and psychological contract studies by Scholarios and Marks (2004) and Suazo (2009), WLB psychological contract was negatively associated with intention to leave the organisation.

Social exchange theory also provided the theoretical foundation for testing if and how employees repay their organisation in the form of enhanced performance. Based on the studies of Sturges et al. (2005) and Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) from the psychological contract and work-life fields respectively, it was predicted that Hypothesis 11 would have been supported. However, contrary to expectations, Hypothesis 11 failed to associate employee perceptions of WLB psychological contract fulfilment with increased levels of in-role performance, although it must be acknowledged that this finding is consistent with a study by Muse (2008) that also failed to establish a statistically significant relationship between work-interfering with family (WIF) conflict or family-interfering with work (FIW) conflict and in-role performance. The current study also tested the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and two forms of contextual performance, including interpersonal facilitation (behaviour directed at work colleagues) and job dedication (behaviour directed at the organisation). Consistent with social exchange theory and previous psychological contract and work-life research (e.g., Muse, 2008; Turnley et al. 2003), the data analysis reveals that participants did repay the organisation by increasing their level of contextual performance (both directed at the organisation and their colleagues), as demonstrated in Hypotheses 12 and 13.
In addition this chapter presented the results of Hypotheses 14a to 14f, exploring the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment, trust and the full range of employee emotions, attitudes and behaviours, and underpinned by Affective Events Theory (AET). With the exception of Hypotheses 14d and 14f, support was found for the mediating role that trust plays in the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and employee job satisfaction, affective commitment, intention to leave and contextual interpersonal facilitation performance.

Finally, no support was found for Hypotheses 15a, 15b, 15c, and 15d, predicting that positive employee perceptions of the four dimensions of WLB organisation justice would strengthen the positive relationship between WLB psychological contract and trust in the organisation.

Chapter Six will provide a more detailed discussion of the key findings presented in Chapters Four and Five. Finally, Chapter Seven will identify the limitations of the study, discuss the theoretical and practical implications, and identify the key future research directions emerging from the study.
Chapter Six

Discussion

6.1. Introduction

In Chapter One the research problem was introduced and the directions of the research project were established. Chapter Two reviewed the relevant WLB and psychological contract literature and presented the research questions and hypotheses underpinning the study. Chapter Three detailed the method adopted to address the research questions and empirically test the hypotheses. Chapter Four reported the results of Hypotheses 1 to 4, exploring factors that explain the formation of the WLB psychological contract. Chapter Five presented the results of Hypotheses 5 and 6, focussing on the factors antecedent to employee perceptions of WLB psychological contract fulfilment, and Hypotheses 7 to 15 exploring the outcomes and interpretations of WLB psychological contract fulfilment. In this chapter, the results of the analysis are discussed in detail.

6.2. Discussion

6.2.1. Discussion of the formation of the WLB psychological contract

The effect of perceived effectiveness of WLB communication and WLB policy awareness on WLB psychological contract formation

The WLB psychological contract refers to those expectations and beliefs an employee has of an organisation to provide a supportive work environment, in the form of policies, programs, supervisory support and a supportive organisational culture, that enhance the employee’s sense of balance between their work and non-working life (De Vos et al., 2003; Ellis, 2007; Botsford, 2009). Hypothesis 1 predicted that there would be a positive relationship between employee perceived effectiveness of communication of organisational WLB promises/commitments and the formation of the employees’ WLB psychological contract.
Hypothesis 2 predicted a positive relationship between awareness of WLB policy availability and formation of the employees’ WLB psychological contract. As support was found for both hypotheses, this demonstrates the signalling role that the existence and communication of WLB policies perform in setting employees’ expectations about organisational WLB support.

The Hypothesis 1 result linking the effective communication of WLB promises and commitments to the formation of the employee WLB psychological contract is consistent with research by Guest and Conway (2002) examining employer perceptions of the formation of employees’ psychological contract. In the Guest and Conway (2002) research, managers reported that effective use of forms of communication (e.g., performance appraisals, inductions, briefing by line management) was associated with a clearer set of organisational promises and commitments to employees in the form of a psychological contract. While Bellou (2007) and Roehling and colleagues (2000) identify there are many components that make up an individual’s psychological contract (e.g., pay and benefits, development opportunities), the current study focussed on one component of the employee’s psychological contract in the form of perceived promises and commitments around WLB support. The findings demonstrate the important signalling role of effective communication (e.g., induction, recruitment advertising) of WLB promises and commitments in forming and determining the strength of employees’ WLB psychological contract.

The positive Hypothesis 2 finding supports the conceptual propositions outlined by Aggarwal and Bhargava (2009) and Suazo et al. (2009), that awareness of HR practices performs an important signalling function in developing the employee’s psychological contract. Heightened awareness of various WLB policies, as reported by respondents in the current study, was linked to the formation and strength of the employees’ WLB psychological contract.
contract. In previous research, signalling theory has been used to explore how HR policies shape expectations about the organisation for potential job candidates, job applicants and current employees (Casper & Buffardi, 2004; Casper & Harris, 2008; Turban, 2001). The Hypotheses 1 and 2 results are consistent with these findings from the extant literature and extend this line of research by empirically applying signalling theory to psychological contract research. Hence the current study responds to calls for more research in the area (e.g., Aggarwal & Bhargava, 2009; Suazo et al. 2009). Overall support for Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 2 extends signalling theory and psychological contact research by empirically demonstrating that employee awareness and perceptions of effective communication of WLB policies are associated with formation of a WLB psychological contract.

Three of the control variables examined in the study demonstrated a statistically significant relationship with the formation of the WLB psychological contract. First, use of one of the organisation’s WLB policies in the 12 months prior to completing the survey was positively associated with WLB psychological contract formation. Second, respondents currently employed on a part-time time or casual basis when completing the survey were also positively related to reports of WLB psychological contract formation. These findings combined suggest that expectations of organisational WLB support are associated with use of WLB policies. This is perhaps an unsurprising finding, based on the notion that if an employee has a recent history of using a WLB policy one would expect this would be associated with higher expectations for future organisational WLB support. It is important to note that this suggestion is based on the assumption that the employee’s experience in accessing the WLB policy was a positive one.
Organisational tenure presents the third control variable that demonstrated a statistically significant relationship with WLB psychological contract formation. The negative relationship between organisational tenure and WLB psychological contract formation is surprising and raises new and interesting questions about how employees form psychological contracts. Despite research by Lambert, Marler and Gueutal (2008) demonstrating that organisational tenure positively predicts utilisation of flexible work arrangements and the widespread belief that WLB concerns are highly salient across age, and life stage (Smola & Sutton, 2002; Sturges & Guest, 2004), in the current study respondents reporting longer organisational tenure had lower expectations around organisational support for their work-life balance. One possible explanation is that organisational tenure has a negative relationship with WLB psychological contract fulfilment in that those employees that have been at the organisation for a longer period of time have experienced their WLB needs not being met and so they modify their expectations for WLB support downward and this manifests in lower WLB psychological contract formation. However, the results examining antecedent factors of WLB psychological contract fulfilment (i.e., Hypotheses 5 and 6) fail to support this possible explanation. No statistically significant relationship was found between organisational tenure and WLB psychological contract fulfilment.

Another possible explanation for the negative relationship between organisational tenure and WLB psychological contract formation is the time delay between exposure to communication activities signalling organisational support for WLB and completion of the survey. In a study on the management of corporate visual identity (CVI), van den Bosch, de Jong and Elving (2006) demonstrated the positive relationship between incorporation of CVI into the organisation’s induction programme and employee perceptions of the consistency of the organisation’s CVI, indicating that induction programmes do form an important role in
shaping employee perceptions. Recency theory suggests humans will best recall, learn or remember those things that were experienced most recently, which may account for this finding (Caylor, Lopez & Rees, 2007). According to Mescher et al. (2010), employees are typically exposed to communication activities (e.g., recruitment materials, the induction process) that promote WLB policies and practices as they go through the recruitment and subsequent induction process as they enter an organisation. Drawing on recency theory, it is conceivable that the passage of time (that organisational tenure represents) dilutes the organisational messages, and the subsequent signalling effect communicated during the earlier stages of an employee’s tenure at the organisation. For example, organisations over the last ten years have increasingly used recruitment materials to promote their flexible working arrangements (e.g., telecommuting) (Thompson & Aspinwall, 2009), but as the employees’ tenure increases, the signalling effect is diminished, because employees don’t recall the original messages communicated when, or soon after, they joined the organisation.

The moderating effect of WLB organisational culture and WLB supervisor support on WLB psychological contract formation

Hypotheses 3a/b and 4a/b predicted that employees would engage in sensemaking behaviours to reconcile their awareness of WLB policies and perceptions of effective communication with their own experiences of the organisation’s WLB culture and perceptions of WLB supervisor support. For example, when employees perceive the organisation has effectively communicated WLB policies and programs and this is consistent with the organisational culture they experience while working at the organisation, the employees will reconcile, or make sense of, the two factors, and this will strengthen formation of their WLB psychological contract. In general, however, this was not supported in the current study, with the exception of the support for Hypothesis 4b, which predicted perceptions of WLB supervisor support
would moderate the relationship between awareness of WLB policies and WLB psychological contract.

While this finding supports the work of De Vos, Buyens and Schalk (2003), which suggests that employees reinterpret and readjust their expectations of the employment relationship based on their actual experiences within the organisation, the current finding indicates this only takes place under particular circumstances. The support for Hypothesis 4b suggests that employees do readjust their expectations of WLB organisational support, based on their awareness of WLB policies and their experience of the WLB support they receive from their supervisor. However, no support was found for the proposition that WLB organisational culture moderates the relationship between awareness of WLB policies and WLB psychological contract formation. These findings are surprising, given that both WLB organisational culture and WLB supervisor support have been consistently linked to a range of positive outcomes in the WLB literature, such as WLB policy usage, organisational citizenship behaviours, job satisfaction and intention to stay with the organisation (e.g., Lambert, 2000; Hammer et al., 2009; Thompson et al., 1999). In addition, both WLB organisational culture and WLB supervisor support were found to have an important impact on WLB psychological contract fulfilment in the current study (refer to Hypotheses 5 and 6 in Chapter Five). Two arguments are proposed to explain the Hypothesis 4a and Hypothesis 4b results.

First, WLB supervisor support is a more ‘proximate’ perception by employees than WLB organisational culture, because the former relates to their relationship with their direct supervisor, as opposed to the more ‘global’ measure of WLB organisational culture (Thompson et al, 1999). Furthermore, the supervisor may be perceived as the bearer of the
organisation’s WLB culture (Aryee et al., 1998). The WLB organisational culture measure includes items exploring employee perceptions of organisational time demands, negative career consequences associated with utilising work-family policies and general managerial support and sensitivity to employees’ family responsibilities (Thompson et al. 1999). While both the WLB supervisor support and WLB organisational culture concepts explore managerial support, the supervisor support measure directs the employee respondent to answer questions about their direct supervisor and the subsequent support they receive from that supervisor. This supervisor support construct presents a more proximate measure of employees’ perceived support than the general managerial support provided across the organisation as captured in the WLB organisational culture measure.

Second, supervisors perform an important and direct role in communicating, explaining and implementing WLB policies (Duxbury & Higgins, 2008; Hammer et al., 2009; McCarthy et al., 2010), which is evidenced in this study by the bivariate correlation coefficient between WLB policy awareness and WLB supervisor support of $r = .34$ ($p < .01$). Combined, the proximity of the relationship conceptualised in the WLB supervisor support measure utilised in this study and the nature of the supervisors’ role may explain why this variable moderated the relationship between WLB policy awareness and WLB psychological contract formation when the WLB organisational culture failed to do so. When engaging in sensemaking behaviours, employees may suspect that their direct supervisor will have a bigger influence on their access to WLB support than does the broader WLB organisational culture. As a result, supervisor support is more important when employees engage in sensemaking behaviours as part of the WLB psychological contract formation process.
As demonstrated in Hypothesis 3a and Hypothesis 4a no support was found for sensemaking behaviours as they apply to employee perceptions of effective communication of WLB promises and commitments. Employee perceptions of WLB supervisor support and a supportive WLB organisational culture failed to moderate the relationship between perceptions of effective communication of WLB promises and commitments and the WLB psychological contract. This suggests that, despite the strong signalling main effect of employee perceptions of effective communication of WLB promises and commitments demonstrated in Hypothesis 1, employees do not appear to readjust their WLB psychological contract based on their experiences of the WLB organisational culture and/or supervisor support.

The lack of support for Hypotheses 3a and 4a are counter to the guiding principles of sensemaking theory as applied by De Vos and colleagues (2003) which suggest that employees will readjust their expectations in the workplace based on their actual experiences within the organisation. In this study, respondents were asked to report on their actual experience of WLB supervisor support and WLB organisational culture. However, the results do further support the claims of researchers advocating the important and persuasive role communication strategies and activities perform in shaping expectations around the WLB support an employee will receive at an organisation (Kirby & Krone, 2002; Mescher et al., 2010). In the current study, it would appear that communication strategies and activities (e.g., induction programs, WLB workshops) do perform an important signalling role in setting the WLB psychological contract regardless of employees’ perceptions of their experience of WLB supervisor support and WLB organisational culture. In other words, those communication activities have an important impact on setting employee expectations, regardless of what the supervisor does or the WLB organisational culture that the employee
experiences. The results suggest that employees still expect the WLB support that was initially promised in those communication activities.

In the hierarchical multiple regression analysis, several control variables demonstrated a statistically significant relationship with WLB psychological contract formation. The control variable of part-time or casual work arrangement proved to be an important indicator of WLB psychological contract formation. As previously addressed in the sections discussing this relationship in Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 2, it is conceivable that employees who are on a part-time or casual work arrangement have higher expectations and awareness of WLB organisational support, given that they are currently accessing a flexible work arrangement and assuming that this is through their own choice.

The negative relationship between Organisation A and WLB psychological contract formation is an interesting finding and suggests employees at this private hospital did not have high expectations around organisational support for their WLB needs. This conclusion cannot be verified by the researcher, since qualitative research was not conducted as part of the study to uncover differences between each organisation. This finding does, however, present an interesting future research direction that is explored in greater detail in Chapter Seven.

6.2.2. Discussion of the antecedents of WLB psychological contract fulfilment

The effect of WLB organisational support and WLB supervisor support on WLB psychological contract fulfilment

The positive relationship between both WLB organisational culture and supervisor support with WLB psychological contract fulfilment demonstrated in Hypotheses 5 and 6 is consistent
with previous research outlining the important role these two variables perform in predicting positive employee perceptions.

WLB organisational culture has been linked to employees’ use of work-family benefits (Thompson et al., 1999), lower levels of work-family conflict (Lapierre et al., 2008) and employee self-reported in-role work performance (ten Brummelhuis & van der Lippe, 2010). This study also demonstrates that WLB organisational culture is a statistically significant predictor of WLB psychological contract fulfilment. The Thompson et al. (1999) measure used in this study is composed of three dimensions of work-family organisational culture including general managerial support, negative consequences (e.g., resentment of colleagues, career consequences) associated with devoting time to responsibilities outside of work, and organisational time demands or responsibilities that interfere with out of work responsibilities. It is intuitively appealing that if an individual reports positive perceptions in relation to these cultural support dimensions they will feel more at ease in accessing available WLB policies and requesting ad hoc flexibility and subsequently report WLB psychological contract fulfilment.

Therefore the finding in the current study extends understanding of the WLB organisational culture construct by demonstrating the relatively important role it performs in fulfilling the employee’s WLB psychological contract. In fact, employee perceptions of a supportive WLB organisational culture were over three times more likely to be associated with WLB psychological contract fulfilment than WLB policy use. The combined findings of the current study and the Thompson et al. (1999) study linking WLB organisational culture to WLB policy use might also suggest that policy use may actually mediate the relationship between perceptions of a supportive WLB organisational culture and WLB psychological contract
fulfilment. This possible relationship provides an interesting avenue for future research to examine the potential mediating role of WLB policy use between WLB organisational culture and a range of dependent variables, such as WLB psychological contract fulfilment, work-family conflict and performance.

Perceptions of WLB supervisor support were also positively linked to WLB psychological contract fulfilment. The WLB supervisor support measure used in the study included a range of supportive behaviour, including knowledge of WLB policies, demonstrated concern for the employee as a person and providing help when employees had a family or personal emergency. When employees perceive that supervisors demonstrate this behaviour, it was positively associated with perceptions of WLB psychological contract fulfilment. This finding complements previous research outlining the important role supervisors perform in mitigating work-life spillover (Muse, 2008) and mitigating employees’ experience of work-family conflict (Kossek & Hammer, 2008).

While the current study demonstrates the important role that WLB organisational support and supervisor support performs in fulfilling employees’ WLB psychological contract, both findings present challenges to HR practitioners working in the field. Developing an organisational culture that is supportive of its employees’ work and life needs and empowers organisational members to access the available policies is challenging (Thompson et al., 1999; McDonald, Pini & Bradley, 2007). This is because organisational culture is difficult to change particularly for workplaces that are built around cultural norms of the ‘ideal worker’ equipped to work long hours in an unquestioning manner (Hochschild, 1997; Pocock, 2003; Wharton & Blair-Loy, 2002; Williams, 2000).
Furthermore, the findings point to the need for organisations to support, train and encourage their supervisors to demonstrate supportive behaviour towards employees’ work-life needs because, as noted by Beehr, Farmer, Glazer, Gudanowski and Nair (2003), most organisations that offer work-life balance support in the form of flexible work hours and scheduling, rely on the discretion of supervisors who approve or reject subordinates’ access to work-life balance policies and directly influence their workload and subsequent work-related stressors. Given the key role performed by supervisors in interpreting and implementing formal organisational WLB policies, and the results of this study demonstrating the role perceived supervisor support plays in WLB psychological contract fulfilment, understanding the elements of WLB supervisor support should be an important focus for organisations and WLB researchers alike.

Understanding of WLB supervisor support will be enhanced by continual improvement of the constructs and items used to measure it. The current study relied on an existing measure used by Lambert (2000), utilising eight items articulating general supervisor support around family and personal issues. More recently in the WLB literature, the study of supervisor support has been refocussed to conceptualise and measure the specific behaviours that supervisors should engage in to help employees better manage work and family/life outside of work (e.g., Hammer, Kossek, Zimmerman & Daniels, 2007; Hammer, Kossek, Yragui, Bodner, & Hanson, 2009). This supportive behaviour as conceptualised by Hammer, Kossek and colleagues (2007, 2009) takes the form of emotional support, instrumental support, role modelling behaviours and creative work-family management (i.e., managerial-initiated actions to restructure work to facilitate employee effectiveness on and off the job). Future studies designed to extend the findings presented in this study should utilise the more sophisticated measures of WLB supervisor support developed in the work of Hammer,
Kossek and colleagues (2007, 2009) to enhance both researcher and practitioner understanding of WLB supervisor support.

WLB organisational culture and WLB supervisor support were expected to perform a significant role in both forming and fulfilling employees’ WLB psychological contracts. While both constructs were significantly and positively associated with WLB psychological contract fulfilment, only WLB supervisor support performed a minor role in determining employees’ WLB psychological contract. One possible explanation for the stronger link between both WLB organisational culture and supervisor support and WLB psychological contract fulfilment is that both perceptions give employees the confidence to request and use formal and informal WLB policies, thus leading to enhanced perceptions of fulfilment. Alternatively, employees do not factor in their perceptions of WLB organisational culture and, to a lesser degree, WLB supervisor support when considering their expectations around the promises and commitments that the organisation has made in relation to supporting their WLB needs and aspirations. These results suggest that signalling mechanisms such as WLB policies and workshops perform a more important role in setting these expectations.

### 6.2.3. Discussion of the outcomes of WLB psychological contract fulfilment

This study uses social exchange theory to demonstrate the reciprocal nature of WLB psychological contract fulfilment and a range of important employee emotions, attitudes and behaviours, including trust, job satisfaction, affective commitment, intention to leave, in-role and contextual performance.
The effect of WLB psychological contract fulfilment on trust

Trust is an important umbrella term, incorporating, in its different manifestations, differing forms and combinations of emotions and cognitive calculations (Young & Daniel, 2003). According to Zeffane and Connell (2003), researchers in the field suggest that efficiency in organisations is possible only when interdependent actors (e.g., employees and managers) work together effectively in a climate of positive trust (Carnevale & Wechsler, 1992; Robinson, 1996; Zeffane & Connell, 2003). Due to the important role of trust as an employee emotion, this study explored the association between perceived WLB psychological contract fulfilment and trust.

Beyond checking for the research findings’ consistency with the psychological contract fulfilment literature, it is also important to check for consistency with research findings on psychological breach, given the inverse relationship between the two constructs. The employee’s cognitive appraisal and assessment of the organisation’s ability and willingness to deliver on its WLB promises and commitments, in the form of a WLB psychological contract, can be thought of as a spectrum ranging from WLB psychological contract breach to WLB psychological contract fulfilment. Drawing on the WLB psychological contract literature (e.g., Lambert, Edwards & Cable, 2003), WLB psychological contract breach as one anchor point highlights a discrepancy between what was promised and what was delivered, while WLB psychological contract fulfilment (i.e., promises are kept) is anchored at the other end of the spectrum.

By demonstrating a positive relationship between psychological contract fulfilment and trust, the results are consistent with a range of literature demonstrating a negative relationship between psychological contract breach and trust (e.g., Deery et al., 2006; Dulac et al., 2008;
Robinson, 1996). As Zhao et al. (2007, p. 650) noted, ‘...when breach occurs, employees question the integrity of the organisation and become overwhelmingly sceptical, cynical, or hostile toward the organisation’s initiatives, all of which are indicators of mistrust’. Alternatively, the support of Hypothesis 7 demonstrates that, when employees perceive the organisation has fulfilled its WLB psychological contract by keeping the promises and commitments that employees perceive the organisation has made, this will be reciprocated by higher levels of trust. The finding extends the psychological contract literature by demonstrating that psychological contract fulfilment has the inverse, but predicted positive relationship with trust that previous studies identified in the negative relationship between breach and trust (e.g., Dulac et al., 2008; Robinson, 1996; Zhao et al. 2007).

The finding linking WLB psychological contract fulfilment with employee trust is also consistent with Hornung and Glaser’s (2010) study. In that study, the researchers demonstrated the positive impact fulfilment of the relational psychological contract, in the form of a telecommuting WLB benefit, had on employees’ sense of trust in the organisation (Hornung & Glaser, 2010). The current findings are also consistent with the Scholarios and Marks (2004) study from the WLB literature that demonstrated the positive relationship between employee perceptions of the employers’ flexibility to work-life issues and trust.

In addition to the main effect results of the WLB psychological contract fulfilment and employee trust, three of the control variables demonstrated a statistically significant relationship with employee trust. First, females in the study were more likely to report enhanced levels of trust in their employer. This presents an interesting finding because it adds to the extant literature that reveals mixed and conflicting insights into the relationship between gender and trust (e.g., Croson & Gneezy, 2009; Garbarino & Slonim, 2009; Hornung
& Glaser, 2010). In Croson and Gneezy’s (2009) review of economic decision-making experiments exploring the link between gender differences and a range of social preferences including trust, it was demonstrated that women tend to trust less. This was supported in a subsequent empirical study by Garbarino and Slonim (2009). Drawing on the work of Kramer (1996), Deery et al. (2006) hypothesised that female employees would exhibit lower levels of trust in their organisation, because they often encounter greater uncertainty and vulnerability in the workplace, although subsequent empirical findings failed to support this. While more recently, a study by Hornung and Glaser (2010) highlighted gender differences in relation to trust by uncovering a statistically significant negative relationship between being female and organisational trust. In summary, the positive relationship between being female and employee trust in the employer is not consistent with previous research in this field and justifies future research attention to uncover if contextual differences (e.g., industry, national culture) explain these contradictory findings.

The second and third control variables that revealed a statistically significant relationship with trust include being partnered (i.e., living with a spouse or de facto) and organisational tenure. Both control variables had a negative relationship with trust in the current study. The negative relationship between length of organisational tenure and trust is consistent with previous research that demonstrated that over time an employee’s trust in management and the organisation may decline (e.g., Hornung & Glaser, 2010; Kiffin-Petersen & Cordery, 2003).

However, the negative relationship between partnered employees and trust in the organisation is more difficult to explain. Previous research has demonstrated a positive relationship between marital status and employee trust perceptions (e.g., Gilbert & Tang, 1998). Gilbert and Tang (1998) hypothesised that married employees will be more trusting of their
organisation, because interpersonal trust and loyalty are the foundations of marriage. The researchers claim a spillover effect from the interpersonal trust that the employee experiences in the marital relationship to the workplace. One possible explanation for the result in the current study demonstrating a negative relationship between being partnered and trust is the large number of employees in the sample who worked irregular hours, including shift work. While shift work was not included as a control variable in the study, the researcher is aware that three of the organisations (the two hospitals and the FMCG organisation) potentially included a significant proportion of shift workers who participated in the study. Furthermore, the three organisations from the local government sector included respondents who potentially worked irregular hours in the councils’ libraries and day care centres. Research by Shen and Dicker (2008) demonstrates that shiftwork affects employee health, family and social lives and personal and workplace relationships. Furthermore, married employees with children report negative experiences in terms of their family and married life (Shen & Dicker, 2008). Given the negative impact shiftwork has on the married employee’s life, it is conceivable that this manifests in reduced employee trust because the employee apportions blame for inferior family and married life to the organisation. Future research is required to examine if the unreported presence of shift workers in this sample could potentially explain the negative relationship between married employees and employee trust.

While the main effects results confirm that trust in its own right is an important work-related employee outcome, as will be demonstrated in subsequent sections discussing the results of Hypotheses 14a to 14f, trust also plays an important mediating role between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and a range of employee attitudes and behaviours.
The effect of WLB psychological contract fulfilment on job satisfaction

Job satisfaction has been widely examined in the context of psychological contract outcomes and within the WLB literature (e.g., Forsythe & Polzer-Debruyne, 2007; Robinson et al., 1994; Scholarios & Marks, 2004). The findings from this study demonstrate a positive and statistically significant relationship between employee perceptions of WLB psychological contract fulfilment and job satisfaction. This is consistent with previous psychological contract and work-life balance studies. Employee perceptions of psychological contract fulfilment (i.e., the keeping of organisational promises and commitments) are consistently linked to enhanced levels of employee job satisfaction (e.g., Pate et al., 2003; Robinson et al., 1994). In contrast, psychological contract breaches have been found to undermine employees’ job satisfaction (e.g., Robinson & Rousseau, 1994; Tekleab & Taylor, 2003). A meta-analysis by Kossek and Ozeki (1998) found a consistent and negative relationship between all forms of work-life conflict and job satisfaction. Hammer et al. (2005) demonstrated that individuals’ use of organisational work-life supports was positively related to job satisfaction, and Forsythe and Polzer-Debruyne (2007) found a positive relationship between visible organisational support for work-life balance and job satisfaction.

The findings of the current study extend our understanding of the WLB psychological contract by testing a direct employee attitudinal link between perceptions of organisations keeping work-life balance promises and commitments and employees’ job satisfaction.

The female control variable demonstrates a statistically significant positive relationship with job satisfaction. This finding is consistent with some previous studies from the literature. Lambert, Hogan and Barton (2001) found that males reported a lower level of job satisfaction
than females, while Luchak and Gellatly (2002) found females more satisfied at work than males.

The effect of WLB psychological contract fulfilment on affective commitment

Organisational commitment describes the strength of an individual’s identification with and attachment to an organisation, and, alongside job satisfaction, it is considered a critical employee attitude (Meyer & Allen, 1984; Zhao et al., 2007). Consistent with previous researchers in the field (e.g., Dulac et al., 2008; Muse et al., 2008), the current study focuses on affective organisational commitment rather than continuance or normative organisational commitment due to social-exchange underpinnings. Affective commitment refers to ‘employees’ emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in, the organisation’ (Allen & Myer, 1990; p. 1). Prior research has identified that both affective commitment and performance provide the means by which employees reciprocate or repay their employer for favourable treatment (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Affective commitment is an important work attitude for organisations to foster, because employees reporting higher levels of affective commitment are more likely to report high levels of organisational citizenship behaviours and lower intentions to quit (Meyer, Allen & Smith, 1993).

Consistent with research by Sturges et al. (2005), the current study demonstrated that employee perceptions of WLB psychological contract fulfilment were positively associated with affective commitment. This finding is also consistent with previous studies demonstrating that psychological contract breach is negatively related to affective commitment (e.g., Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 2000; Dulac et al., 2008; Suazo, 2009). However, it is important to note that not all previous research has revealed a positive
relationship between psychological contract fulfilment and affective commitment. In a study by Conway and Briner (2002), the psychological contract was used as an explanatory framework to compare and explain work attitude differences between full-time and part-time employees. The Conway and Briner (2002) study failed to establish a statistically significant and positive relationship between psychological contract fulfilment and affective commitment. These contrary findings are possibly explained by the nature of their sample from the banking and retail supermarket sectors which included a high number of part-time employees. Seventy-one percent and 65% of the two samples used in the Conway and Briner study were part-time employees, while only 28% of respondents in the current study worked on a part-time or casual basis. This is an important distinction, because the Conway and Briner (2002) study demonstrated a negative relationship between psychological contract fulfilment and affective commitment for the part-time employees included in their study, and this may explain why the researchers failed to find a statistically significant and positive relationship between psychological contract fulfilment and affective commitment when analysing the data from the overall sample.

The positive relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and affective commitment is, however, consistent with previous findings in the WLB field. In a study by Muse and colleagues (2008), employees’ use and perceived value of a work-life benefit package are positively related to feelings of perceived organisational support and affective commitment to the organisation. Furthermore, Scholarios and Marks (2004) demonstrated a positive relationship between perceived flexibility and employees’ affective commitment.

In the hierarchical multiple regression analysis, several control variables demonstrated a statistically significant relationship to affective commitment. Being female and organisational
tenure were positively related to affective commitment while working at Organisations A, B, C and D all predicted a negative relationship with affective commitment.

The negative relationship between organisational tenure and affective commitment is consistent with previous research conducted in an Australian setting. In a study by Beck and Wilson (2000) of 479 Australian police officers, the relationship between affective commitment and organisational tenure was negative and statistically significant. As noted by Beck and Wilson (2000), the negative relationship between commitment and organisational tenure might be explained by the nature of the commitment component under examination. In a meta-analysis by Mathieu and Zajac (1990), organisational tenure was positively associated with calculative commitment. Similar in nature to the continuance commitment construct developed by Allen and Meyer (1990), calculative commitment is defined as ‘a structural phenomenon which occurs as a result of individual-organisational transactions and alterations in side-bets or investments over time’ (Hrebiniak & Alutto, 1972, p. 556). According to Mathieu and Zajac (1990), individuals become bound to the organisation over time because they have side-bets or sunk costs such as pension or superannuation plans invested in their organisation and literally cannot ‘afford’ to separate themselves from it, whereas affective commitment, similar to the attitudinal commitment component utilised in the Mathieu and Zajac (1990) study, relates to the individual’s level of identification with and involvement in the organisation, that is, employees are committed to the organisation because they believe in it. When combined, these findings suggest that the nature of the commitment component under investigation may determine the strength and nature of the relationship between organisational tenure and organisational commitment. That is, the nature of the commitment construct under examination in the current study (affective as opposed to continuance)
explains the negative relationship with organisational tenure and is consistent with previous research.

The negative relationship between gender and affective commitment in the current study is also consistent with other previous research. For example, studies by Mowday, Porter and Steers (1982) and Mathieu and Zajac (1990) indicated that women tend to be more committed than men. Grusky (1966) proposed that women would become more committed to an organisation because they fought harder to overcome more barriers than men to gain membership. However, Mohamad, Taylor and Hassan (2006) observe that empirical studies investigating this relationship have yielded contradictory results. Aranya, Kushnir and Valency (1986) and Marsden, Kalleberg, and Cook (1993) report that men experience greater commitment than women, and it is also important to note that other studies have found no direct main effects relationship between gender and commitment (e.g., Aven, Parker & McEvoy, 1993; Mohamed, Taylor & Hassan, 2006).

The finding that Organisations A, B, C and D were all negatively associated with affective commitment (from both the private hospital and local government industry sectors) may suggest that these organisations have certain characteristics or work environments that result in what Beck and Wilson (2000, p. 132) refer to as ‘universal repulsion for their employees, where work experiences flag a lack of support, justice, and value’. According to the researchers, in these organisations employees build up an inventory of unfavourable or negative work experiences and this leads to decreased levels of commitment (Beck & Wilson, 2000). The structural and cultural characteristics of these organisations that contribute to the negative relationship with affective commitment were not explored as part of this study but represent an interesting future research direction.
The effect of WLB psychological contract fulfilment on intention to leave

Turnover intentions report on the subjective probability that an individual employee will leave his or her organisation over a certain period of time (Zhao et al., 2007). Intention to leave the organisation is a common response to negative events that take place at work (Lum et al., 1998). Psychological contract breach has been consistently and positively associated with employees’ intention to leave the organisation (Dulac et al., 2008; Suazo, 2009). The current study found support for Hypothesis 10, that WLB psychological contract fulfilment would be negatively associated with intentions to leave the organisation, and this confirms that employees who report that their organisation has kept promises and commitments around work-life balance support are less likely to consider leaving that organisation. This finding is also consistent with the work of Parzefall (2008) demonstrating a negative relationship between psychological contract fulfilment and intention to leave the organisation.

Beyond supporting the existing psychological contract literature demonstrating that psychological contract breach is linked to turnover intentions, the current study also supports the WLB literature that has linked organisational support for enhanced employee work-life balance and reduced intentions to leave the organisation (e.g., Bilal, Zia-ur-Rehman & Raza, 2010; Forsyth & Polzer-Debruyne, 2007; Scholarios & Marks, 2004). In fact, minimising voluntary turnover, particularly of women, is one of the primary drivers of organisational WLB strategies (Divya, Suganthi, & Samuel, 2010; Hewlett & Luce, 2005).

The female control variable demonstrated a negative and statistically significant relationship with the intention to leave the organisation attitude. Females were less likely to report intentions to leave the organisation. A number of gender effects have been proposed in the literature to explain why females might be more inclined to stay with their current employer,
including the effect of the ‘the paradox of the contented female worker’ (Valentine, 2000, p. 133), where females feel relatively content with their pay and jobs compared with their male counterparts. Furthermore, it is conceivable that, if females perceive job insecurity in the broader labour market due to gendered female stereotypes, they may be less likely to consider leaving their current employer. However, research on the gender and turnover intentions relationship is not conclusive. In a study by Weisberg and Kirschenbaum (1993), gender did not explain the intention to leave, but did prove to be a significant factor in explaining actual turnover.

The preceding sections have presented the results and discussion of the hypotheses testing the emotional and attitudinal responses to WLB psychological contract fulfilment using self-report data from employees at the seven participating organisations. All forms of emotional (trust) and attitudinal (job satisfaction, affective commitment, intention to leave) responses to WLB psychological contract fulfilment were associated as hypothesised. The following three sections outline the results and discussion of the hypotheses exploring employees’ behavioural responses to WLB psychological contract fulfilment in the form of performance. The discussion based on analysis in the following three sections focussing on in-role performance and contextual performance directed at colleagues and the organisation is based on the self-report data provided from employees and the matched performance ratings provided by their supervisors.

**The effect of WLB psychological contract fulfilment on in-role performance**

Work behaviours, including in-role performance, are employees’ work-related actions and, when compared to the workplace emotions and attitudes (e.g., trust, job satisfaction, affective commitment, intention to leave), can have a more tangible impact on the workplace (Zhao et
al., 2007). As such, in-role performance has been extensively researched in both the psychological contract and work-life balance literature (e.g., Forsythe & Polzer-Debruyne, 2007; Muse et al., 2008; Sturges et al., 2005; Turnley et al., 2003).

Underpinned by social exchange theory, this study predicted that employees would reciprocate WLB psychological contract fulfilment through the effective performance of formal job responsibilities (i.e., their in-role performance behaviour). In the current study, supervisors provided their evaluation of their direct reports’ in-role performance and, contrary to expectations, employee perceptions of WLB psychological contract fulfilment were not linked to enhanced in-role performance. This finding is inconsistent with the results in the literature exploring psychological contracts and in-role performance. From the psychological contract literature, fulfilment has been positively associated with in-role job performance (e.g., Turnley et al., 2003; Sturges et al., 2003), while breach has been negatively associated with in-role job performance (e.g., Suazo et al., 2007; Suazo, 2009). However, results from the work-life balance literature are mixed and do not support the view that employees always recalibrate their work performance based on their perceptions of organisational support for work-life balance. Forsythe and Polzer-Debruyne (2007) demonstrated a statistically significant negative relationship between perceptions of organisational work-life balance support and in-role performance. In a study of health professionals, Muse (2008) failed to establish a statistically significant relationship between work-interfering with family (WIF) conflict or family-interfering with work (FIW) conflict and in-role performance. The findings of Muse (2008) and the current study are, however, at odds with results from the WLB literature more generally, which demonstrates increased job performance resulting from employee perceptions of WLB organisational support (e.g., Friedman & Greenhaus, 2000; Kossek, Colquitt & Noe, 2001; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002).
One possible explanation for the lack of support for the prediction that WLB psychological contract fulfilment would lead to enhanced job performance is the sample used in the current study. At least two-thirds of the sample in the current study was involved in what could be described as civic duties (e.g., local government employees serving their local communities, nurses providing health care to patients). Drawing on Muse (2008), and given the high proportion of respondents in the current study involved in civic duties, it could be argued that these types of employees perform their prescribed duties at a level regardless of their sense of WLB psychological contract fulfilment, due to the effect of their motivation to serve the public. According to the principles of Public Service Motivation (PSM), employees working in roles that service the public (including local government and health) are ‘motivated to perform more effectively because their jobs provide opportunities to express and fulfil their values of compassion, self-sacrifice, civic duty and policy making’ (Wright & Grant, 2010, p. 694). A number of studies have linked PSM to enhanced levels of job performance (e.g., Alonso & Lewis, 2001; Naff & Crum, 1999), and while Wright (2007) cautions that the direction of causality between PSM and enhanced performance is unclear the results may shed some light on the results from the current study that failed to reveal a positive relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and in-role performance.

In addition, the data analysis for this hypothesis relies on self-report data collected from employees for the WLB psychological contract variable and data collected from supervisors for the in-role performance variable. The result raises interesting questions about the way supervisors view and rate their employees and also prompts questions about whether supervisors rate employees who enjoy the benefits of work-life balance support more harshly than they rate associates who report low levels of work-life balance support. While this relationship remains untested in the empirical literature, support has been found for a number
of other factors that bias supervisor ratings including supervisors’ liking for subordinates, subordinates’ qualifications and ethnicity (Lefkowitz & Battista, 1995).

In summary, this finding suggests that while employees may reciprocate in the form of trust, job satisfaction, commitment and reduced intentions to leave when they perceive the organisation has fulfilled their WLB psychological contract, no support could be found for the suggestion that in-role performance forms part of the social exchange process. This finding warrants further investigation, using a more diverse and larger sample, because expectations around improved employee in-role performance is one of the key strategic levers for organisations developing and implementing WLB programs (Forsyth & Polzer-Debruyne, 2007).

The effect of WLB psychological contract fulfilment on contextual interpersonal facilitation performance (CIFP)

Unlike in-role job performance, contextual performance behaviours (e.g., helping behaviours directed at both co-workers and the organisation), as conceptualised in this study, are not tied to any one specific job, but are common to many jobs within the organisation (Muse et al., 2008). Similar to the organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) construct, contextual performance describes another way the employee reciprocates favourably towards the organisation as part of the social exchange process when she or he perceives the organisation has delivered on its promises and commitments and/or provided organisational support (Muse et al., 2008; Turnley et al., 2003). While in-role performance relies on technical skill and knowledge to perform a certain role within the organisation, contextual performance is extra-role and involves behavioural patterns that are directed towards the employee’s co-workers or the organisation itself (Van Scotter et al., 2000). Beyond the organisational pay-offs for
contextual performance behaviours, they can also benefit the individual employee. Van Scotter et al. (2000) reported a positive relationship between contextual performance and informal rewards (e.g., recommended for training or nominated for an award) offered to employees.

Examples of contextual interpersonal facilitation performance (CIFP) behaviours include praising a co-worker or helping a co-worker without being asked and encouraging others to overcome their differences and get along (Van Scotter et al., 2000). This kind of behaviour is important to the overall performance of the organisation because it builds on organisational social capital (Chuang & Liao, 2010; Bolino et al., 2002).

In the current study, employees reporting WLB psychological contract fulfilment were more likely to engage in CIFP behaviours. This finding suggests that this social-exchange and reciprocation by employees takes the form of helping and supporting their co-workers and is consistent with previous research from the psychological contract and WLB literature (e.g., Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 2000; Muse, 2008; Turnley et al., 2003). However, the finding also extends our knowledge of psychological contracts and WLB. The results specifically link the WLB psychological contract component to interpersonal facilitation beyond the global psychological contract construct or the previously researched construct of WLB supervisor support.

The effect of WLB psychological contract fulfilment on contextual job dedication performance (CJDP)

Contextual job dedication performance (CJDP) presents another way the employee repays the organisation for fulfilling his or her WLB psychological contract by behaving in a way that
ultimately benefits the organisation. Unlike CIFP that is directed at co-workers, the organisation is the target of CJDP (Van Scotter et al., 2000; Williams & Anderson, 1991). Examples of the job dedication construct include taking the initiative to solve a problem and working harder than necessary (Muse et al., 2008).

In the current study, the statistically significant and positive relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and CJDP demonstrates that when employees perceive that the organisation has kept its WLB promises and commitments they reciprocate by increasing their discretionary dedication to their job. This finding is consistent with empirical research exploring psychological contracts and contextual performance and related constructs, including OCB and discretionary performance. Research by Coyle-Shapiro and Kessler (2000) demonstrated a link between psychological contract breach and diminished OCB performance. The results from the current study are also consistent with the research by Turnley and colleagues (2003) which demonstrated a positive relationship between psychological contract fulfilment and contextual performance in the form of job dedication (referred to as OCB-Organisation in the Turnley study). Similar to the Turnley et al. (2003) study, the results from this study demonstrate that WLB psychological contract fulfilment is more strongly related to contextual performance directed at the organisation than to contextual performance behaviours directed at one’s colleagues. From the WLB literature, Muse et al. (2008) demonstrated a link between the perceived value and use of work-life benefits, perceived organisational support, affective commitment and contextual behaviour (including CJDP), while in a study by Lambert (2000), employee assessments of the usefulness of work-life benefits were a significant and positive predictor of OCBs.
The relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and CJDP is an important relationship to study because the extant research presents mixed outcomes of CJDP when investigated at the organisational and individual level. While CJDP has been linked to enhanced organisational functioning and effectiveness (e.g., Werner, 2000), the findings linking various forms of job dedication to individual outcomes are mixed. In a study of air force mechanics, Van Scotter (1999) demonstrated the potential positive effects for the individual of contextual job performance, in that it was linked to promotion eligibility and re-enlistment eligibility. In addition, Van Scotter et al. (2000) demonstrated that CJDP affects an employee’s career advancement and informal rewards (e.g., nominations for awards, access to training opportunities) over time.

However, it is important to acknowledge that several research studies have linked contextual and other OCB type behaviours to negative employee outcomes at the individual level. Drawing on the work of Organ and Ryan (1995), Bolino and Turnley (2005) demonstrated that a form of contextual performance behaviour, referred to as individual initiative within the OCB framework, is positively associated with higher levels of employee role overload, job stress, and work-family conflict. Similarly, Kelliher and Anderson (2010) revealed that work intensification was a potential and unanticipated consequence of adopting flexible working practices.

In a qualitative study of 37 employees, Kelliher and Anderson (2010) presented evidence showing that flexible workers record higher levels of job satisfaction and organisational commitment than their non-flexible colleagues. On the negative side, the employees also experience higher forms of work intensification through imposed intensification, enabled intensification and, of relevance to this study, intensification as an act of reciprocation or
exchange in the form of merely expending additional effort toward the organisation and co-workers. The statistically significant relationship revealed in the current study presents an interesting future direction to examine any links between WLB psychological contract fulfilment, CJDP, work intensification and work-life conflict. In other words, in a bid to ‘repay’ the organisation for fulfilling the employee’s WLB psychological contract, the employee expends additional effort aimed at the organisation, and potentially experiences the negative consequences of work intensification and subsequent work-life conflict.

The mediating role of trust in the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and employee attitudes and behaviours

Trust in its own right is an important work-related emotion expressed by employees that forms the cornerstone of the social exchange relationship between employee and employer (Aggarwal et al., 2007). Drawing on the work of Weiss and Cropanzano (1996) and Zhao and colleagues (2007), Affective Events Theory (AET) provided a theoretical framework for examining if and how trust as an affective state mediates the positive relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and workplace attitudes and behaviours.

Based on Zhao and colleagues’ (2007) meta-analysis demonstrating the mediating role trust has on the relationship between psychological contract breach and job satisfaction, affective commitment and intention to leave, the current study extends their research by demonstrating that trust also mediates the positive relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and job satisfaction and affective commitment and the negative relationship with intention to leave the organisation. In other words, when an employee perceives the organisation is keeping the promises and commitments it made in relation to WLB support, this triggers an emotional response in the form of enhanced trust, which then leads to greater
levels of job satisfaction and affective commitment. Furthermore, the emotional response of enhanced trust levels also reduces the likelihood of turnover intentions. These findings were consistent with a range of studies from both the psychological contract and work-life literature that focus on breach or workplace flexibility and the mediating role of trust in generating attitudinal and behavioural responses (e.g., Montes & Irving, 2008; Robinson & Morrison, 1995; Scholarios & Marks, 2004). Combined, the direct affects results of Hypotheses 7 to 10, and partially mediating results of Hypotheses 14a to 14c, extend the work of Zhao and colleagues (2007) and Scholarios and Marks (2004), which focus on psychological contract breach. They do this by applying AET theory to examine the positive role that WLB psychological contract fulfilment has on a range of employee emotions and attitudes and the mediating role of trust.

However, no support was found for the mediating role trust as an emotional response plays out in the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and in-role performance. This lack of support is perhaps not surprising, given that no main effects relationship was established between psychological contract fulfilment and in-role performance in the testing of Hypothesis 11. The finding is inconsistent with the findings of the Robinson (1996) study that demonstrated trust plays a mediating role in the relationship between psychological contract breach and in-role performance. As previously discussed, this could be explained by the nature of the sample used in this study including a large number of respondents who worked in hospitals and local government organisations in roles that may include an element of public service motivation that elicited a level of in-role performance, regardless of perceptions of WLB psychological contract fulfilment (Alonso & Lewis, 2001). Another potential explanation is the possibility of supervisor bias in terms of the in-role
performance rating matched to their subordinates’ WLB psychological contract fulfilment and trust data.

In relation to the mediating role of trust and contextual performance the results were mixed. Consistent with the Robinson (1996) study, trust did mediate the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and contextual performance directed at colleagues (i.e., interpersonal facilitation) but failed to mediate the relationship with the job dedication dimension of contextual performance. These results from the current study are not easily explained, but they suggest that WLB psychological contract fulfilment leads to enhanced levels of dedication to the job, irrespective of the impact on employee trust, while helping colleagues is dependent upon enhanced levels of trust. These conflicting findings between the role that trust plays on mediating the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and in-role and contextual performance are important, because they signal the requirement for additional research to better understand the role that trust has on the WLB psychological contract fulfilment experience.

The moderating role of WLB organisational justice in the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and trust

Underpinned by sensemaking theory that suggests employees interpret their responses to certain events based on their actual experiences and perceptions within an organisation, Hypotheses 15a, 15b, 15c, and 15d predicted that positive employee perceptions of the four dimensions of WLB organisation justice would strengthen the positive relationship between WLB psychological contract and trust in the organisation. This is because of the trust-building nature of WLB distributional, procedural, interactional and informational justice perceptions (Lo & Aryee, 2003; Saunders & Thornhill, 2004). This set of hypotheses was built on the
conceptual work by Poelmans and Beham (2008), proposing that employee perceptions of fairness and justice would dilute an employee’s negative response to not being able to access a WLB policy, and the empirical work of Kickul et al. (2002) and Seigel et al. (2005). Contrary to expectations, all four moderating interaction variables failed to reach significance. These results suggest that the affective reaction to WLB psychological contract fulfilment in the form of trust is strong and direct, regardless of the assessments employees make about the fairness of the outcome, process or concern shown for them in relation to WLB support, as conceptualised in the four WLB justice dimensions outlined in Chapter Two, Section 2.11.1.

Despite the lack of support for the moderating role of WLB justice perceptions, employee perceptions of procedural and interpersonal justice did have a positive and significant relationship with trust, and these findings warrant future research to unpack the role justice perceptions perform in the WLB psychological contract fulfilment experience. One possible explanation is that employees engage in sensemaking behaviours only to explain and justify unfavourable organisational perceptions such as psychological contract breach. However, when they perceive that their psychological contract has been fulfilled, even to a small degree, employees do not necessarily rationalise the decision by assessing the decision’s fairness.

6.3. Summary

This chapter has provided a detailed discussion of the study’s results outlined in Chapters Four and Five. As expected, employee perceptions of effective communication and awareness of WLB policies and programs performs a significant signalling role in shaping employees’ WLB psychological contract. This is an important finding, given the attention many organisations are now affording to their WLB employer branding strategies that actively promote their WLB credentials (Harrington & Ladge, 2009; Mescher et al., 2010; Thompson
& Aspinwall, 2009). The discussion also centred on the sensemaking behaviours employees engage in when reconciling their awareness of WLB policies and their own experiences of WLB supervisor support in the formation of their WLB psychological contract. As highlighted in this chapter, a supportive supervisor heightened the respondent’s WLB psychological contract when combined with high levels of WLB policy awareness.

The discussion identified the positive role that WLB supervisor support and WLB organisational culture play in the lives of employees. While both factors have been previously linked to employees’ use of work-family benefits, reduced work-family conflict, stress and enhanced health and wellbeing (e.g., Kossek & Hammer, 2008; Lappiere et al., 2008; Thompson et al., 1999), this study demonstrated that both factors also perform an important role in employee perceptions of WLB psychological contract fulfilment.

The chapter also included a discussion on the social-exchange relationship between employee perceptions of WLB psychological contract fulfilment and a range of important work-related emotions, attitudes and behaviour including trust, affective commitment, job satisfaction, intention to leave the organisation and contextual performance. In addition, AET explained the mediating role trust performed in the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and contextual interpersonal facilitation performance. Finally, the discussion highlighted the lack of support for the hypotheses predicting that the four dimensions of WLB organisational justice (i.e., distributive, procedural, interpersonal and informational justice) would moderate the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and employee trust.
The final chapter will discuss the study’s theoretical, methodological and practical contributions, identify the limitations of the study, and present the future research directions emerging from the study before drawing final conclusions.
Chapter Seven

Key findings, contributions and future research directions

7.1. Introduction

In Chapter One the research problem that forms the focus of the study was introduced and the directions of the research project were established. Chapter Two reviewed the relevant WLB and psychological contract literature and mapped out the development of the research questions and hypotheses. Chapter Three detailed the method adopted to address the research questions and empirically test the hypotheses. Chapter Four reported the results of Hypotheses 1 to 4, exploring factors that explain the formation of the WLB psychological contract. Chapter Five presented the results of Hypotheses 5 and 6, focussing on the factors antecedent to employee perceptions of WLB psychological contract fulfilment, and Hypotheses 7 to 15, exploring the outcomes and interpretations of WLB psychological contract fulfilment. Chapter Six presented a detailed discussion of the results of the data analysis. In this chapter, a summary of the key findings, contributions and limitations of the study are presented. In addition, this chapter identifies a range of future research directions that emerge from the study before the overall conclusions are drawn.

7.2. Key Findings

This research study sought to address five primary research questions: 1) What is the relationship between employee perceptions of effective communication of WLB programs, WLB policy awareness and WLB psychological contract formation? 2) What is the relationship between WLB supervisor support, WLB organisational culture and WLB psychological contract formation? 3) What is the relationship between WLB supervisor support, WLB organisational culture and WLB psychological contract formation? 4) What is
the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and employee trust, job satisfaction, affective commitment, intention to leave the organisation and in-role and contextual performance? 5) What effect does WLB distributional, procedural, interpersonal and informational justice have on the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and trust?

Drawing on the work-life and psychological contract literature, the WLB psychological contract was used as the central construct to study these five relationships from the employee’s perspective.

In summary, the current study demonstrated that employee perceptions of effective communication of WLB policies and programs and awareness of WLB policies did form WLB psychological contracts. Furthermore, WLB supervisor support also performed a role in forming WLB psychological contracts due to its moderating influence on WLB policy awareness. Both WLB supervisor support and WLB organisational culture performed an important antecedent role in fulfilling employees’ WLB psychological contracts. WLB psychological contract fulfilment was associated with enhanced employee trust, job satisfaction, affective commitment and contextual performance directed at both the organisation and colleagues. WLB psychological contract fulfilment also reduces the employee’s intention to leave the organisation. In addition to the main effects relationship trust had with WLB psychological contract fulfilment, trust also mediated the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and job satisfaction, affective commitment, intention to leave the organisation and contextual performance directed at colleagues (i.e., interpersonal facilitation). Finally, organisational justice dimensions failed to moderate the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and trust.
7.3. Contributions of the research

By drawing on both the WLB and psychological contract literatures, this study has made a number of important theoretical, methodological and practical contributions to the existing psychological contract and/or work-life balance field.

7.3.1. Theoretical, knowledge-based and methodological contributions

The hypotheses and relationships analysed in Chapter Four of the thesis, focussing on the formation of the WLB psychological contract, represents an important theoretical contribution of the study. While previous studies from researchers, including Botsford (2009) and Xu (2008), have explored the responses to work-family psychological contracts, this research study extends theory in the area of both work-life and psychological contracts by using signalling theory to examine how employees form WLB psychological contracts in the first place. The study extends theory development in the field by identifying and examining what factors lead to WLB psychological contract formation, how those factors are related and the psychological and social factors that justify the selection of the factors and the proposed relationships between them (Whetten, 1989).

Both WLB policy awareness and employee perceptions of effective communication of WLB promises and commitments had a positive relationship with WLB psychological contract formation. This is due to the signalling role that both factors perform in raising employee expectations for WLB support. This is an important contribution, as it answers calls by researchers in the field of signalling theory to determine if human resource policies and communication strategies do indeed shape employee expectations in the form of psychological contracts (e.g., Aggarwal & Bhargava, 2009; Suazo et al., 2009). In addition, drawing on sensemaking theory, WLB supervisor support mediated the relationship between
WLB policy awareness and WLB psychological contract formation. The relationship between these factors is explained by the way employees cognitively reconcile (or make sense of) the signals organisations send, in the form of WLB policies, and their own actual experiences within the organisation (De Vos et al., 2003). This sensemaking behaviour impacts on the formation of the employee’s WLB psychological contract.

Furthermore, the study extends the research of Guest and Conway (2002) by using the same items to explore if employee perceptions of effective communication of WLB policies and programs do indeed form psychological contracts. The Guest and Conway study focussed on managers’ perspectives that effective uses of these forms of communication were associated with a clearer set of organisational promises and commitments to employees. This research extends the Guest and Conway (2002) findings by applying the concepts to the employees’ perspective and specifically to the formation of WLB psychological contracts. The combined findings of the two studies demonstrate that both managers and employees believe the effective use of communication methods, including recruitment advertising, inductions, line manager briefings etc., do indeed lead to a better understanding of the employee’s psychological contract.

The sample used in the study represents an important methodological contribution. The study answers the call of previous researchers in the psychological contract field to use a more diverse sample of research participants beyond MBA students, managers and other occupational elite categories of employees (e.g., Deery et al., 2006; Robinson & Morrison, 2000; Turnley & Feldman, 1999). Turnley and Feldman (1999, p. 383) highlight the potential pitfalls of over-relying on MBA students by calling for research ‘to aggressively expand its sample base lest it be reduced to the investigation of the disappointments and perceived
entitlements of highly paid new MBAs simply experiencing “entry shock” as they make the transition from school to work.’ This study addresses this issue by sampling a diverse range of employees employed in a variety of roles, including nurses, accountants, gardeners, swimming instructors, engineers, catering assistants and production line workers, across seven organisations. Furthermore, by selecting Australian organisations the study addresses the calls of both psychological contract and WLB researchers to increase the representation of Australian data in both streams of research. For example, O’Donohue, Donohue and Grimmer (2007) highlighted the lack of psychological contract research based in the Australian context, while Bardoel, De Cieri and Santos (2008) and Hayman (2009) also identified the opportunity for additional WLB research to be conducted in the Australian setting to advance both knowledge and management practice.

In addition to the theoretical and methodological contributions, a number of insightful contributions to knowledge emerge from this study. The first contribution to knowledge of this study is the unification of the WLB and psychological contract constructs to explore employee perceptions of organisational promises and commitments to support their work-life balance needs. Previous researchers have explored the issue from a work-family perspective (e.g., Botsford, 2009; Heywood et al., 2010; Xu, 2008). The current study is the first, to the researcher’s knowledge, to explore the broader construct of the work-life balance psychological contract and to utilise existing measures of WLB psychological formation and fulfilment developed by De Vos and colleagues (2003) and De Vos and Meganck (2009), respectively. Given that it is widely agreed that concerns around managing life outside of work extend far beyond family responsibilities (e.g., Brough & O’Driscoll, 2010; Harrington, 2007), this study examining how employees form WLB psychological contracts in the first
place, and respond to perceived fulfilment, presents an important extension to the existing literature.

The testing of the relationship between psychological contract fulfilment and intention to leave the organisation presents a second contribution to work-life and psychological contract knowledge. Previous research has only tested the positive relationship between intention to leave the organisation with psychological contract breach, while this research presents a contribution to knowledge by testing the relationship between intention to leave and fulfilment. As hypothesised, the relationship was negative and statistically significant.

The utilisation of the WLB organisational culture measure in this study to test the role it performs in forming and fulfilling the WLB psychological contract presents another contribution to knowledge. In the extant research, organisational culture has been consistently shown to play an important role in shaping employees willingness to utilise work-life balance policies (e.g., Haas, Allard & Hwang, 2002; McDonald et al., 2007; Thompson et al., 1999). This study presents the first use of the WLB organisational culture measure in testing the role that organisational culture performs in forming and fulfilling WLB psychological contracts. This is important due to the organisational impact of the employee outcomes explored in this study. In addition to encouraging employees to actually use WLB policies, a supportive WLB organisational culture can play a key role in fulfilling the employees’ WLB psychological contract and ultimately enhancing the employees’ trust, job satisfaction, affective commitment, intention to leave and contextual performance. Drawing on the tenets of strategic HRM, these outcomes are directly linked to the quality of the organisations’ human capital and ultimate organisational performance and competitiveness (Becker & Huselid, 2006; Wright, Gardner & Moynihan, 2003).
7.3.2. Practical contributions

In addition to the theoretical, methodological and knowledge-based contributions of the study, the research results and subsequent discussion present a range of practical contributions. Firstly, given that organisations are increasingly using the promise of work-life balance support as part of their employer branding strategy, it is important that the architects of these programs understand the potential impact they have on forming the individual employee’s psychological contract in the first place and subsequent responses to fulfilment or breach. As has been argued in this study, the HR function plays an important role in shaping the WLB signals sent out by organisational agents through their day-to-day work activities performed in developing HR policy, internal communications, employer branding strategies and implementation, and through training and developing line managers in WLB issues (Milliken et al., 1998; Polach, 2003). Given that organisations are increasingly using more sophisticated forms of recruitment advertising and on-boarding programs as part of their employer branding strategy in a competitive labour market, this study’s findings provide a timely reminder to HR professionals of the potential impact these activities have on their employees’ WLB psychological contract.

The second practical contribution relates to the examination of the outcomes to WLB psychological contract fulfilment. Enhancing the employee-related responses to WLB psychological contract fulfilment (e.g., job satisfaction, affective commitment, performance) included in this study is an important part of the HR practitioner’s brief. While this study demonstrated the positive employee responses to WLB psychological contract fulfilment, the potential negative outcomes of psychological contract breach, including diminished trust, job satisfaction, affective commitment and performance and increased intentions to leave the organisation, are also well documented in the research (e.g., Deery et al., 2006; Suazo, 2009;
Zhao et al., 2007). These findings point to the need for HR practitioners and their organisations to ensure that the organisation and its agents can realistically deliver upon the expectations they are creating in the form of WLB psychological contracts. Supervisor support was a key antecedent factor to WLB psychological contract fulfilment. For organisations to take full advantage of their WLB employer branding investments and thus enhance WLB psychological contract fulfilment, the findings from this research underlines the importance for HR Managers to educate and support supervisors. This may be in the form of providing policies, processes, training and mentoring that assist the supervisor in providing the WLB support required of them from their direct reports (Spinks, 2003).

A third practical contribution relates to the study’s examination of the role of supervisor support and organisational culture. Beyond the role that HR practitioners play in supporting and developing supervisors, supervisors themselves perform an important and direct role in communicating, explaining and implementing WLB policies and demonstrating WLB supportive behaviours (Hammer et al., 2009; McCarthy et al., 2010). The current study explores this role in the form of supportive WLB supervisor behaviour. Some examples of WLB supervisor behaviour studied include showing concern for the employee as a person, being helpful to the employee in the case of a family or personal emergency and being understanding when the employee has a personal or family problem which interferes with their work. Furthermore, a supportive WLB organisational culture exists when employees are encouraged to strike a balance between their work and personal lives and feel comfortable to discuss their personal life at work (Thompson et al., 1999). Supportive WLB supervisor behaviour and a supportive WLB organisational culture were positively associated with fulfilment of the WLB psychological contract, and WLB psychological contract fulfilment was linked with enhanced job satisfaction, affective commitment, contextual performance
directed at both the organisation and work colleagues, and negatively associated with intentions to leave the organisation. These findings reinforce previous WLB research (e.g., Hammer et al., 2009; Lambert, 2000; Thompson et al., 1999) and should inform business practice by way of aiding in the selection, development and promotion of supervisors, and by providing the impetus to drive cultural change towards a more supportive organisation in the form of support for employees’ work and non-work aspirations and responsibilities.

Following this, the findings point to the practical importance, at the organisational level, for HR professionals to conduct an audit of the WLB support and awareness levels of supervisors and examine the level of WLB support its existing organisational culture provides before developing any WLB employer branding strategy. The research findings demonstrate that WLB policies and effective communication of WLB policies and programs that form the key components of the WLB employer branding strategy will increase employee expectations for WLB support. Specifically, it is recommended that strategies (e.g., supervisor and senior leader training, mentoring, cultural change programs) be actioned before steps are taken to actively promote and position the organisation as a flexible and WLB ‘friendly’ employer. WLB employer branding strategies involve considerable investment of resources. The findings from this research predict that for organisations to receive a return on that investment, in the form of enhanced employee trust, job satisfaction, affective commitment, contextual performance and reduced turnover intentions, requires supervisor support and a supportive WLB organisational culture. Organisational leaders are advised to avoid the temptation to respond to institutional or mimetic pressures (Peters & Heusinkveld, 2010) to promote the organisation as one that is flexible and supportive of its employees’ WLB needs without fully understanding the consequences of not delivering on the expectations it is creating. HR professionals play an important role in advocating for and ultimately
implementing a considered and carefully constructed approach to the organisation’s WLB strategy.

7.4. Limitations of the research

The limitations of the studies and directions for future research are discussed in two sections. The first section outlines the methodological limitations and the second section outlines the conceptual limitations.

7.4.1. Methodological limitations

Several methodological limitations relate to the study, including the low response rate, the use of a cross-sectional survey and research design and the lack of demographic data collected in the Stage 2 Survey. As mentioned in Section 3.3.1 of Chapter Three, the low response rate is a concern, but this was overcome by distributing the survey to a large sample of potential respondents. The analysis outlined in Chapter Three demonstrated that the final sample size of 627 respondents provided good statistical power. However, in future, researchers when extending this study may consider reducing the complexity and length of the survey in a bid to increase the response rate.

Given that the study used a cross-sectional research design, causality between the variables and relationships included in the study cannot be interpreted from the findings. As a result, only associations between the variables of interest can be drawn. As an example, Hypothesis 1 demonstrated a positive association between employee perceptions of effective communication of WLB promises/commitments and formation of the WLB psychological contract. Due to the cross-sectional nature of the research design this finding represents only a conservative test of the hypothesis. In order to test a more direct ‘cause and effect’
relationship between the two variables, a longitudinal research design, including data collected at two points in time, should be employed in future to determine if the independent variable (e.g., employee perceptions of effective communication of WLB promises/commitments) measured at one point of time leads to the formation of a WLB psychological contract at another point of time.

A further limitation of the study is the use of the single item measure for the intention to leave the organisation construct. A decision was made to use the single item measure in an attempt to reduce the length of the survey, a practice followed by many researchers (Tett & Meyer, 1993). However, despite the fact that using a single item measure for employee attitudes including job satisfaction and intention to leave (e.g. Choi, 2011; Holland, Pyman, Cooper & Teicher, 2011; Scholarios & Marks, 2004) is not uncommon in the literature, researchers have raised concerns about the reliability and validity of using single-item measures (e.g., Andrews & Whithey, 1976; Schriesheim, Powers, Scandura, Gardiner & Lankau, 1993). However, three issues should be considered when considering the impact of this limitation. First, a meta-analysis by Tett and Meyer (1993) found that the impact of single-item versus multi-item measurement of turnover intention was less than that of global job satisfaction. The authors attributed this to the “greater explicitness of intent-to-quit items” (Tett & Meyer, 1993, p. 281). As Tett and Meyer (1993) observe, and consistent with the single-item measure used in the current study, intent-to-quit items tend to ask respondents to indicate the likelihood of leaving the company within a specified interval (e.g., 6 months). Furthermore, Tett and Meyer (1993) argue that the explicit (or concrete) nature of this homogenous scale may not require aggregated multi-items to increase reliability and correlations with other variables for scales measuring more heterogeneous (or abstract) constructs. It is important to note that Wanous, Reichers and Hudy (1997) demonstrated that single-item measures of
overall job satisfaction converged strongly with multi-item measures of overall job satisfaction (r corrected for reliability = .67). Given that job satisfaction is considered a more heterogeneous construct than turnover intentions it is argued that the job satisfaction results support the selection of a single-item measure in the current study. Second, if the use of the single-item measure does result in a reduced level of reliability this would typically have the impact of attenuating effect sizes and reducing statistical power (Hair et al., 2006). Thus, the negative relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and intention to leave the organisation reported in the study (see Hypothesis 10) may be underestimated. Finally, the findings did support the hypothesis, thereby providing partial support for the criterion validity of this measure.

The generalisability of the results should also be considered with caution for two specific reasons. First, data were collected from only three industry sectors in Australia and this may limit the generalisability of the findings beyond the research sites included in this study. Second, the potential for non-response bias detected in the chi-square analysis of the sample, and reported in Section 3.3.2 of Chapter Three needs to be acknowledged. The analysis revealed the under-representation of part-time and casual employees detected in a large proportion of the sample. Given that the part-time and casual work status of the participants proved to be a statistically significant control variable in a number of relationships examined in the formation and response to WLB psychological contract fulfilment, these results should be approached with some caution. However, the research participants from the three industry sectors were involved in a large variety of job types, from accountants to nurses to gardeners, and this does extend the generalisability of the results. However, future research based on these findings should be extended to include a wide variety of industry sectors and employees.
employed on both a full time and part time or casual basis in different national cultural contexts to enhance the generalisability of the results.

A final methodological limitation relates to common method bias due to the use of single-source self-report data, which can inflate relationships among variables (Podsakoff et al., 2003). An additional potential effect of common method variance, demonstrated by Casciaro (1998), is that an individual’s personality, hierarchical position and position location can influence the accuracy of his or her perception, and this may be another potential example of how the use of self-report data has biased the final research results. In order to reduce the impact of common method variance, supervisor ratings of employee performance were obtained for Hypotheses 11, 12, 13, 14d, 14e and 14f. The use of supervisor ratings of employee performance is an important step in overcoming the potential problems outlined by Podsakoff and Organ (1986) associated with collecting self-report data at a single point in time. However it must be acknowledged that the decision to limit the supervisor rating survey (i.e. Stage 2 Survey) to questions only related to their reports’ performance may present a potential limitation in itself. The survey did not collect additional data from the supervisors (e.g. demographic or attitudinal data) that may have been used to control for any potential supervisor bias. However this trade-off was made by the researcher to reduce the size of the survey to increase the response rate and it follows the lead of other researchers that have published similar studies in reputable journals (e.g. Muse et al., 2008) and those that have warned against the potential danger of over using control variables when collecting supervisor ratings (Spector & Brannick, 2010).

It should be noted that it was not possible to employ a strategy of collecting a second source of data in all parts of the study due to the nature of the questions. Most of the variables in the
study are inherently subjective or intra-psychic in nature (e.g., trust, intention to leave the organisation), and gathering data from another source for these variables is not appropriate (Chang, 2010). Data on variables that are behavioural by nature and can be observed (e.g., in-role and contextual performance), however, were collected from another source. The researcher acknowledges the potential limitations of self-report data, and accordingly all results are interpreted with some caution. In future studies, the use of a longitudinal research design may address some of the potential problems associated with common-method bias. In addition to minimising the potential impact of common-method bias, longitudinal research can reveal insightful cause and effect relationships by collecting data at multiple points in time (Tharenou et al., 2007).

7.4.2. Conceptual limitations

In addition to the methodological limitations outlined in the previous section, it is important to identify the conceptual limitations associated with the study to guide future research directions in this field. First, the results only explained between 28% to 38% of the variance in the formation of a WLB psychological contract. These results indicate that other variables explain the remaining variance. Future research should include other potential important variables (e.g., nature of the work role, role identity) that may also serve to explain the variance in formation of the WLB psychological contract (e.g., Batt & Valcour, 2003; Carlson & Kacmar, 2000; Heywood, Siebert, & Xiangdong, 2010; Hoobler, 2007). Furthermore, employee perceptions of a supportive WLB organisational culture and supervisor support only explains 42% of the variance in WLB psychological contract fulfilment, suggesting that other factors (e.g., support from powerful colleagues) should also be explored and tested in future research to attempt to examine the variance in WLB psychological contract fulfilment unaccounted for in this study (e.g., Blair-Loy & Wharton, 2002). Other relationships tested in
the study revealed varying levels of unexplained variance that reveal the conceptual limitations of the study and provide opportunities for future research. For example, WLB psychological contract fulfilment only accounts for 16% of the variance in contextual interpersonal facilitation performance.

The second conceptual limitation of the study relates to the conceptual rationale behind Hypotheses 15a to 15d. This was highlighted by the fact that the analysis used to explore the role that WLB organisational justice performs in moderating the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and trust was not supported. The interaction terms used in testing Hypotheses 15a to 15d did not reveal the expected moderating effects hypothesised from the literature. The non-support of these hypotheses was surprising. The proposition that employee perceptions of WLB distributive, procedural, interactional and informational justice moderate the impact of WLB psychological contract fulfilment on employee trust was intuitively appealing due to the trust building nature of justice perceptions (e.g., Lo & Aryee, 2003; Saunders & Thornhill, 2004). Furthermore, the hypotheses were consistent with other conceptual and empirical contributions linking organisational justice with more negative cognitions, such as psychological contract breach and lack of WLB supervisor support and approval of policies (e.g., Kickul et al., 2002; Poelmans & Beham, 2008).

The lack of support of Hypotheses 15a to 15d could be the result of the conceptualisation of the various forms of WLB organisational justice drawn from a study by Judge and Colquitt (2004). Alternatively, the justice dimensions may be related to WLB psychological contract fulfilment in another configuration that was not considered in the development of the relevant hypotheses. For example, WLB distributive, procedural, interactional and informational justice may have a main effects (i.e., antecedent) relationship with WLB psychological
contract fulfilment, rather than act as a moderating variable, as outlined in this study. Future research should explore the role of employee perceptions of WLB organisational justice in different ways.

7.5. **Future research directions**

This study reveals a range of important research directions to extend the findings of the current study, and to further contribute to the knowledge and understanding of how WLB psychological contracts are formed and how employees respond to perceptions of psychological contract fulfilment. In addition to presenting new configurations of variables to study, the following sections identify potential alternative research methodologies to the cross-sectional study utilized in the current study to explore these concepts at both the individual and organisational level.

7.5.1. **Individual level research**

At the individual level, additional research is required to further explore the signalling role that specific WLB policies and communication methods perform in shaping the individual employee’s WLB psychological contract. While the current study did reveal a positive relationship between WLB policy awareness and communication effectiveness and WLB psychological contract formation, robust qualitative research would be especially useful in uncovering both the signalling and sensemaking processes that individual employees experience as they identify, interpret and process the multitude of signals that organisational agents send out in the form of communication of WLB policies and practices.

Furthermore, qualitative research could be used to provide rich insights into how organisational culture and supervisor support (or lack thereof) calibrate the employee’s
formation of WLB psychological contract and contribute to WLB psychological contract fulfilment. As highlighted in Section 6.2.2 of Chapter Six, research conducted at the individual level could explore the potential mediating role of WLB policy use in the positive relationship between employee perceptions of a supportive WLB organisational culture and WLB psychological contract fulfilment. Rich insights generated through qualitative research in combination with the empirical findings of this study would enhance the practical contributions of this line of research. The potential contribution lies in providing an enhanced level of understanding to all organisational agents involved in the formation and fulfilment of WLB organisational promises and commitments. Organisational agents include HR practitioners involved in the development and communication of WLB policies and programs, and the recruitment and induction process, supervisors who play a critical role in forming and fulfilling the WLB psychological contract, and senior leaders who play a key role in shaping the WLB organisational culture (Bond & Wise, 2003; Kossek et al., 2011; Koppes, 2008; McCarthy et al., 2010).

A range of control variables used in this study produced some interesting and unexpected findings that warrant additional future research to determine the differences between how individuals form and respond to WLB psychological contracts. The negative relationship between organisational tenure and WLB psychological contract formation is surprising. Recency theory may go some way to explain the finding that individuals report lower levels of WLB psychological contract formation as organisational tenure increases, because many WLB policies are communicated towards the beginning of an individual employee’s tenure (i.e., during recruitment and induction) (Caylor et al., 2007). However, given that it is widely agreed that interest in and concern for work-life balance is prevalent across all demographic segments (Smola & Sutton, 2002; Sturges & Guest, 2004), and, one would suspect, all stages
of organisational tenure, additional research is required to uncover why expectations of WLB support from the organisation decline the longer an employee is tenured at the organisation.

In addition, the impact of the female control variable consistently proved to be statistically significant and positively associated with a range of dependent variables studied, including trust, job satisfaction and affective commitment. The relationship between the female control variable and intention to leave the organisation was also statistically significant but negative. While gender was certainly not the focus of this current study, these findings add to the inconsistent results in the extant literature, and highlight the potential to further explore the influence that gender has on the aforementioned employee emotions and attitudes. Being partnered also revealed some interesting findings in terms of its negative relationship to trust in the organisation that perhaps warrant future research to explore why partnered employees are less trusting of their organisation. Finally, research conducted at both the individual and organisational level may uncover if individual or contextual differences (e.g., job level, industry) explain the contradictory findings in the extant literature on the relationship between gender and trust and other control variables examined in this study.

Another control variable that warrants further investigation is that of previous use of a WLB policy. This variable proved to be positively associated with both WLB psychological contract formation and WLB psychological contract fulfilment. While perhaps these findings are not surprising, future research could explore if the previous use of a WLB policy was a positive or negative experience. The question used in the current study to examine WLB policy use was a blunt instrument, asking participants if they had used any of the policies listed in the questionnaire in the last 12 months. Further refinement of this question by disentangling if the experience of using the WLB policy was a positive or negative experience
would further enhance researchers’ understanding of the impact that these alternative experiences of applying for and experiencing a WLB policy have on the individual’s expectation of WLB support and WLB psychological contract fulfilment. Finally, in relation to control variables, the dependent eldercare variable could be included as an additional control variable to extend this line of research. Given the growing importance of eldercare outlined in the literature review the dependent eldercare variable could make an interesting future research direction, particularly if a more reliable measure became available.

The link between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and all three measures of performance, including in-role, contextual interpersonal facilitation and contextual job dedication performance, presents an important future research direction at the individual level. As discussed in Chapter Six, enhanced individual performance is one of the often-cited justifications for organisations to invest in WLB policies and programs (Forsyth & Polzer-Debruyne, 2007). However, this research highlighted the tenuous and complex link between perceptions of WLB psychological contract fulfilment and the social exchange process of repaying the organisation through enhanced performance. Future research using a range of research methodologies, including qualitative approaches, should strive to uncover why WLB psychological contract fulfilment does not lead to enhanced levels of in-role performance but does lead to enhanced levels of contextual performance directed at both the employee’s colleagues (i.e., interpersonal facilitation) and the organisation more broadly (i.e., job dedication). Individual differences, including the profession of the individual (e.g., nursing) or individual sense of civic duty (e.g., nursing and local government), may explain some of the findings, and future research is required to uncover this. Research conducted at the organisational level to explore these findings around performance will be addressed in the following section.
Another variable that could be introduced into future studies at the individual level alongside the WLB psychological contract fulfilment variable is work-life conflict. It would be interesting to explore if an employee reporting work-life conflict can still report relatively high levels of WLB psychological contract fulfilment to disentangle the factors that the organisation potentially can and cannot influence. For example, while organisations can influence supervisor support and organisational culture, it is important to acknowledge that employee perceptions of WLB psychological contract fulfilment may not necessarily reduce their sense of work-life conflict if they are not receiving social support from their spouse and/or family (e.g., Carlson & Perrewé, 1999; Muse, 2008). The testing of this relationship is particularly appealing, given the results of Hypothesis 13 demonstrating the positive association revealed between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and contextual job dedication performance. Employees increase their level of contextual performance directed at the organisation as they sense the organisation is keeping their WLB promises and commitments as a form of social exchange to ‘repay’ the organisation. Examples of this contextual job dedication performance include putting in extra hours to get work done on time, asking for a challenging work assignment and working harder than necessary. Potentially these are all behaviours that could lead to work-life conflict. As previously discussed in Chapter Six, work-life conflict could represent an unintended consequence of organisational attempts to fulfil the individual’s WLB psychological contract.

Furthermore, qualitative research in the form of in-depth interviews could provide additional rich insights into how and why individuals ‘repay’ the organisation when they perceive WLB psychological contract fulfilment. Alternatively, according to social exchange theory, individual employees will withhold their trust, job satisfaction, affective commitment, intention to stay and in-role and contextual performance if they perceive the organisation has
failed to fulfill their WLB psychological contract. Qualitative research could provide revealing insights into this withholding behavior.

Future research using qualitative methods is required to explore the role that perceptions of WLB organisational justice perform in the WLB psychological contract experience for individual employees. As discussed in the section outlining the conceptual limitations of the current study, all four forms of WLB organisational justice failed to moderate the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and employee trust. Given that these concepts are less well developed in the empirical psychological contract and work-life balance literature, qualitative research should be undertaken to explore the utility of these concepts in this context, and the nature of the relationship between these variables. While the hypotheses developed from the literature and underpinned by sensemaking theory are intuitive, they obviously require additional exploratory research to delineate the exact direction and nature of the relationships between the relevant variables. Potentially, the four forms of WLB organisational justice have a main effects and direct relationship with WLB psychological contract fulfilment and/or trust, rather than a moderating effect, as hypothesized in this study.

Finally, and as addressed in the previous section on the methodological limitations of the study, future researchers should consider employing longitudinal research designs incorporating quasi-experimental techniques. While the current study revealed a range of new and important relationships between the variables of interest, longitudinal research would enhance the predictive power of those hypothesized relationships and in turn present additional methodological insights to researchers and enhance the ability of this line of research to genuinely inform managerial practice.
A quasi-experimental design, including the co-ordinated roll-out of a WLB employer branding strategy including both internal and external communication activities between Time 1 and Time 2, would enhance the methodological rigour of the research to determine if effective communication of WLB promises/commitments does indeed lead to the formation of a WLB psychological contract, as suggested in the current study. Another example of the limitations of a cross-sectional design and the potential benefits of a longitudinal research design are highlighted in the reported relationship between supportive WLB supervisor support and WLB psychological contract fulfilment (as articulated and tested in Hypothesis 6). A longitudinal research design could be used to further test and validate the results reported in this study. For example, if WLB psychological contract fulfilment was measured at Time 1, prior to the deployment of a quasi-experimental research design, including an intervention of supervisor training, as used in the Kossek and Hammer (2009) research, it would provide a more rigorous test of the relationship with WLB psychological contract fulfilment at Time 2. This type of research in the future could further validate and extend the research findings presented in this thesis.

7.5.2. Organisational level of research

In addition to researching many of the relationships tested in this study using different research methodologies and concepts at an individual level, the findings suggest another fruitful line of research exists at the organisational level. In the last decade there has been an increased focus by many organisations to promote their WLB credentials in a bid to position themselves as ‘employers of choice’’ (Heywood, 2010; Mescher et al., 2010). Employer branding strategies, in the form of internal and external organisational communication activities, play an important role in shaping realistic expectations within the psychological
Testing Hypotheses 1 and 2 at an organisational level across a wider range of industry sectors and organisations to tease out the differences between organisations could contribute to the employer branding literature by uncovering if and how employer branding activities promoting the WLB credentials of the organisation influence the individual’s WLB psychological contract. For example, in the current study, Organisation A had a negative association with WLB psychological contract formation (see Hypotheses 3a/b and 4a/b). Using a case study research design, these organisational differences could be examined to determine the role of WLB policy and communication strategies or indeed other factors in forming WLB psychological contracts. In addition, by extending this research across industry sectors and organisations and testing Hypotheses 3a/b, 4a/b, 5 and 6, researchers in the field could also uncover important differences between organisations in terms of the impact that WLB organisational culture and supervisor support have on WLB psychological contract formation and fulfilment. By utilizing a range of research methodologies the differences between WLB organisational culture across organisations and industry sectors would pave the way for improvements in the way business schools teach WLB cultural change interventions and how practitioners can learn to play an important role in shaping that culture.

Testing Hypotheses 7 to 13 on individual responses to WLB psychological contract fulfilment and then comparing across organisations could also lead to revealing insights, particularly if other organisational variables, including size, sector, and cultural context, were included in the study. While researchers have a good understanding of the consequences of psychological contract fulfilment in a general sense, research is required to explore if this existing research extends to psychological contract fulfilment in the context of the organisation’s WLB strategy and implementation. For example, organisational research could provide additional
explanatory power in explaining the WLB psychological contract fulfilment and performance relationships uncovered in this study.

In addition to utilising the quantitative and qualitative research approaches discussed in the preceding sections, we encourage researchers to undertake in-depth case studies using multiple methods of enquiry involving the potential use of in-depth interviews and surveys, document analysis and observation. Bailyn and Fletcher (2007) have identified collaborative interactive action research (CIAR) as an excellent research method to explore WLB strategy and implementation. Action research or case study research could also explore in further detail the perceptions of both parties (i.e., employees and employers) involved in the WLB psychological contract as called for by Cullinane and Dundon (2006). Furthermore, case study or CIAB methodologies could also provide interesting insights into how HR practitioners within organisations support and educate line managers to facilitate WLB psychological contract fulfilment.

7.6. Conclusions

Over the past few decades a combination of demographic, socio-culture, labour force and business environment change has inherently changed the employee and employer relationship and raised the profile of work-life balance as a key concern for both employees and their employing organisations. In light of the increasing use of WLB employer branding strategies by organisations, the study explored the employees’ perspectives of how these activities impact on their expectations of support for their work and non-work responsibilities and aspirations. The study has drawn on the work-life balance and psychological contract literatures to examine if employee awareness of WLB policies and perceptions of the effectiveness of communication of WLB promises and commitments lead to WLB
psychological contract formation. The study also examined the antecedents and outcomes of WLB psychological contract fulfilment.

As hypothesised, and consistent with signalling theory, employee perceptions of effective communication of WLB policies and programs and awareness of WLB policies did form WLB psychological contracts. Furthermore, WLB supervisor support also performed a role in forming WLB psychological contracts due to its moderating influence on WLB policy awareness. Consistent with previous literature demonstrating the positive role of WLB supervisor support and organisational culture (e.g., Hammer et al., 2007; Lambert, 2000; Thompson et al., 1999), both variables performed an important antecedent role in fulfilling employees’ WLB psychological contracts in the current study. Social-exchange theory provided the foundation for examining the positive relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and enhanced levels of employee trust, job satisfaction, affective commitment and contextual performance directed at both the organisation and colleagues. The study also demonstrated that WLB psychological contract fulfilment reduces the employee’s intention to leave the organisation. In addition to the main effects relationship trust had with WLB psychological contract fulfilment, based on AET, trust also mediated the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and job satisfaction, affective commitment, intention to leave the organisation and contextual performance directed at colleagues (i.e., interpersonal facilitation) in the study. Finally, and counter to expectations, based on sensemaking theory, organisational justice dimensions failed to moderate the relationship between WLB psychological contract fulfilment and trust.

The findings have made significant theoretical, methodological and practical contributions, most notably the contribution the findings make to the field of signalling theory by
empirically testing the role that communication strategies currently used by many organisations as part of their employer branding initiatives perform in raising employee expectations of WLB organisational support. The study also contributes significantly to the WLB and psychological contract literature through the use of the WLB psychological contract formation and fulfilment constructs. These findings also inform business practice in the areas of HR, supervisor recruitment, training and development and organisational cultural change programs. Finally, a range of important future research directions emerge from this study to advance both the work-life and psychological contract literatures.

The increasingly proactive and explicit use of WLB employer branding strategies and availability of WLB policies by Australian organisations over the last decade provided the impetus and underlying motivation for this study. During this time, a plethora of awards and accreditation programs have emerged recognising organisations that provide a flexible workplace to assist with the WLB needs of their employees (e.g., Fair and Flexible Employer, National Work-Life Balance Awards). The researcher wanted to examine if the increased focus on and promotion of the organisations’ WLB credentials shaped employee expectations. Using signalling theory, this study demonstrated that WLB employer branding strategies and WLB policies do indeed shape employee expectations of organisational support for their work and non-work life aspirations and responsibilities.

In addition, the researcher was motivated to examine the antecedent factors that lead to WLB psychological contract fulfilment and the way that employees respond when they perceive their employing organisation has met or exceeded their expectations. The study’s findings were mostly consistent with the researcher’s expectations formed by the extant work-life and psychological contract literature. Furthermore, the findings also resonated with the stories told
by the researcher’s friends and family members who were seeking work-life balance support from their employers in a bid to juggle their work and non-working lives. When organisations fulfil employees’ WLB psychological contracts by providing supportive supervisors and a supportive WLB culture, employees respond in kind through a social-exchange process of enhanced levels of trust, job satisfaction, affective commitment, intentions to stay with the organisation and contextual performance. Conversely, organisations run the risk of experiencing negative employee responses (e.g., diminished job satisfaction, affective commitment) if they fail to fulfil the employees’ expectations they have created through their WLB strategies. HR and communication professionals, who typically play a key role in the development of an organisation’s WLB strategy, are cautioned against raising employee expectations based on promises the organisation cannot keep. In summary, an organisation’s WLB strategy is partly about expectation management and partly about creating a workplace environment in which both the supervisors, who make most of the discretionary WLB decisions, and the organisational culture is one where all employees have the opportunity to enhance the balance between their work and personal lives.
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268


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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Stage 1 Survey

The impact of work-life balance organisational support on employee job satisfaction, commitment and performance

I would like to invite you to participate in a survey to examine the commitments or promises your organisation has made to assist employees to find a better balance between their work and personal life. The survey will also explore your perceptions of the support you receive from your supervisor and organisation to help achieve a better balance between your work and personal life. The survey also explores the implications this has for your sense of trust in the organisation, job satisfaction, commitment, and performance.

This survey will take about 20-25 minutes to complete. Your participation in this survey is entirely voluntary. Your responses will be strictly confidential and anonymous. Upon completion of the project, the data will be stored for at least 5 years and then destroyed as prescribed by University regulations.

All the data used in the study will be de-identified and the results of this survey will be published in the researcher’s PhD thesis, international management journals and presented at conferences. It is anticipated the research findings will also provide future guidance to organisations on the important issue of work-life balance and the role of organisational support.

If you would like to contact us about any aspect of this study, please contact:

Kerry Grigg
PhD Candidate
Email: [REDACTED]
Mobile Phone: [REDACTED]
Supervisor: Associate Professor Anne Bardoel
Department of Management
Faculty of Business & Economics
Monash University, Caulfield.
Email: [REDACTED]
Telephone: [REDACTED]

If you have a complaint concerning the manner in which this research SCERH CF09/0171: 2009000060 is being conducted, please contact:

Human Ethics Officer
Standing Committee on Ethics in Research Involving Humans (SCERH)
Building 3e
Room 111
Research Office
Monash University VIC 3800
Telephone: (03) 9905 2052
Fax: (03) 9905 1420
Email: scerh@adm.monash.edu.au

Please note:
While the survey uses the term work-life balance (WLB) to describe the policies and programs an organisation may implement to assist employees find a sense of balance between their work and personal life your own organisation may use a different term such as flexible work practices or diversity management. The survey also asks questions about your supervisor. This term may be interchangeable with ‘manager’. It refers to the person that directly oversees your work performance and has the authority to make decisions about how various policies are implemented.

After completing your survey please return it using the enclosed reply-paid addressed envelope. Thank you very much for your co-operation and participation.

Yours faithfully

Kerry Grigg
1. These questions relate to the various work-life balance or flexible work policies that may or may not be available at your organisation. Please clearly circle the relevant response.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Not available</th>
<th>Available</th>
<th>Don't Know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a)</td>
<td>Part time work</td>
<td>0 1 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b)</td>
<td>Casual work</td>
<td>0 1 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c)</td>
<td>Flexible hours (e.g. working shorter shifts between school hours or a combination of long and short days to meet personal needs)</td>
<td>0 1 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d)</td>
<td>Flexible annual leave options (e.g. taking additional annual leave by reducing your annual pay over 52 weeks).</td>
<td>0 1 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e)</td>
<td>Telecommuting (e.g. working from home)</td>
<td>0 1 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f)</td>
<td>Job sharing</td>
<td>0 1 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(g)</td>
<td>Rostering by request</td>
<td>0 1 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(h)</td>
<td>Paid maternity leave</td>
<td>0 1 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i)</td>
<td>Paid paternity leave</td>
<td>0 1 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(j)</td>
<td>Unpaid parental leave</td>
<td>0 1 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(k)</td>
<td>Lactation breaks for lactating mothers</td>
<td>0 1 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(l)</td>
<td>Lactation facilities</td>
<td>0 1 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(m)</td>
<td>Eldercare leave</td>
<td>0 1 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n)</td>
<td>Cultural/religious leave</td>
<td>0 1 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(o)</td>
<td>Bereavement leave</td>
<td>0 1 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(p)</td>
<td>Study/training leave</td>
<td>0 1 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(q)</td>
<td>Public/community service leave</td>
<td>0 1 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(r)</td>
<td>Employer provided onsite childcare</td>
<td>0 1 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(s)</td>
<td>Employer assistance with offsite childcare</td>
<td>0 1 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(t)</td>
<td>Employee Assistance Program</td>
<td>0 1 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(u)</td>
<td>Health &amp; well-being support programs or services</td>
<td>0 1 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Have you used one or more of these policies outlined in question 1 over the last twelve months at this organisation?

*Please tick ✓ the relevant response*

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. I would like you now to consider the methods your organisation uses to communicate its promises and commitments in relation to supporting your work and personal life and to indicate the effectiveness of these methods.

In your opinion, to what extent are the following methods effective in communicating your organisation’s work-life balance promises and commitments? Please clearly circle the relevant response. If the method is not used at all, circle the “0” response.

(a) Recruitment process (e.g. recruitment advertising, job interview)  
(b) Job descriptions  
(c) Induction training/sessions  
(d) Staff handbook/manual/intranet site  
(e) Workshops/seminars on work-life balance  
(f) Organisational mission statement  
(g) Informal day-to-day interaction with colleagues  
(h) Performance appraisal  
(i) Specific briefing by line manager/supervisor on work-life balance issues

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Not used</th>
<th>It is not effective at all</th>
<th>It is slightly effective</th>
<th>It is somewhat effective</th>
<th>It is effective</th>
<th>It is very effective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment process</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job descriptions</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Induction training/sessions</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff handbook/manual/intranet site</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshops/seminars on work-life balance</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisational mission statement</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal day-to-day interaction with colleagues</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance appraisal</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific briefing by line manager/supervisor on work-life balance issues</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. The following questions refer first to the promises or commitments you feel the organisation has made to you as an employee and second the extent to which commitments have been met. These promises may be explicit, in the form of spoken assurances from a recruiter, supervisor, co-worker or workshop presenter. These promises may also be implicit or inferred based upon aspects of the organisation’s culture, vision, observations of the outcomes of others in the organisation, the organisation’s human resource policies on the intranet site or employee handbook.

Please note there are two parts to each question. There is no need to complete Part B for a question if you answer ‘1’ ‘Not promised at all’ in Part A.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>To what extent has the organisation made a promise or commitment to provide the following?</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>To what extent has the organisation fulfilled its promise or commitment?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not promised at all</td>
<td>Promised to a small extent</td>
<td>Promised to some extent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect for your personal situation</td>
<td>a(i)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities for flexible working hours depending on your personal needs</td>
<td>b(i)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The opportunity to decide for yourself when you take your annual leave</td>
<td>c(i)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A flexible attitude concerning the correspondence between your work and personal life</td>
<td>d(i)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arrangements that support quality work-life balance</td>
<td>e(i)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working conditions that enable you to have a satisfying personal life</td>
<td>f(i)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. Please clearly circle the relevant response.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Not at all important</th>
<th>Important to a small extent</th>
<th>Important to some extent</th>
<th>Important to a large extent</th>
<th>Important to a very large extent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) Indicate the extent to which you feel it is important for the organisation to make promises and commitments about the provision of work-life balance programs.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. Do you believe the organisation has failed to keep its work-life balance promises or commitments to you?

Please tick ✓ the relevant response

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. Please indicate the single best explanation, from the four listed below, that may explain why the organisation has failed to keep its work-life balance promises or commitments.

Please place a tick ✓ next to one response only.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) The organisation could have kept its promises, but it chose not to.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) A situation beyond the organisation’s control made it impossible for the organisation to keep its promises.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) There was an honest misunderstanding between myself and the organisation regarding what the organisation would provide.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) I failed to keep my obligations to the company; thus, the company was no longer obligated to keep its side of the deal.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8. Thinking about your perceptions of the overall extent to which your organisation supports employees’ efforts to balance their work and personal lives, please indicate the level to which you agree or disagree with the following statements. Please clearly circle the relevant response.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Moderately disagree</th>
<th>Slightly disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Slightly agree</th>
<th>Moderately agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a)</td>
<td>In this organisation, employees can easily balance their work and family lives.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b)</td>
<td>In the event of a personal problem, managers are understanding when employees have to put their family first</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c)</td>
<td>In this organisation it is generally okay to talk about one’s family at work</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d)</td>
<td>Employees are often expected to take work home at night and/or on weekends</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e)</td>
<td>Senior management in this organisation encourages supervisors to be sensitive to employees’ family and personal concerns</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f)</td>
<td>Employees are regularly expected to put their jobs before their families</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(g)</td>
<td>To turn down a promotion or transfer for family-related reasons will seriously hurt one’s career progress in this organisation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(h)</td>
<td>In general, managers in this organisation are quite accommodating of family-related needs</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i)</td>
<td>Many employees are resentful when women in this organisation take extended leave to care for newborn or adopted children</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(j)</td>
<td>To get ahead at this organisation, employees are expected to work more than 50 hours a week, whether at the workplace or at home</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(k)</td>
<td>To be viewed favourably by top management, employees in this organisation must constantly put their jobs ahead of their families or personal lives</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(l)</td>
<td>In this organisation employees who participate in available work-family programs (e.g., job sharing, part-time work) are viewed as less serious about their careers than those who do not participate in these programs</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(m)</td>
<td>Many employees are resentful when men in this organisation take extended leave to care for newborn or adopted children</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n)</td>
<td>In this organisation it is very hard to leave during the workday to take care of personal or family matters</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(o)</td>
<td>This organisation encourages employees to set limits on where work stops and home life begins.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(p)</td>
<td>Managers and supervisors in this organisation are sympathetic towards employees’ child care responsibilities</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(q)</td>
<td>This organisation is supportive of employees who want to switch to less demanding jobs for family reasons</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(r)</td>
<td>Managers and supervisors in this organisation are sympathetic toward employees’ elder care responsibilities</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(s)</td>
<td>In this organisation employees who use work-life balance policies are less likely to advance their careers than those who do not use them</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(t)</td>
<td>In this organisation employees are encouraged to strike a balance between their work and family lives</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
9. The following questions are designed to assess your perceptions of the personal and family related support you receive from your supervisor.

*Please clearly circle the relevant response.*

**MY SUPERVISOR....**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) Is concerned about me as a person</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Is helpful to me when I have a family or personal emergency</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Feels each of us is important as an individual</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) Is helpful to me when I have a routine family or personal matter to attend to</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e) Is concerned about the way we employees think and feel about things</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f) Is understanding when I have personal or family problems which interfere with my work</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(g) Appears to know a lot about company policies that help employees manage their family responsibilities</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(h) Keeps the things we tell him/her confidential</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. The following questions refer to the outcomes of your organisation’s work-life balance policies.

*Please clearly circle the relevant response.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>To a very small extent</th>
<th>To a small extent</th>
<th>To some extent</th>
<th>To a large extent</th>
<th>To a very large extent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) Does the organisation’s assistance with work-life balance issues reflect the effort you have put into your work?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Is the availability of work-life balance assistance appropriate for the work you have completed?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Does the availability of work-life balance assistance reflect what you have contributed to the organisation?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) Is the availability of work-life balance assistance justified, given your performance?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11. The following questions refer to the procedures used to arrive at your organisation’s work-life balance policy implementation decisions.

*Please clearly circle the relevant response.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>To a very small extent</th>
<th>To a small extent</th>
<th>To some extent</th>
<th>To a large extent</th>
<th>To a very large extent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) Have you been able to express your views and feelings regarding work-life balance issues?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Have you had influence over the outcomes/decisions arrived at by the work-life balance policies?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Have the work-life balance policies been applied consistently?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) Have the work-life balance policy decisions been free of bias?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e) Have the work-life balance policy decisions been based on accurate information?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f) Do you feel you could successfully appeal a work-life balance policy decision?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(g) Have the work-life balance policy decisions upheld ethical and moral standards?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
12. The following questions refer to your supervisor who has responsibility for implementing the organisation’s work-life balance policies and procedures.

Please clearly circle the relevant response.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>To a very small extent</th>
<th>To a small extent</th>
<th>To some extent</th>
<th>To a large extent</th>
<th>To a very large extent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a)</td>
<td>Has he/she treated you in a polite manner?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b)</td>
<td>Has he/she treated you with dignity?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c)</td>
<td>Has he/she treated you with respect?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d)</td>
<td>Has he/she refrained from improper remarks or comments?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e)</td>
<td>Has he/she been candid in his/her communications with you?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f)</td>
<td>Has he/she explained the work-life balance policies and issues thoroughly?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(g)</td>
<td>Were his/her explanations regarding work-life balance policies and issues reasonable?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(h)</td>
<td>Has he/she communicated details about work-life balance policies in a timely manner?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i)</td>
<td>Has he/she tailored his/her communications to your specific work-life balance needs?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13. The following questions relate to your general feelings towards your job and the organisation.

Please clearly circle the relevant response.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a)</td>
<td>I am not sure I fully trust the organisation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b)</td>
<td>The organisation is open and upfront with me</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c)</td>
<td>I believe the organisation has high integrity</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d)</td>
<td>In general, I believe the organisation’s motives and intentions are good</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e)</td>
<td>The organisation is not always honest and truthful</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f)</td>
<td>I don’t think the organisation treats me fairly</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(g)</td>
<td>I can expect the organisation to treat me in a consistent and predictable fashion</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(h)</td>
<td>I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organisation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i)</td>
<td>I enjoy discussing my organisation with people outside it</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(j)</td>
<td>I really feel as if this organisation’s problems are my own</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(k)</td>
<td>I think that I could easily become as attached to another organisation as I am to this one</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(l)</td>
<td>I do not feel like ‘part of the family’ at my organisation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(m)</td>
<td>I do not feel ‘emotionally attached’ to this organisation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n)</td>
<td>This organisation has a great deal of personal meaning for me</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(o)</td>
<td>I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to my organisation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(p)</td>
<td>All in all, I am satisfied with my job</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(q)</td>
<td>In general, I don’t like my job</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(r)</td>
<td>In general, I like working here</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
13. **Please clearly circle the relevant response.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(s)</th>
<th>How often in the last six (6) months have you thought about leaving this organisation to work elsewhere?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14. **The following questions are designed to capture your perceptions of your own job performance.**

**Please clearly circle the relevant response.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(a)</th>
<th>I adequately complete assigned duties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(b)</th>
<th>I fulfil the responsibilities specified in my job description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(c)</th>
<th>I perform the tasks that are expected of me</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(d)</th>
<th>I meet formal performance requirements of the job</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(e)</th>
<th>I engage in activities that will directly affect my performance evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(f)</th>
<th>I neglect aspects of the job I am obligated to perform</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(g)</th>
<th>I fail to perform essential duties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

15. **Please clearly circle the relevant response to best describe how likely or unlikely it is that you do the following in the workplace.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(a)</th>
<th>Praise co-workers when they are successful</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extremely unlikely</td>
<td>Unlikely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(b)</th>
<th>Support or encourage a co-worker with a personal problem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extremely unlikely</td>
<td>Unlikely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(c)</th>
<th>Talk to others before taking actions that might affect them</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extremely unlikely</td>
<td>Unlikely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(d)</th>
<th>Say things to make people feel good about themselves or their work group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extremely unlikely</td>
<td>Unlikely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(e)</th>
<th>Encourage others to overcome their differences and get along</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extremely unlikely</td>
<td>Unlikely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(f)</th>
<th>Treat others fairly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extremely unlikely</td>
<td>Unlikely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(g)</th>
<th>Help someone without being asked</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extremely unlikely</td>
<td>Unlikely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<th>(h)</th>
<th>Put in extra hours to get work done on time</th>
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<td>Unlikely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
15. Please clearly circle the relevant response to best describe how likely or unlikely it is that you do the following in the workplace.

| (n) | Persist in overcoming obstacles to complete a task | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (o) | Tackle a different work assignment enthusiastically | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
The following questions provide background personal information. Where required, clearly circle (e.g., ☐) the relevant response or clearly print your response.

16. How old are you? ..............................................

17. What is your gender?
   Female ......................................................... 1
   Male .......................................................... 2

18. How long have you worked at the organisation?

19. How long have you been in your current position at the organisation?  .......

20. On what basis are you currently employed at the organisation?
   Full-time ......................................................... 1
   Part-time ......................................................... 2
   Casual .......................................................... 3

21. What is your marital status?
   Never married .................................................. 1
   Married/partnered and living with partner ....  2
   Married/partnered but not living with partner .............................................. 3
   Separated/divorced/widowed ................................. 4

22. If you currently have responsibility for dependent children, how many dependent children do you have? Please enter a number in the box beside the relevant option.

23. Do you currently have eldercare responsibilities? ElderCare is defined as providing some type of assistance in the daily living activities for an elderly relative who is chronically ill, frail or disabled.
   Yes ..................................................................... 1
   No ..................................................................... 2

24. Do you have any other caring responsibilities and/or personal circumstances that impact on your ability to balance your work and personal life? Please clearly print your response below.

25. What is your occupation? Please clearly print your response below.
As part of this study, I would like to send a confidential job performance assessment to your supervisor/manager. If you choose to give your permission I will send a short survey to your supervisor asking for their assessment of your performance. This important step will improve the validity of the research findings. Please note that at no time will you, your supervisor, or the organisation have access to both surveys. Once I receive your supervisor’s survey I will match it with this completed survey and the names will be removed immediately. Only I as the researcher will have access to the surveys and no individual results or names will be published or provided to the organisation. If you decide not to provide permission I would still like to receive this completed survey.

You are under no obligation to agree to this request and participation in this stage of the project is entirely voluntary.

☐ If YES (please ✓ tick)

I give permission to the researcher to send a performance evaluation rating survey to my supervisor. I understand that:

1. My supervisor will be asked to rate my performance but at no time will I be able to access the performance rating survey provided by my supervisor should he/she choose to participate.

2. At no time will my supervisor or the organisation have access to the survey I have completed.

3. At no time will I, my supervisor or the organisation have access to the two matched surveys.

If you ticked the YES box above please clearly print your name and the name of your supervisor and proceed to return the survey using the reply paid envelope provided.

☐ If NO (please ✓ tick)

I do not give my permission to send a performance rating survey to my supervisor.

If you ticked NO, I would still like to receive your completed survey so please do proceed to return the survey using the reply paid envelope provided.

Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this survey. Please return the completed survey using the enclosed reply-paid envelope. If you have misplaced the envelope please post the survey to:

Kerry Grigg
Reply Paid 756
P.O. Box 756
ALBURY NSW 2640
Appendix 2: Stage 2 Survey

The impact of work-life balance organisational support on employee job satisfaction, commitment and performance

Dear

I am writing to you as the Manager/Supervisor of ________________________________. I am interested in exploring the impact access to work-life balance policies and employee perceptions of organisational and supervisory support has on an individual staff member’s job performance. I have already received a completed questionnaire from _____________________________ and they have given me their permission to send this survey to you. I am hoping to match their questionnaire to your own assessment of their performance. This will greatly improve the validity of the research findings and overall quality of the study. Please note that __________________ has also given me permission to distribute this questionnaire.

At no stage in the process will the organisation be given an individual employee’s completed questionnaire OR your assessment performance questionnaire. At no stage in the process will the employee you are rating (i.e. your direct report) have access to the performance rating you provide should you choose to participate in this stage of the project. Only I will have access to both matched questionnaires and the data will be aggregated and no participant name will be included in any publication. This survey will take approximately 5 minutes to complete.

The results of this project will be published by the researcher’s PhD thesis, within international management journals and presented at conferences. It is anticipated the research findings will also provide future guidance to organisations on the important issue of work-life balance and the role of organisational support.

Being in this study is voluntary and you are under no obligation to consent to participation. Your responses will be strictly confidential and, only aggregate data will be used and no participant name will be included in any publication. Upon completion of the project the data will be stored for at least 5 years and then destroyed as prescribed by university regulations.

If you would like to contact us about any aspect of this study, please contact:

Kerry Grigg
Email: 
Phone: 
Supervisor: Associate Professor Anne Bardoe
Department of Management
Faculty Of Business & Economics
Monash University, Caulfield.
Email: 
Phone: 
Fax: 

If you have a complaint concerning the manner in which this research SCERH CF09/0171: 2009000060 is being conducted, please contact:

Human Ethics Officer
Standing Committee on Ethics in Research Involving Humans (SCERH)
Building 3e Room 111
Research Office
Monash University VIC 3800
Tel: +61 3 9905 2052
Fax: +61 3 9905 1420
Email: scerh@adm.monash.edu.au

After completing the survey please return it using the reply-paid addressed envelope provided. Thank you very much for your co-operation and participation.

Yours sincerely

Kerry Grigg
1. Please clearly circle the number that best describes your agreement or disagreement with each statement in reference to ______________________performance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) Adequately completes assigned duties</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Fulfils responsibilities specified in job description</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Performs tasks that are expected of him/her</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) Meets formal performance requirements of the job</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e) Engages in activities that will directly affect his/her performance evaluation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f) Neglects aspects of the job he/she is obligated to perform</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(g) Fails to perform essential duties</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Please clearly circle the number that best describes how likely or unlikely you believe it is that __________________________will do the following.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Extremely unlikely</th>
<th>Unlikely</th>
<th>Neither likely nor unlikely</th>
<th>Likely</th>
<th>Extremely likely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) Praise co-workers when they are successful</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Support or encourage a co-worker with a personal problem</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Talk to others before taking actions that might affect them</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) Say things to make people feel good about themselves or their work group</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e) Encourage others to overcome their differences and get along</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(f) Treat others fairly</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(g) Help someone without being asked</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(h) Put in extra hours to get work done on time</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>(j) Work harder than necessary</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(k) Ask for a challenging work assignment</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(l) Exercise personal discipline and self-control</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(m) Take the initiative to solve a work problem</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n) Persist in overcoming obstacles to complete a task</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(o) Tackle a different work assignment enthusiastically</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this survey. Please return it using the enclosed addressed reply-paid envelope. If you have misplaced the envelope please post the survey to:

Kerry Grigg, Reply Paid 756, P.O. Box 756 ALBURY, NSW 2640

294
Appendix 3: Explanatory Statement

Invitation to Participate in Research

The impact of work-life balance organisational support on employee job satisfaction, commitment and performance

This is an invitation to (organisations name removed) to participate in a research project conducted by Kerry Grigg a PhD student at the Department of Management, Monash University. The aim of this project is to examine the commitments or promises the organisation has made to assist employees to find a better balance between their work and personal life. While this project refers to work-life balance programs the more familiar term in your own organisation may include flexibility and/or diversity initiatives. The project will explore the perceptions of the support employees receive from their supervisor and organisation to help achieve a better balance between their work and personal life and the impact it has on their feelings of trust, job satisfaction, commitment to the organisation and work performance.

The results of this project will be published as the researcher’s PhD thesis, within international management journals and presented at conferences. It is anticipated the research findings will also provide future guidance to organisations on the important issue of work-life balance and the role of organisational support. I would be happy to present a report to (organisations name removed) on the results from your organisation and the overall findings if the organisation decides to participate in the study.

I am inviting (organisations name removed) to participate in this project to explore the process through which the organisation communicates its work-life balance promises, how those promises are implemented and the resulting positive and/or negative consequences for both the organisation and employees. The study will take place in two stages:

Stage 1: Survey of all staff: I will distribute a survey that will take 20-25 minutes to complete. In the survey I will ask a range of questions about employee’s expectations and experiences of the organisation’s approach to work-life balance and the resulting consequences for their job performance, job satisfaction and commitment. The survey can be made available to (organisations name removed) employees online or by way of a traditional ‘pencil and paper’ questionnaire. An addressed reply paid envelope will be provided with the ‘pencil and paper’ survey to ensure it is returned directly to me as the researcher.

Stage 2: Survey of Manager/Supervisor: Once I have received the completed surveys I will, if employees provide permission, send a separate short survey to their immediate supervisor for their assessment of their performance. This important step will improve the validity of the research findings and guard against the problem of same source bias. Please be assured that only I as the researcher will have access to both matched questionnaires and the data will be aggregated and no participant name will be included in any publication. This survey will take approximately 5 minutes to complete. A pre-addressed reply paid envelope will be provided to ensure all surveys are returned directly to me as the researcher.

Participation in the study is entirely voluntary and all responses will be strictly confidential and all transcripts will be de-identified; only aggregate data will be used and no participant name, department or organisation will be included in any publication.

Thank you in anticipation of your involvement.

Ms Kerry Grigg
Department of Management
Faculty of Business and Economics

Mobile: [redacted]
Appendix 4: Ethics Approval

MONASH University
Standing Committee on Ethics in Research Involving Humans (SCERH)
Research Office

Human Ethics Certificate of Approval

Data: 25 March 2009
Project Number: CF09/0171: 2009000060
Project Title: Communication of work-life employer brands and the psychological contract
Chief Investigator: Assoc Prof Anne Bardoe
Approved: From: 25 March 2009 To: 25 March 2014

Terms of approval

1. This project is approved for Stage 1 only.
2. This project is approved for data collection at Ramsay Health. The Chief investigator is responsible for ensuring that permission letters for other organisations are obtained and a copy forwarded to SCERH before any data collection can occur at the specified organisation. Failure to provide permission letters to SCERH before data collection commences is in breach of the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research and the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research.
3. Approval is only valid whilst you hold a position at Monash University.
4. It is the responsibility of the Chief Investigator to ensure that all investigators are aware of the terms of approval and to ensure the project is conducted as approved by SCERH.
5. You should notify SCERH immediately of any serious or unexpected adverse effects on participants or unforeseen events affecting the ethical acceptability of the project.
6. The Explanatory Statement must be on Monash University letterhead and the Monash University complaints clause must contain your project number.
7. Amendments to the approved project (including changes in personnel): Requires the submission of a Request for Amendment form to SCERH and must not begin without written approval from SCERH. Substantial variations may require a new application.
8. Future correspondence: Please quote the project number and project title above in any further correspondence.
9. Annual reports: Continued approval of this project is dependent on the submission of an Annual Report. This is determined by the date of your letter of approval.
10. Final report: A Final Report should be provided at the conclusion of the project. SCERH should be notified if the project is discontinued before the expected date of completion.
11. Monitoring: Projects may be subject to an audit or any other form of monitoring by SCERH at any time.
12. Retention and storage of data: The Chief Investigator is responsible for the storage and retention of original data pertaining to a project for a minimum period of five years.

Professor Ben Canny
Chair, SCERH
cc: Dr Susan Mayson, Ms Kerry Grigg

Postal – Monash University, Vic 3800, Australia
Building 35, Room 111, Clayton Campus, Wellington Road, Clayton
Telephone +61 3 9905 5400 Fax/teacher +61 3 9905 1420
Email scerh@adm.monash.edu.au www.monash.edu/research/ethics/human/index.html
ABN 12 377 614 012 CRICOS Provider #00056C